

# Taglines

*Greater New York Region 15 is 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.*

## Celebrating A Barbershop Legend

***Editor's Note: Last December, Master Director and International Quartet Champion Lead Renee Craig (The Cracker Jills, 1957) retired after 43 years of leading Region 15's three-time International Champion Ramapo Valley Chorus. Taglines asked Ramapo Valley member and Just4(kicks) Lead Jean Schoenlank to reflect on Renee's accomplishments.***

How can we possibly sum up all the Renee Craig has meant to Sweet Adelines?

She has accomplished so much and has had such a tremendous impact on our organization. She's been a performer, director, arranger, composer, judge, teacher, coach, mentor and friend. She has been a pioneer and a formidable presence in Sweet Adelines International for more than 50 years. No one in the organization is her equal.

Fittingly, this year is the 50th anniversary of The Cracker Jills' 1957 quartet championship. The Cracker Jills gave Renee the opportunity to share her vocal talent with the barbershop world, as well as her incredible arranging ability and her unique performing style.

The 20 years she spent traveling and performing around the country with the Cracker Jills were her training ground. The Jills only sang Renee's arrangements. The other three members of the quartet—Jan Saundry, Judy Rowell, and Bobbi Bostick—never knew what to expect from Renee during a performance. Sometimes they'd barely have time enough to hear the pitch before she launched into a song, but the audience never knew what was and wasn't rehearsed. The Jills were crowd favorites everywhere they went—as popular as the men's quartets of the time, which was really saying something. The Cracker Jills were as close to professionals as amateurs could be.



**The diminutive Renee Craig onstage with the 1957 International Champion Quartet, The Cracker Jills, with whom she sang lead and toured the country for 20 years.**

In 1964, Renee moved to New Jersey from Michigan. She was lured here by Judy Rowell, who convinced her to become director of a new chorus formed from the merger of two existing choruses: the Ramapo Chapter and the Valley Chapter. Thus, Ramapo Valley was born.

From the first moments, Renee and Ramapo  
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were synonymous. Renee grew as an arranger. She challenged the chorus members to sing arrangements that were beyond what they had ever sung before. She created incredible moments for chorus members and audience members. No one could arrange or direct a ballad like Renee.

Those who've been lucky enough to stand on the risers for her know how blessed they've been to sing for her and sing her music. Think of songs like "If I Loved You," "What I Did For Love," "Music Maestro Please," and "Maria." If you've heard Renee's arrangements, you'll never forget them.



**Renee celebrates one of Ramapo Valley's incredible 18 regional competition wins onstage in Philadelphia. The chorus also won the International contest three times.**

Renee just sees and hears music differently from everybody else. It's genius.

Renee made the word "Champions" part of the Ramapo Valley name. In its 43-year history, Renee led the chorus to 18 Regional Championships and three International Championships. Competition was a way of life for Ramapo

Valley. Once Sweet Adelines International decided to create the performance package in the international chorus finals, Renee was in her element. Her first creation of the "West Side Story" material rocked the Sweet Adelines world and won the chorus their second international championship. Her creativity was at its best in the performance packages the chorus performed over the years. She loved it and so did the chorus members.

In 1998, Sweet Adelines International chose to recognize Renee as the first ever recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the International Convention in Nashville. Once again, Renee made history.

And now, even though Renee has officially retired as director of Ramapo Valley, she will remain a force throughout the organization. Her music and arrangements will continue to be sung. Her influence will continue on those whose lives she's touched. Directors and performers throughout the organization will always strive to achieve the magic that Renee practiced so naturally.

In the end there's only one word that can truly sum up Renee—legend.

*—Jean Schoenlank*



### Regional Management Team (RMT)

Team Coordinator → Peggy DiSunno  
 Finance Coordinator → Jeannie Allen  
 Education Coordinator → Harriette Walters  
 Director Coordinator → Sharon Vitkovsky  
 Events Coordinator → Carol Schultheis  
 Communications Coordinator → Beth Fulton  
 Marketing Coordinator → Christine Klepeis  
 Chapter/Membership Coordinator → Lisbet Kline  
 Administrative Assistant → Pat Friedhoff

### International Appointments

Communications Coordinator → Beth Fulton  
 Competition Coordinator → Jeannie Allen  
 Education Coordinator → Harriette Walters  
 Marketing Coordinator → Christine Klepeis

### Staff Coordinators

Education Coordinator → Barbara Blaisdell  
 (Blaise), Teresa Heuser & Kathy Sullivan  
 Director Certification Program → Mary DiLeo  
 Quartets → Carole Argulewicz  
 Young Women In Harmony → Carolyn Schmidt  
 Arrangers → Sonny Steffan  
 Coaching → Sharon Vitkovsky

### Off-Team Chairs

Events Coordinator Assistant → Cathy Bucholtz  
 Registration → Helen Caponigro & Catherine Lynd  
 Taglines → Heather Collins  
 Bylaws & Rules → Johanna Herudek

### Regional Convention Committee

Chair → Joan Shuster  
 Official Panel Liaison (OPL) → Sandy Adams  
 Events Coordinator → Carol Schultheis  
 Assistant, Events → Cathy Bucholtz  
 Competition Coordinator → Jeannie Allen  
 Competition Coordinator Assistant → Joyce Brandt

Technical Assistant → Lauren Heller  
 Tickets/Registration/Ushers/Photos → Jan MacCaskill  
 Housing → Johanna Herudek  
 Assistant, Housing → Kathleen Wright  
 Awards → Anita Barry  
 Front of House → Susan Johns-Greenfield  
 Convention Program → Lauren Heller

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1/8-page = \$25

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### Deadlines/Submissions

Want to submit an article? Seeking quartet personnel? Need to let us know about an upcoming performance? Here's your contact:

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### FUTURE TAGLINES DEADLINES

**Spring/Summer 2007: May 15, 2007**

**Fall 2007: Sept. 29, 2007**

**Interest in making Taglines better with each issue? Contact Heather Collins to pitch your ideas. Call her at (201) 612-4385.**



# REGIONAL NEWS

## Save The Date For TRAX

You won't want to miss this year's TRAX weekend, scheduled for Sept. 14 to 16.

The location will be finalized soon. But we're thrilled to announce the guest faculty for the weekend is Darlene Rogers, director of the Texas Harmony Chorus and an acclaimed music educator. This vocal production expert has been coach to many award-winning choruses and quartets, including the 2006 International Champion Chorus Rich-Tones and the 1999 Sweet Adelines International Quartet Champions, Rumors. You won't want to miss Darlene's tips on being a better singer.

We'll also be offering a fun musical incentive to the Region 15 members who attend predetermined TRAX classes and sessions: You'll have the chance to win an Apple iPod Shuffle. Only members who attend and stay the entire weekend and have their "passport" stamped to show proof of participation in certain sessions will be eligible for this drawing.

Finally, you'll have the chance to be part of a coaching session Sunday morning with the regional champion chorus. Whether you're on stage or in the audience, you won't want to miss this morning.

More details about this exciting educational weekend will be forthcoming this summer.

—*Heather Collins, Taglines Editor*

## Calling All Team Leaders

Members holding the position of Team Coordinator/President are responsible for facilitating chapter meetings. It is important to review the rules for the meeting before beginning—including the "one person speaks at a time" axiom. Team Coordinators and Presidents must keep meetings on task so that the momentum of the meeting will not be interrupted.

Another responsibility that the Team Coordinator/President must take on, after asking team members for discussion ideas, is getting an agenda out to the team before the meeting.

Team Coordinators/Presidents are also the Standing Rules expert on the team. These rules should be updated every three to five years. Currently, amended rules should be sent to my assistant as Team Coordinator, Johanna Herudek.

Every successful team has a long-range plan. The Team Coordinator/President has the responsibility to encourage her team to review the plan annually for revisions. The RMT's strategic plan is on the Region 15 Web site for your reference.

Finally, the Team Coordinator/President must lead the team to a successful solution to any problem that might arise, using either consensus or a vote. It is important again to enforce the "one person speaking at a time" rule. Patience and understanding will set the tone for your team so a desirable outcome is reached.

If you hold the Team Coordinator or President position, please keep June 3 free on your calendar so you will be able to attend a Leadership Workshop with your director. It will be a worthwhile experience to see that both you and your director are using a similar approach as the leaders of your chorus.

—*Peggy DiSunno, Team Coordinator*

## Every Individual Counts

As we approach competition, I want to remind everyone of how much we learn every day. I think that we don't always think in those terms on a regular basis.

We may think we learn only when put in a setting designed for education, such as a class, seminar or the like. Certainly the focus of what we are learning during the Sweet Adelines contest season is based on our music and all the components, which we assimilate during our rehearsals and coaching sessions. But I encourage and challenge each of you to broaden that thinking and open your minds and hearts.

Essential to our progress as singers is to gain complete understanding of the fundamentals, as well as the new skills we learn at our weekly rehearsals and coaching sessions. Additionally, we want to utilize the skills every time we sing and perform and be sure we are as consistent as possible. Another key component is to be aware of where we are in the process, as each member of our team is reliant on our consistency and growth. In this way, we can feel the consistency of not just ourselves as individuals, but of the performing unit—and that will certainly move us in the right direction.

If we are truly diligent in self-assessing and evaluating, then we can make real progress ongoing. It is then that we can be truthful in the realization of what we know we already know and what we know we must revisit. Further to that, other lessons become more apparent when we are comfortable with this process.

I want to emphasize the power of the "Team" not only in education, but in everything we do. When our focal point is the Team, so much seems to fall into place. What we do becomes so much more than our singing. Investing in your Team will teach you great lessons, bringing you exactly where you want to be.

Be open to these lessons and see them for what they are. Sometimes it is simply the right time to learn, whether it be something technical or something about ourselves or others. Never underestimate what we can achieve. Allow yourself the ability to do more and be more than you ever thought possible. Understand and allow the process to work for you. Remember that it is as important to learn from and with each other every day, as it is to learn at planned sessions. When everyone is of the same mind, great things begin to happen. When they happen together, anything is possible!

—*Harriette Walters, Education Coordinator*

## Welcoming A New DC

I'd like to start by telling you all how much I have appreciated the opportunity to serve on the Regional Management Team first as Education Coordinator for four years and most recently as Director Coordinator.

Term limits require my departure from the team, but I am pleased to announce that in May, the new DC will be Carole Argulewicz. Congratulations!

In addition to administering the Chorus Coaching Reimbursement Program for the region, it has been my job to plan the Director's Workshop each year. All front-line directors are totally subsidized for this event. Other musical leaders are invited to attend for a small registration fee.

The 2007 Director's Workshop will be held on June 1 and 2 and will continue June 3 with a Leadership Seminar. Sandy Robinson-Marron will be the guest faculty for Friday and Saturday. She is a member of the International Faculty, the director of Lion's Gate Chorus in Canada and tenor of the 2003 International Quartet Champions Brava. The location, class descriptions and times will be disclosed soon.

—*Sharon Vitkovsky, Director Coordinator*

## Kudos In Order

Leona Schwartz, the Island Hills Chorus Assistant Director, has been certified in the Director Certification Program. Harriette Walters, Region 15 EC, will present Leona with her Certificate of Completion. Congratulations, Leona, on your hard work and perseverance!

—*Mary Dileo, DCP Coordinator*

## Dangerous Curves Ahead!

The Curves fitness initiative is progressing at full tilt. This unique promotion will provide Sweet Adelines members in the U.S. with three full months to lose pounds and inches and, most importantly, to promote personal health and fitness.

In marketing terms, this third-party promotion is a winner. Sweet Adelines International will benefit from generous advertising space donated by Curves in their publications and on their Web site. Hopefully, choruses will benefit from women who are curious about the Sweet Adelines participating in the program. The health benefits of good nutrition and weight loss to individual participants are obvious.

With all this exposure, membership should be affected. Be sure to have some Sweet Adeline literature in your gym bag in case someone approaches you for information. A copy of the Pitch Pipe could help too. However remember the rules: introduce, discuss, explain and ask if there's anything more she'd like to know (that's the IDEA). Then leave the topic alone, she'll know where to find you.

If you gain any members as a result of this program please advise Lisbet Kline, the Region 15 Chapter/Membership Coordinator.

As I hope you know, our region is conducting a "biggest loser" contest to run concurrently with the broader SAI Curves program. The chorus losing the most inches by March 31 will be recognized at our annual regional contest in Philadelphia in April and will be mentioned in the next issue of Taglines. The RMT decided the prize for the "Biggest Losing Chorus" would be their choice of a new chorus song—the region will pay the per-chorus-member fee for the music.

Sweet Adelines International is watching this national undertaking very closely. Hopefully we in Region 15 will help make this program an unprecedented success across the organization.

—*Chris Klepeis, Marketing Coordinator*

## Keep The Photos Coming!

During my time as Communications/Technology Coordinator, I have met so many wonderful people in Region 15. I have learned so much about the ins and outs of the region and that a lot of hard work goes into running it.

My most challenging task in this position has been the Web site. With the issues we had with our host last year to the constant update of everything going on in the region, it has proven to be a daily task on my list of things to do. I am still trying to collect photos for the past champion quartets so we can fill in all the "holes" on that page. Also, we are always looking for more photos from all of the choruses and quartets to fill in the photo gallery. I want to see as many different faces in the photo gallery as we can. So keep them coming!

I look forward to meeting more of you in the last months of my term, and I look forward to training your new CTC (actually she will be the CC, Communications Coordinator, according to SAI), Heather Collins. Heather will be an awesome addition to this team. She already has some really great ideas going forward and I am sure will do a fabulous job. See you all in Philadelphia!

—*Beth Fulton, Communications Coordinator*

## Where Should We Go Next?

As Events Coordinator, I work on finding sites for regional events, which include our Regional Convention, TRAX, Director's Workshops, RMT meetings and other special events scheduled by the region.

Since taking over the position last May, one of the main tasks I've been working on is looking at potential future convention sites.

Our Regional Convention site for the past few decades has been the Wyndham Franklin Plaza in Philadelphia. In June 2006, the hotel changed hands and is now called the Sheraton City Center. We are contracted to go to the Sheraton in 2007 and 2008. In November, Jeannie Allen, Cathy Bucholtz and I visited the remodeled hotel to see what changes they have made. They are very busy: new carpets, paint, wallpaper and the

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infamous Sheraton Sleep Beds are being tackled floor-by-floor. The conference rooms are staying the same, but some have been renamed. When we visited, they were in the process of adding a concierge floor, and one of the Presidential Suites we traditionally contract is being remodeled into a lounge on the concierge floor. We're negotiating alternate space in lieu of that suite.

We also made two scouting trips, one to the Meadowlands Area of New Jersey and another to the Friar Tuck Inn in Catskill, N.Y. So far, however, we have not found a hotel with enough conference room space to meet our needs for competition.

If anyone can suggest a site within Region 15's borders that has a minimum of two large conference rooms; a minimum of two smaller conference rooms suitable for flat floor rehearsals and a primp room; and a minimum of 300 hotel rooms that cost no more than \$148/night) drop me an e-mail ([schulcl@optonline.net](mailto:schulcl@optonline.net)). The RMT has approved a prize for the first person that recommends a site picked by the search committee.

—Carol Schultheis, Events Coordinator

## It's All About Members

The RMT started 2007 with excitement about the plans we have for the region and welcomed the two new members who will be joining us in May, Heather Collins, new Communications Coordinator and Carole Argulewicz, new Director Coordinator.

As your Chapter/Membership Coordinator, I am enjoying getting to know more and more of you. My goal is to be in phone contact with ALL chapters once every quarter, beginning now! We can do so much good if we help each other, share success stories and freely give away ideas that have helped us overcome obstacles and difficulties. The RMT is eager to help out, and I do encourage you to use us even more than you do now.

In the past months, I have been busy visiting several chapters and helping with programs that hopefully will start yielding results during the coming months. EVERYTHING has to do with membership, and if we want to compete with all the exciting activities that are available for women these days, we have to be very organized, plan our rehearsals extremely well, make sure we work hard, laugh a lot and go home with a feeling of accomplishment. Let me know how I may be able to help your chapter. I am only an e-mail or a phone call away. I can't wait to meet the rest of you this year.

—Lisbet Kline, Chapter/Membership Coordinator

## Financial Assessment

I am happy to report that all of Region 15 choruses have paid their assessment and are in good standing with the region for another year. Your assessment includes your All Events ticket for the Regional Competition and we look forward to seeing you all there.

—Jeannie Allen, Finance Coordinator

## Youth Harmony Festival

The seventh annual Festival of Harmony will be held Saturday, April 28, at Rahway Middle School in Rahway, N.J. A joint committee of 11 barbershoppers, both men and women, and three music educators, is working with M-AD Youth In Harmony and Sweet Adelines International's Young Women In Harmony in making this a bigger event. Their goal is to have more than 120 high and middle school students (boys and girls) from New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania attend a day of FUN and LEARNING along with their music educators. Instructors will be Reveille and Quest quartets.

Co-chair Joe Weiss of the Rahway Jerseyaires, said, "The three songs to be learned will be sent to registered organizations (i.e., schools, boy/girl scouts, etc.) in advance so they have time to memorize the songs." Organizations may register for the festival by visiting the Web site ([www.festivalofharmony.org](http://www.festivalofharmony.org)).

Here's what you can do to support the festival:

1. Visit the web site and learn more about the event
2. Contact your local high and middle schools and encourage them to participate
3. Send a chapter contribution of a few hundred dollars to the festival (call Joe Weiss for details)
4. Plan to attend the evening public concert

If you have questions or need further information, call Joe Weiss at (908) 486-5218.

—Carolyn Schmidt, YWIH Coordinator

## A Note From The Newbies!

Where do we begin? Carole Argulewicz and I are thrilled to be joining the Regional Management Team officially in May—although I can assure you that we're both already busy with the behind-the-scenes planning associated with our positions. I've even been drafted to lead the next Nominating Committee, which is tasked with finding candidates to fill the upcoming team vacancies.

As part of our orientation, we attended the RMT retreat in January, where we had a window into all the hard work that goes into making things look easy! Both of us felt overwhelmed and also proud to be asked to lend our ideas to the team.

We're both excited to be attending the International Education Symposium in July, where we hope to glean even more ideas that we can share with our Region 15 sisters.

Meanwhile, we encourage all of you to reach out and participate. As newbies to the team, we hope to see more new faces and minds become involved with helping shape our future. Reach out soon and often. See you in Philadelphia!

—Carole Argulewicz and Heather Collins

# Round The Region



## Brooklyn

On Dec. 15, Brooklyn Chorus was featured on the NBC early show "Today in New York."

NBC reporter Cat Greenleaf and her crew visited our rehearsal on Dec. 11 and filmed about two hours, including interviews with our Director, Mary Ruffin, and former Director, Mindy Fliegelman Jacobsen; our youngest member Cloe Liotta-Jones; and our two oldest members, Lucille Cappillo and Gert Heuler.

What a thrill to see the wonderful four-minute spotlight Brooklyn Chorus got on TV at about 6:49 a.m. as we sang several holiday songs. The NBC Web site put up the segment plus a few more minutes, including Cat Greenleaf singing "On the Road Again" with the chorus.

Two more new members joined Brooklyn Chorus in time to sing with us on the NBC show: Debra McLaughlin, lead, and Mary Sheldorfer, bass.

Brooklyn Chorus sang at Kings Plaza shopping mall Dec. 13 and even had their picture taken with Santa. Several members were guests at the holiday party of the Queens Chapter of Barbershop Harmony Society on Dec. 20. Our own celebration was after Christmas on Jan. 3. It was quite a reunion! More than a dozen former Brooklyn Chorus members attended.

—Carolyn De Paolo

## Evergreen



For most of the holidays, we wondered whether it was really wintertime?

Even with all the Christmas songs that were sung, dreaming about snow, wishing for snow, we didn't have much of the white stuff until recently.

December was quite busy for Evergreen with performances. We started on Dec. 2, with two programs in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. The theater itself was intimate and the seats were arranged in a circle, making the audience seem like they were right at our feet. It was a unique experience. Both audiences gave us a standing ovation, which is always greatly appreciated.

On Dec. 3, we sang in Wappingers Falls, N.Y., for their annual tree-lighting ceremony with Linnea Acton directing. On Dec. 7, several members rose early, REAL early, to sing on Joe Daily's holiday radio program. Thanks, ladies! Then Dec. 9 found us bundled up to our noses to sing for the Rosendale Chamber of Commerce holiday festival. We strolled the main street and stopped in stores and restaurants singing carols, which helped put us in the holiday spirit.

On Sunday, Dec. 9, we performed our Holiday Harmony concert at the Hyde Park United Methodist Church with guests/class members joining us on several Christmas songs. Our newest quartet, Good Times, made their debut and did a splendid job.

Baritone Kathy Sylvester again graciously invited the chorus to her home Dec. 16 to view her husband's spectacular outdoor holiday display. Then on Dec. 18, Evergreen sang at the Galleria Mall in Poughkeepsie, with Sue Koppenhauer directing. The season culminated Dec. 19 with our Christmas party and gift exchange.

January found us beginning the new year with riser placements,

PVIs for every chorus member, learning new music and looking forward to our retreat weekend with Karen Sweeters as our coach.

Enjoy the rest of the winter (snow free?) We'll see everyone in April at competition in Philly.

—Bassically yours,  
Ruth Martin

## Golden Apple



Great songs, great guests, and a terrific new venue combined to ensure

that our annual show, "That's Entertainment" was a huge success!

Thanks to lead Annalise Curtin, who is school counselor there, for making the arrangements at the beautifully new and modern auditorium at Seven Bridges Middle School in Chappaqua, N.Y. Guest quartets Fanfare and our own Pipin' Hot, and the Living Legends Radio Theater troupe all added to the audience's enjoyment. Thanks to lead Jocelyn Ramage for offering her home for a special Saturday rehearsal prior to the show.

Our performance at the Creative Aging Symposium for the Westchester Center for Creative Aging in November was received with wildly enthusiastic applause.

Holiday performances began at the Tree Lighting Ceremony at the Warner Library in Tarrytown. The Ladies Guild at St. Gregory's Armenian Church in White Plains loved our holiday songs and gra-

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ciously invited us to stay for a buffet dinner of delicious Armenian dishes. The desserts were fabulous!

Jenna's Dream Benefit Concert welcomed us for the second year. This charitable organization benefits children through the performing arts.

Back to Tarrytown for caroling on Third Friday. Luckily, it was a balmy evening, as we strolled up and down Main Street, singing holiday favorites. A large crowd enjoyed the ice sculptor, storytellers and special treats from the shops that stayed open late. We even had our picture taken with Rudolph and Frosty the Snowman. A repeat performance for the Pleasantville Women's Club finished our holiday sing-outs—this group loves to sing along.

Our holiday dinner at Casa Rina Restaurant was a great way to round out the holiday season. Restaurant patrons applauded and asked for more when we sang a few favorite barbershop tunes.

We have some special coaching sessions and weekend retreat planned in the coming months, as we prepare for competition. See you in Philadelphia.

—B. A. deFerrari

## Greater Nassau



Sweet Adelines is a fantasyland of sequins, bright lights and false eyelashes. But in the last few months, the real

world has come to intrude on our fantasyland; several of our members have been dealing with serious illnesses that have kept them away from us. Much more than a missing voice or empty spot on the risers, the absence of these women is felt as a personal and collective heartache.

Women who join Greater Nassau because they just love to sing, knowing little or nothing about barbershop harmony, quickly receive a major education. Through the music and performance that progress only through teamwork, we all come to realize before too long that this is more than a hobby; it's a sisterhood.

This sense of sisterhood, of family, is evident at every turn. It was obvious to me from my first International Contest, when the ladies of Rich-Tones graciously lent us the use of their sewing machines (yes, they brought sewing machines!) so we could whip up new costumes to replace a few of ours that had been stolen on their way down to Baltimore. It's apparent in the willingness of those who have achieved those coveted gold medals to share their expertise with the rest of us, even knowing that one day we hope to usurp them. GNC felt it in the warmth of the crowd in Detroit when we paid tribute to an exceptional member of each chorus, chosen for the honor by her own chorus.

Now we face weekly announcements that have come to include a report on the health of each of our missing members. We all feel saddened and a bit helpless, but through everything, our sisterhood has remained intact, and possibly all these troubles have brought us closer together. We have continued to sing for each other, pray for each other, and to make sure that our absent sisters know that they're never far from our thoughts.

Although it would seem that it might be disorienting for anyone new to enter this environment, the chorus remains extremely focused on encouraging and mentoring those in the "audition loop." We're so pleased that a new face has recently come through our doors and passed her audition. To her we say, "Mindy Smith, welcome to the family!"

—Janet Prete

## Heart of Long Island

Much has been going on as we eagerly prepare for contest in April. We have had multiple coaching sessions with Lisbet Kline and Sonny Steffan. The Heart of Long Island has been working hard each



week: brushing up on our vocal production skills and improving on sounding like one voice. Attendance

has been wonderful as everyone does their best to get ready. Sections are continuing to meet for rehearsals outside of regular practice nights. Our members are even coordinating some of their extra practices to duet with other sections to improve our unit sound.

This Regional Convention will be the first contest experience for most of our chorus. We could not wait to get fitted for our costumes, talk make-up and hair like school girls, and get our travel plans organized. Can you tell we are all very excited to do, look and sound our best?

We recently enjoyed a very successful fundraiser and our newly formed Fundraising Committee has brainstormed several great ideas we are excited to see implemented in the near future.

The Heart of Long Island Chorus wishes to send a very special thank-you to Judy Michon, tenor, her husband, Mike, and son, David. Judy opened up her beautiful home for our holiday party last December. Her Christmas decorations, including her houses, lights and garland (and her three trees!) were amazing. We could not imagine a more appropriate setting for our gathering. How could we not get in the spirit as we ate, drank and sang the night away?

Last, but not least, Heart of Long Island would like to wish



everyone the best of luck in April. We also would like to thank our Director, Irene Weingartner, because we know that in addition to our efforts, it's her dedication, sacrifices and love that helps get us to that contest stage. See you in Philadelphia!

—Gina Cicero

## Heart of New Jersey



Hard to believe another year has come and gone, and contest is on our doorstep once again. Last November, we

had a very successful show and dinner dance. There was a waiting list for tickets, so that we have had to look for a larger venue for the future. Thank you to Julie Oliver for finding us a great facility for 2007.

The holidays are always a busy time. Our new Performance Coordinator, Sharon Pitoscia, did such a wonderful job we had to turn down some performances this season. Thank-you, Sharon!

As I write this, the chorus is looking forward to our coaching session with Jane Tamarkin and our retreat at St. Mary's Villa in February with our wonderful and entertaining coach, Sylvia Alsbury.

While we lost a number of people last year due to moves, we are very happy to welcome our newest members: Lorraine Ciuba, Linda Weiss and Joanna Silverstein. We are also thrilled to welcome back Donna Edwards and Becky Woodard.

Good luck to all competing choruses and quartets! See you in Philadelphia.

—Ellen Greenhouse

## Hickory Tree

The first thing Hickory Tree wants to say is "Thank-You" to our region

for the tremendous love and support we felt in Las Vegas from all of you, whether you were there with us or not.

We had a great time and gave a performance that we're very proud of. Region 15 put on a magnificent pep rally for us, featuring a special appearance by The Buzz. We visited with and cheered for our former members in Top 10 choruses Velvet Hills, Spirit of the Gulf and Melodeers. We got to learn from the best education program in the world, seeing and hearing the International chorus and quartet competitions. And a few of us actually won money. So who's luckier than us? Nobody!

As soon as we got back, it was time to celebrate a very significant and wonderful milestone. We honored Lilas Schmidt as she turned 80 (yes, believe it, eight-zero). Lilas has served in virtually every chorus job over the years, and this year we still can't live without her. She's a bass section leader, show coordinator, devoted costume maker, and is still competing in her quartet. We all want to be Lilas when we grow up. Lilas, please stay for 80 more years!



There was no vacation for us because our show, "Home for the Holidays," came right up on Dec. 2. It was fun to present holiday music, to get us and our audience in the mood for Christmas, Hanukkah and snow. We were joined by our own Escape and by Cadence, a men's a cappella group that delighted our audience with their innovative arrangements and high energy.

After the show, we had one more holiday performance, at the Franciscan Oaks adult community. Then, a vacation at last! Now we're back, excited by some new

music and delighted to welcome our newest member, Wendy Keilin. As I write, we've just returned from our retreat with the brilliant Renee Porzel, Melodeers choreographer and Showmanship judge. Yes, my friends, Lulu is definitely back in town, and she (we) can't wait to see all of you in Philadelphia. Meanwhile, we wish you a safe and healthy winter!

—Susan Williams

## Island Hills

What a wonderful winter it has been—until just before this issue went to deadline! With December's unseasonable weather, it could have been difficult to get into the holiday mood without the biting cold, snow and heavy winter coats. But holiday songs can put you into the spirit in a moment.



The chorus was full of holiday cheer and participated in a tree lighting, sang for un-

derprivileged children, veterans and in a nursing home. Our quartets sang in catering halls, restaurants and museums—not to mention all the singing and the fun we all had at our annual holiday party. And what would the party be without Marion Kelly's Twelve Days of Christmas?

Out with the old and in with the new. ... Besides a mantra for heralding in each new year, our costume committee used the phrase to pack away our old costume and present us with a wonderful outfit that is versatile, elegant and sparkling. A big thank-you goes to the costume team for their diligence and patience in coordinating the measuring and ordering just in time for contest in Philly.

During the late winter and early spring months, we will be full  
(continued next page)

speed ahead into contest mode. Our annual retreat was scheduled for late January with Leslie Forsyth. Harriette (who needs no last name) is on the docket for a Saturday coaching session. We're drilling choreo with our coaches and building stamina for those precious six minutes on stage. All this dedication comes willingly as we strive to master the barbershop craft.

February is when we "love" to get out there and deliver those singing Valentines. Our long-range focus is set for an appearance on the Barbershop Harmony Society's Long Island Sound Chorus show at Five Towns College on May 1 and on our own June 9 show. We invite everyone to pencil us in on your calendars, as the evening promises to be diverse and very entertaining.

Congratulations and a warm welcome to Sue Goldstein, the newest member of our lead section. Best wishes to all as you prepare for contest.

See you in April.

—Chris Klepeis

## Liberty Oak

Liberty Oak is feeling energized with high hopes for this year.

After the "busy-ness" of the holidays, which included a couple of great performances for LOC, we started January off with more intensive work on our contest songs. We jumped right into coaching



with Sharon Vitkovsky and then held our retreat in February. This year was particularly fun, as we had both Harriette Walters and Gail Jencik for coaching.

In addition to regular rehearsal efforts, Katie, our music team and board have worked to

implement new programs to help LOC become a stronger, more cohesive unit. Each program serves the purpose of encouraging members towards continuous personal growth as singers within the chorus. As our previously implemented quartet program has been so favorable, even resulting in the formation of new chapter quartets, we're confident these will be successful, too. Coincidentally, these past months have brought several new members. So, our new "Riser-Buddy" program, designed to assist new members in feeling at home and becoming acclimated to life in Liberty Oak, was well-timed.

With our new programs, new music, and our risers filling up with more and more wonderful singers, it's no wonder we're looking forward to good things in the future. We wish the same for each of you as we continue through the year.

See you in Philly!

—Anne Gerard

## Long Island Sound

The Long Island Sound Chorus recently said farewell to a Charter member of our Chorus, Betty Strong. Although Betty had not sung with us in several years, she was always present at our Installation ceremonies, and other special occasions. During this Christmas season, the chorus went to her home and sang for her. Her home was always the spot we gathered at the holidays when her husband, Jim Strong was our director. Her homemade cookies were always the big hit at her holiday party. This year, we all baked for her and brought our very best to fill her cookie jar. It was an unforgettable afternoon, and she will always be remembered by all of us as a beautiful friend who lived her life in harmony with everyone she met.

Our chorus is now looking towards spring and competition and, like all of our sister choruses, is busy with coaching and taping and

extra rehearsals! We're looking forward to our sessions coming up with Elaine Gain, Pam Calveric and Michael Hayden. One thing we will be doing with Michael Hayden is having a PVI for each member of the chorus. We are all excited and nervous about that!

We continue to improve in this hobby, work hard and still manage to be new mothers, grandmothers, travelers, students, working women, wives and significant others! Sweet Adelines are AMAZING!

*Yours In Harmony,  
Thea Di Sunno*

## Metro Rhythm

As we left you last fall, we at Metro Rhythm were working on our holiday show. That seemed to go well and was followed by a singing engagement in early December, a visit from Lisbet Kline, and our chorus party at a Westfield restaurant.

With the holidays long gone, we're all—all of us in Region 15, that is—preparing for competition. This is being written in January, but we all know in the blink of an eye April will be here!

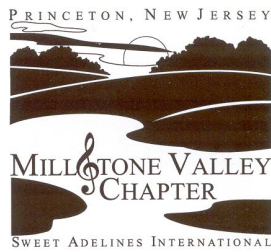


Jan. 19 was our retreat weekend with Lisbet in Sloatsburg, N.Y. It promises to be a productive time with intense rehearsal and strong bonding. Scheduled for Saturday evening was the chorus talent show, always good for entertainment and laughs.

Pat Dunphy has returned to the chorus. We appreciate her strong voice in the tenor section.

We are so excited and happy to be competing this year. The 2007 contest will be our debut with Daniel, something for us to anticipate joyfully. All the best to all of our competitors/friends. See you in Philadelphia in April.

—Sue Schmehr



## Millstone Valley

As we greet the New Year, we at Millstone Valley find ourselves experiencing changes and facing new challenges.

Regretfully, Jack Pinto's schedule no longer allows him to share his talents with us as our director. We are searching for a director and are encouraged by the interest of some talented people and the avenues yet open to explore. We are fortunate that our Assistant Director, Jean Ferguson, has stepped up and agreed to act as interim director while we conduct our search.

Jean is a certified director and has always been involved with directing small group performances, leading warm-ups and giving a hand wherever there's a need. We are also receiving wonderful support from Region 15 leaders such as Harriette Walters and Peggy DiSunno, who visited to help "sort things out."

Our last performance under Jack's direction was a memorable holiday concert at the College of New Jersey. We joined with Brothers in Harmony to perform selections from holiday hymns and carols to fun-filled holiday favorites. Thanks to Hickory Tree's Molly May, who performed as our guest cellist. Thank-You, also, to Debbie Connelly of "The Buzz." Debbie traveled from Florida to lend her magnificent talent as the lead soloist in our grand finale, bringing the audience to their feet.

We're grateful to the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Society and the New Jersey Council

on the Arts for recognizing Millstone Valley as an essential part of the county's arts community. We are so proud and pleased to receive this grant.

Plans for this year's Singing Valentines program were in full swing at this writing. Under Jean's musical leadership, brushing up and finetuning the repertoire for small performances is on the agenda. Thanks to the many people who have wished us well during our "reconstruction" time. We're looking forward to seeing you in April at competition.

—Carole Auletta



## Ramapo Valley

Unlike the recent weather, our fall and winter have been anything but mild.

Last December, we had a spectacular party to celebrate 42 years of Ramapo Valley and 42 years of Renee Craig as our director. We had more than 150 members, alumni and friends attend the bash, which included live music, high-tech audio-visual entertainment and a memory game, during which each table was asked to come up with various favorite or funny memories of the chorus or Renee. To no one's surprise, many of these memories involved costume mishaps.

We are forever grateful for 42 wonderful years with our beloved and talented Renee, who is now moving on—literally—to other places and pastimes. But never fear, she's got the regional contest on her schedule, so you should see her again soon.

Immediately after the party, we began planning how to move forward. With a lot of input, a lot of discussion, and a lot of

members stepping up to take the lead as we embarked on this transition, we took some giant steps into the vast unknown of "where do we go from here?"

First, we located some interim directors! Our members Sharon Vitkovsky and Marilyn Block volunteered to take on directing as a joint venture. We are thoroughly enjoying having one or the other in front of us, and from their faces at rehearsal, they're having fun being a team.

Next, our interim directors selected some new music! It's a little odd not to be learning one of Renee's beautiful arrangements, but we're getting used to it. Our directors have a whole music schedule planned through June, and probably further.

Finally, we're choosing a new name. By unanimous decision and out of love and respect for the incredible musical legacy Renee created, we have elected to retire the Ramapo Valley name. By the time you read this, we should have our new identity picked out.

Our rehearsals this year have brought a number of guests, many of them completely new to the barbershop world. We're looking forward to educating them in the joys that are four-part harmony, sequins, eyelash glue, and undergarments that pinch in all the wrong places!

So all in all, this is a very exciting time for us, and we can't wait to see everyone again at the regional contest in April!

—Stephanie Robinson

## Song of the Valley

We are proud and pleased to report that during 2006, the following women chose our chapter as their Sweet Adelines home: Donna Cella, Kathy Dembek, Paulina Elser, Bobbi Huntington, Joan Keller, Carol Klein, Lainie Lasko, Judy Malachowsky, Marie Notaro, Roe

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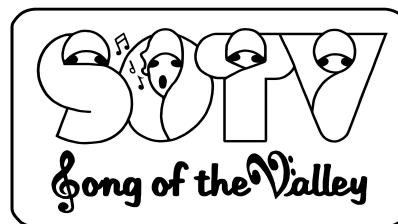


O’Gorman, Lauramae Piper, Annette Smith, Josine Stanley and Theresa Young. Two new members agreed to share with the region, in writing, their feelings about being a part of Song of the Valley. Here are their submissions. ...

**From Theresa Young:** *“I was anxious when I picked up the phone, but I decided to call anyway since for years I longed to sing in a chorus. Because the lady who answered was so kind and gently welcoming, I decided to attend a rehearsal. The Song of The Valley Sweet Adelines Diva program was only in its second week, and it was such a warm welcome! What impressed me immediately was the professionalism of the vocal instruction. I quickly learned that this is an organization with high standards for vocal performance. I have been a performing member of the chorus for about seven months and have found the opportunities for growth in artistic self-expression and friendship to be amazing. Performing upbeat songs, in costume, with choreography and caring fun women, gives me great joy. I find my voice has grown stronger, I am learning to read music better and my confidence is growing. I am thrilled our director and management team are dedicated to continual improvement of the chapter organization and musical program. Thanks to Song of the Valley and Sweet Adelines, my personal dream to be a vocal performer has come true!”*

**From Josine Stanley:** *“ ‘You’ve got to come check out this group’, was the gist of the e-mail I received from a dear friend with whom I had sung in Hudson Harmony. Being a single mother of two college students, juggling two jobs and an active church life, there was just not enough time or money, so I left that chorus shortly before it folded. Trusting her judgment, I went. I was instantly taken aback by the organization,*

*the sharing of responsibilities and the poise with which Song of the Valley received a large influx of new members. Director Lisbet Kline and the ladies of the chorus were not overwhelmed at all, and I was graciously provided with all music and a nametag designating my section within minutes of entering the room. Even though a show was coming up soon, costumes were provided within weeks, and I felt as one of the group. That feeling motivated me to work hard to prepare for the show and, at all times, I was complimented on my efforts. What a way to make me feel good! This is truly a group of “Sweet” Adelines. Is there enough time or money now? No. Is it worth it? Yes!”*



October found Song of The Valley preparing for our annual show, but we took time out to enjoy a Halloween Costume Party and our monthly birthday celebrations! On Nov. 2, Paulina Elser and June Pierson gave a 15-minute live interview on WBNR’s morning show, “Sound of the Valley.” The following Sunday, we welcomed Dolly Power as the wonderful Mistress of Ceremonies for our show, “Thank-You for the Music,” which proved the most musically successful show in our recent history and the most financially successful show ever.

Late in November, the chorus made a tape of holiday songs with the help of Ron Pierson, our sound engineer, which first aired in early December on Robert Elser’s radio show (Tuesdays, 10 a.m.), also on WBNR. In December, we performed at a “Breakfast for Autism” and at a

holiday concert and for the local Business and Professional Women’s Club in Wallkill.

The most memorable event of these past months came at our Post-Holiday Party Jan. 2.

In 2006, Lisbet Kline’s Dad, Dr. Arne Possing, who lives in Denmark, was diagnosed with a very serious illness. Fortunately, he was well enough to travel to the United States to spend the holiday season with Lisbet and Ron and grace us with his presence at our party. To welcome and honor Lisbet’s Dad, the chapter named a star for him, which was selected to be in the same constellation as the one named for Lisbet last year. Dr. Possing, with great dignity and presence, chose to read the card out loud, and then gave a moving, extemporaneous speech, in clear, exquisite English, which ended with a call for a toast, by all the men present, to his “singing ladies.” There is no way to express the absolute magical perfection of these moments. They will surely live in our memories forever. It was a wonderful way to start the New Year!

—June Pierson



## Twin County

Sending a warm mid-winter hello to all. We started off the holiday season on Nov. 9, with our bi-annual fashion show, which was even more successful than our last one. One of the guests was a Newsday photographer, who took a picture of Connie directing us for a feature titled “Back At It,” about people who have returned to doing something they had done earlier in life.

We performed at the Farmingdale Jewish Center on

Nov. 19, the Islip Historical Society on Dec. 3, Broadlawn Manor on Dec. 7, the Home Depot Design Center on Dec. 10, Woodbury Gardens on Dec. 12, and Somerset Gardens on Dec. 14. We also managed to fit our holiday party in there, which we again held at The South Bay Diner in Lindenhurst.

As of this writing, we have a lot of performances coming up: The Halandia in Rockville Centre on Feb. 7, The Bristol in Amityville on Feb. 11, and Gurwin on March 6. The Farmingdale Senior Citizens Center, the Rainbow Senior Center and Leisure Glen in Ridge have been penciled in for early spring. Lately, each time we perform, someone in the audience asks to book us for their venue. It's a great feeling.

And in the middle of all this, Chris Ferguson, director of Royal River Chorus in Region 1, came down for a weekend coaching session on Jan. 12 and 13. It's tough singing all day Saturday after a Friday night rehearsal, but we had a lot of fun as she helped us add new layers to our performance.

Meanwhile, we keep working on our competition package. Our newest members are keeping right up with the veterans, and we just keep getting better and better. So we are very much looking forward to this April.

Twin County offers heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of Jeanne Stevens, who passed away in early December. Jeanne was a charter member of TC (having joined in 1963). She was also a member of the County Corkers quartet, and was President of TC for several years during the 1970s. During her three decades with Twin County, Jeanne sang in both the tenor and baritone sections. A few years ago, she was admitted to Broadlawn Manor SNF and, each year since, had attended our annual holiday performances, joining in with the rest of the audience during our sing-alongs, and occasionally mouthing the words to songs from our repertoire.

Finally, we would like to welcome back Bass Nancy Hudson (Villanueva).

Have a great spring, see you all in Philly.

—*Naomi Rose*

## Events Calendar

2007

- April 12-15:** Regional Convention, Philadelphia
- May 5:** RMT Meeting
- May 14:** RMT Visits Brooklyn
- May 19:** Liberty Oak Show
- May 22:** RMT Visits Greater Nassau
- May 30:** RMT Visits Heart of New Jersey
- June 1-3:** Director's Workshop
- June 9:** Island Hills Show
- June 12:** RMT Visits Heart of Long Island
- June 12:** RMT Visits Evergreen
- June 21:** RMT Visits Island Hills
- June 26:** RMT Visits Golden Apple
- June 27:** RMT Visits Liberty Oak
- July 11-14:** IES, San Antonio, Texas
- Sept. 10:** RMT Meeting
- Sept 14-16:** TRAX Weekend
- Sept. 26:** RMT Visits Hickory Tree
- Sept. 30:** Long Island Sound Show
- Oct. 9-13:** International Convention, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
- Oct. 27-28:** Evergreen Show
- Oct. 28:** Song of the Valley Show
- Nov. 1:** RMT Visits Twin County
- Nov. 3:** RMT Meeting
- Nov. 4:** Heart of New Jersey Show
- Nov. 5:** RMT Visits Millstone Valley
- Nov. 7:** RMT Visits Ramapo Valley
- Nov. 14:** RMT Visits Long Island Sound
- Nov. 14:** RMT Visits Metro Rhythm
- Nov. 17:** Hickory Tree Show
- Nov. 27:** RMT Visits Song of the Valley
- Dec. 1:** Ramapo Valley Show
- Dec. 1:** Greater Nassau Show

## REGION 15 SHINING STARS

IN THIS FEATURE, THE RMT ASKS EACH CHORUS TO HIGHLIGHT AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER WHOSE ONGOING CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE MADE A TRUE DIFFERENCE TO THE GROUP. WE SALUTE THIS GALAXY OF SHINING STARS!

### **Liberty Oak, Arlene Gunther and Johanna Herudek**

Liberty Oak Chorus would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to our board President, Arlene Gunther, and Treasurer, Johanna Herudek.

We want to honor these two wonderful ladies, who have effectively served our membership so well for the past six years. As their board terms will end this spring, we want to let them know how much their hard work and dedication these past years have meant to all of us.

While we're sure you're both looking forward to stepping back into the role of "Molly Member," please know how much you will each be missed as officers of the board. Also know that your assistance will most certainly be called upon by the members who try to fill your shoes! Don't get too comfortable!

Thanks Arlene and Johanna, for your years of commitment to the administrative duties of Liberty Oak. We love you both!

### **Millstone Valley, Anita Barry**

Millstone Valley Chorus would like to take the opportunity to shed a little ray of the spotlight on Sweet Adeline Extraordinaire Anita Barry.

Anita joined the organization in October 1968 as a member of the Queen City Chapter, Region 15, which later became Region 19's Somerset Valley Chorus. When SVC disbanded in 2001, Anita, along with most of the membership, joined Millstone Valley.

During her 39 years as a Sweet Adeline, Anita has always been an administrative and musical standout. She has held chapter positions as president, vice president many times and has also served as treasurer, recording secretary and board member, chairing almost every committee at one time or another.

Along with her service to the chapter life, Anita has always been active in regional management. She served Region 19 as regent, historian, treasurer, TIMES chair, convention chair. Now, back with Region 15, she serves as our awards chair.

Singing bass, Anita has been in seven quartets. In 1978, along with Jo Lund, Carolyn Schmidt and Joyce Kalbach, Anita's Sound Express quartet became Region 15 champions and competed at International in Los Angeles and St. Louis. She has served on music

teams and has been Bass Section Leader for several years during her SAI career.

Here at MVC, Anita currently serves on our management team as membership chair and is "PPPP" (presently pitch pipe person). Along with loving to tease her about knowing everybody in "Adelinedom," her various spills and broken bones, and being our "Barry" that sings bass, we appreciate her for all she does, especially taking over our Singing Valentines project every year since she initiated it in 1997.

What does Anita think of us? She tells us that Sweet Adelines is a very important part of her life. She loves quartetting, loves the harmony, loves the friendships and support and loves winning medals (She just loved winning her first chorus medal after 35 years with SAI!)

### **Twin County, Liz Levitt**

Liz has been singing her entire life. She studied at Julliard, sang with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and performed in road and regional companies of Broadway musicals. Once, as an understudy for Guinevere in Camelot, she went on for Shirley Jones. She also has a club act she performs once a year.

Liz has been a vocal coach for 35 years, giving lessons ranging from the conventional voice to helping performers prepare for auditions. In addition to her involvement in SAI, she is very involved in the Long Island Traditional Music Association, where she has been on the Board of Directors for nine years. Liz served on the Twin County Board for one term, is very active with the costume committee, and has been on the nominating committee for the last few years.

Always ready to lend a hand wherever needed, Liz is an asset to the chorus. In addition to everything she adds to our group, she is married to an excellent photographer and sound engineer. Liz has two sons and two granddaughters, all of whom love to sing as well.



## QUARTET CORNER

### SWINGTIME

Eleven years singing with the same four people has provided us with a devoted second family and following. We were pleased to be part of our Heart of New Jersey show this fall, sharing the stage with our chorus' newest quartet, Best Regards. Have we mentioned how wonderful it is to have multiple quartets in the chorus? Well it is! And no matter where we go, our HONJ audience remains our favorite, not to mention our most tolerant.

For the 10th year in a row, SwingTime kicked off the holiday season at the Cream Ridge Winery's open house. It's a pleasure to sing for the owners, Tom and Joan Amabile, and their customers. They are so appreciative of live music, especially barbershop. And we appreciate their award-winning fruit wines! Stop by if you are in the area and taste for yourself.

In January, we were invited to sing at the retirement party of our chorus emcee and fan, Eva Fields. This "Phenomenal Woman" retired after 42 years in the Social Security Administration, and nine

years with the Heart of New Jersey chorus. Appropriately, she asked us to sing "When I'm Sixty-Four" and joined in as we sang "Renaissance Woman," a favorite of hers. We already miss her dearly and wish her well in Tennessee.

### SWEET REVIVAL

After the resignation of our bass and the audition of several very talented ladies, Sweet Revival is proud and pleased to announce that Linda Bridge, a member of Millstone Valley Chorus, is our new bass.

We are thrilled and excited to have her join our quartet, and we look forward to performing for you during Regional Competition.

In Harmony,  
Jean Ferguson, Tenor (Millstone Valley)  
Laurie Shuss, Lead (Millstone Valley)  
Chris Sheils, Baritone (Liberty Oak)  
Linda Bridge, Bass (Millstone Valley)

## In loving memory .....

Our charter member, since 1959,

## Betty Strong

a fabulous bass,  
a caring friend to everyone,  
wife of Jim Strong, director of Eastern Suffolk Chorus  
mother to Karen Mullen and Linda Beyer, who were members of our  
award-winning Region 15 quartet, Summer Windsong

With love,

## The Long Island Sound Chorus

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### Taglines

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