

Westcoast Harmony Chorus Hosts 12th Annual Young Women in Harmony Workshop

by Joyce Graham

Not even a huge snowstorm could stop forty-two young women from making their way to Westcoast's ever-popular Young Women in Harmony workshop in Langley last February. Now in its twelfth year, this two-day introduction to barbershop harmony has become a mainstay of Westcoast, thanks to Patti Thorpe, longtime Westcoast member and the first recipient of the Canadian Music Educator Award, presented to her in Las Vegas in October.

True to form, the young women arrived Friday evening well prepared to fine-tune two songs, "Fight Song" and "Imagine," for a performance for family and friends on Saturday evening. They had received the sheet music and recordings a few weeks before, with encouragement to commit the music to memory, and they didn't disappoint. While the weekend comes with a fee, no applicant is turned away for lack of funding. This year's director was Lisa Hunszinger, director of Alberta Heartland Chorus. Lisa Hills of Westcoast did

double duty as lead section leader and choreographer. Other section leaders were Gayle Rowden, Linda Wilson, and Rebecca Wright, all of Westcoast, and Margie Miller, longtime friend of the workshop. The chorus was the usual half new

afoot to encourage more youth interaction among choruses. A wonderful thought! Behind the scenes was a small army of indispensable Westcoast volunteers taking care of every detail—especially food! No small feat in a



snowstorm that inevitably kept some away. Westcoast knows that youthful enthusiasm comes with a healthy appetite. As a bit of a brain break on Saturday afternoon, Anne Downton, director of Westcoast and baritone with Frenzy, the 2017 International

and half returning—a solid group of devoted attendees have been coming year after year. The largest group was high school singers, but this year saw a significant number of young ones, the youngest being 10! Three singers, including twins aged 12, are already members of Westcoast, and they are by no means the first to come to Westcoast through YWIH. Three other singers are with Lions Gate and Peace Arch Chorus. With so many choruses represented by these young singers, there's a movement

Quartet Champions, along with Pat Downton of Voices Incorporated, introduced the chorus to tags. That evening's performance, before a brave and enthusiastic crowd, featured a small but skookum version of Westcoast, VITA quartet, and of course the YWIH chorus showcasing all they had learned. Says Patti Thorpe, "Yes, this weekend is a ton of work, but the look on these young women's faces and the sound of them singing, it's worth every minute. I know we all changed lives this weekend."

Pilot Project - Regional Governance

On behalf of the Pilot Project Regional Executive Committee, we are pleased and proud to announce that we have completed the process of appointing the resource staff who will continue to support the growth and development of the musical and administrative skills for all members of Region 26, for the duration of the Pilot Project.

This revised governance structure has individual Directors in the areas of Administration, Education and Membership and make up the 3-person Regional Executive Committee. Each Director will work with resource staff members who have various and extensive abilities and expectations in each one of these areas.

Drum roll please.....

Resource Staff under the guidance of **Lynda Elliott**, Regional Education Director

Lori Holtorf, Lions Gate Chapter - Chair, Regional Convention
Lisa Greenough, Chorus Director Liaison - Gateway Chapter
Judy McAlpine, Facilities Coordinator - Lions Gate Chapter

Education Staff Specialists

Jill McLeod, Southern Accord Chapter - DCP Regional Administrative Program

Kathryn Roberts, Gateway Chapter - Faculty Specialist

Patti Thorpe, Westcoast Harmony Chapter - YWIH Specialist

Arranger Education Specialist - open

General Education Specialist - open

Quartet Education Specialist - open

Resource Staff under the guidance of **Marsha Fulton**, Regional Administrative Director

Kim Martin, Chinook Winds Show Chorus Chapter - Communications Coordinator

Susan Dumas, Lions Gate Chapter - Financial Coordinator
Sue Wazny, Peace Arch Chapter - Leadership Development Specialist
Stacey Rose, Peace Arch Chapter - Marketing Coordinator
Robin Bosch, Gateway Chapter - Regional Bylaws & Rules
Bev Hunter, CAL - Regional Secretary

Resource Staff under the guidance of **Yvonne Meyer**, Regional Membership Director

Shirley Nicholson, CAL - Alternate Membership Liaison

Brenda Wells, Alberta Heartland Chapter - Chartered Chapter Liaison

Joanne Johnson, Alberta Heartland Chapter - Prospective Chapter Coordinator

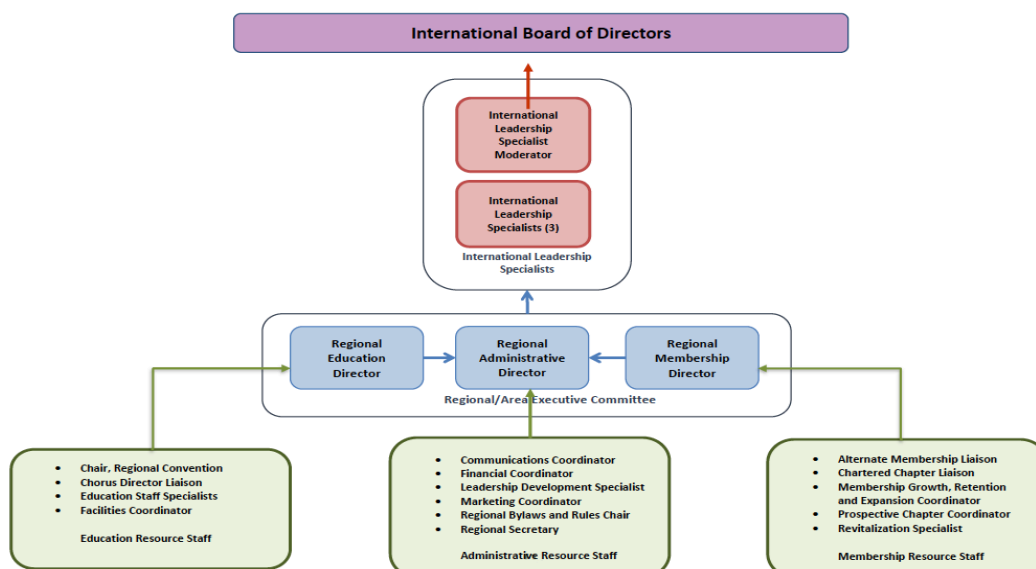
Membership Growth, Retention and Expansion Coordinator - open
 Revitalization Specialist - open

Big thanks to **Joey Minshall** our Regional Governance Task Force "point of contact" who showered us with enthusiasm, support and counsel during this process.

The Regional Executive Committee (REC) are meeting in Kelowna this weekend, and Bev Hunter will join us to do what Regional Secretaries do. We look forward to working with each other and forging ahead supporting education efforts in music and administration through the revised governance structure.

In Harmony

Marsha Fulton, Regional Administrative Director
 Lynda Elliott, Regional Education Director
 Yvonne Meyer, Regional Membership Director



No Strings. Before we walked on stage ...

by Stephanie Ball

Before we walked on stage, we were already celebrating the fun and laughter we shared, and the time and effort that we put in between April and October.



No Strings and Uptown Suite in Las Vegas.

The week in Las Vegas was unforgettable. Flying out from YYC airport, we were with an amazing group of Rhythm of the Rockies and Alberta Gold members. Soon after arriving, we walked into our room and caught some Rhythm sisters in the act of decorating our suite with candy and streamers! Thank you to our friends and family who organised wine and grocery deliveries.

After competing in the semi-finals, we discovered we had jumped 16 spots from our last Las Vegas performance, which felt pretty good! Right beside us was our amazing wildcard quartet, Uptown Suite. And of course, the highlight of the contest: Frenzy! our queens, went down in history! To make it even sweeter, Glow was there too, cheering all of the region's quartets on. It's an amazing feeling to look out into the audience and see all of the red-shirts and Canadian flags flying. Region 26 knows how to cheer!

There's a lot of time between one contest and the next, and believe it or not, we do more than just rehearse and perform (gasp!). We thought we'd share some other news with you too!

Our lead, Jen, spent the Christmas holidays in Phoenix with her extended family, Laura, our bass, celebrated the Christmas holidays at home with her mom and two teens, Steph and her new hubby Gary spent the holidays in Ontario and then honeymooned in Jamaica, and Karri, our bari, was busy with orchestra concerts, string quartet gigs, and the testing (and tasting) of holiday recipes with her family in Calgary.

Each of us is looking forward to the warmer weather so we can get outside with our friends and family. Jen can't wait to start gardening, camping and hiking; Laura will officially be the mother of two teenagers when her daughter Meagan turns 13 and her son, Derek, turns 16 in July; Steph will be starting up a photography business to help get her through college; and Karri will be busy with her music businesses (teaching, playing wedding music and performing in two orchestras).

We can't wait to get to Surrey where we'll catch up with all our Region 26 friends. See ya soon!

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www.southernaccord.org
southernaccord1998@gmail.com



FEATURED

Talent

by Stephanie Ball

The region would like to feature members from all our choruses. There is no criteria and hopefully we can choose one or more ladies each issue and share their story. Your membership is amazing!

Mary Dieser joined the Southern Accord chapter of Sweet Adelines in January, 2003.

Her sister, Karen, is a charter member of Southern Accord and had been bugging Mary to take up the "hobby". When she quit her job in 2002, her sister pounced and Mary has been a practicing member since then. She has served on Southern Accord's board as Secretary and President.



Mary started out singing lead, but several years later she tried another part, and has been happily singing Bass ever since.

Soon after she joined the chorus, she was chatting with another member Jill, who told her they were going to meet the arranger of one of our regional songs, Canadian Medley. "I was only half listening," she admits, "and Jill was fairly soft spoken then, so what I heard was that Joni Mitchell had arranged one of our songs."

"I didn't know that she, my sixties folk-rock goddess was a Sweet Adeline!" When she met Joey Minshall, she says she was every bit as enthralled as she would have been if she met Joni Mitchell, the Canadian folk artist.

Mary is so proud of Region 26 and our success in the Sweet Adelines organization. She's impressed with all of the members serving in SAI's governing body and the very successful choruses and quartets at competition.

"I think the most important part of my Sweet Adelines experience is the awesome sisterhood with like-minded women that develops. We share the highs of getting a medal, or absolutely nailing a song, to the profound sadness of attending and singing for a friend's funeral. We pitch in to help with organizing coffee night, or a show, or competition. We all just get it, and I'm so grateful for that."

White Sails A Cappella Chorus
presents

Happy Together!

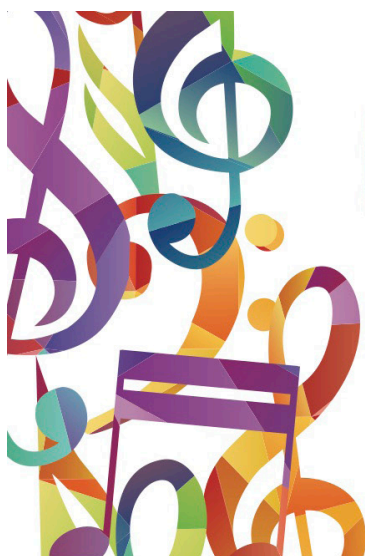
Tuesday, April 25
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FEATURED *Talent*

by Stephanie Ball



The Team Coordinators/President of the four Calgary Sweet Adeline Choruses met yesterday (March 9, 2017) for the first time, with the intention of making this a regular event. It was interesting to learn about each others choruses and individual backgrounds as well as to start the discussion on how we can work together to bring even more harmony to our city. In the photo left to right is Fran Thorson (Rhythm of the Rockies), Muriel Piebiak (Alberta Gold), Kim Martin (Chinook Winds Show Chorus), and Aimee Perreault (Vocal Motion). Interestingly enough, we are all Leads!

Kim Martin :)
Chinook Winds Show Chorus



Esther Gusthart joined Magic City Chorus (Saskatoon) in October of 1999 and hasn't looked back since.

After retiring from teaching, she was looking for a hobby and a friend encouraged her to check out Magic City Chorus (MCC). She showed up at guest night and fell in love with the barbershop harmony. She was "hooked on the feeling" and is now in her 18th year of singing baritone with MCC.

Coming from a musical family, she has advanced piano training and has been singing all her life. "I sang alto in church choir in my younger years."

Esther says that singing barbershop and baritone is an on-going challenge, but she loves it because there's always a new technique or skill to work on.

A favourite memory of Esther's is when MCC sang "Where everybody Knows Your Name" from Cheers, in the James Joyce Pub in Calgary. Along with Magic City Chorus, the pub was packed with regular patrons and another chorus. "It was just such a perfect place to sing that song!"

Esther enjoys competing with her chorus and was overjoyed to sing on the Show of Champions in Surrey in 2001. "Sweet Adelines is the perfect, and perhaps, the only place for a mature woman like me to get dolled up and sing her heart out on stage!"

An active member of the chorus, she is completing four years as President this spring. She's also been the costume committee chair, board member, music team member, physical warm-up leader, and most recently a tape listener.

MCC supports each other with positive feedback and encouragement, especially at the Rah Rah Night, the week of competition. What's especially wonderful though, is the camaraderie, says Esther.

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To avoid conflict of dates all choruses are reminded that upcoming events should be coordinated with **the Region**. Please contact us Region26contest@gmail.com



2017

- Apr 27 - 30 Regional Convention , Surrey, BC
- Aug 2 - 6 Baltimore, MD
- Aug 17 - 20 RES with Frenzy!! REC meeting
- Sep 15 - 17 Director's Workshop Mo Field to be confirmed
- Oct 9 - 14 International Convention in Las Vegas NV

2018

- May 3 - 6 Regional Convention, Surrey, BC
- Sep 28 - 29 Area School TBA - Ryan Heller
- Nov 2 - 3 Area School TBA - Ryan Heller
- Nov 16 - 17 Area School TBA - Ryan Heller
- Oct 16 - 20 International Convention in St Louis, MS

LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR EVENTS!

We'll post them here & online.

Next Maple Leaf EXPRESS is August 1st and stuff is due the week before.

region26contest@gmail.com

REGION 26 Calendar is also online in the members only section!

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY

Do you have a **business** in women's services, jewellery, bookkeeping or virtual assistance? These are a few examples of the types of businesses we want to help with advertising!

Two issues - 1/4 page - \$50, 1/2 page - \$95
Four issues - 1/4 page - \$80, 1/2 page - \$155
(design fees are separate) Please email for rate sheet and order region26contest@gmail.com

ADVERTISING NEWS!!!

REGION 26 CHORUS OR QUARTET ADS FREE!

>>EDITOR<<

Yvonne Meyer

<region26contest@gmail.com>

WEB LINKS TO BARBERSHOP

- www.barbershop.org
- www.evgsings.org (Evergreen District BHS)
- www.barbershophistory.com
- www.barbershop.de (BinG)
- www.labbs.org.uk/ (Ladies British BBS)
- www.harmonyinc.org (Women BBS)
- www.snobs.org (Nordic Barbershop)



Message me if you know of others. YM

ANY DONATION IS WELCOME!



Like it says, ANY donation will be appreciated!

Challenge: Sing a song, bake some cookies, or pass a hat.... collect donations and contact Susan to send a cheque or e-transfer. Any donation! We'll congratulate all participants in the next Maple Leaf Express.

E-transfers to finregion26@gmail.com
Susan Dumas - sdumas3255@gmail.com

Alberta Gold

The Little Chorus with Heart By Stephanie Ball

April is upon us and that means a lot of Region 26 choruses and quartets are busy preparing for contest. For many choruses, this is the norm, but for Alberta Gold Chorus, it's something that only happens every few years.

Instead of organizing costumes, music, coaches, and new songs for contest each year, Alberta Gold has taken a different approach and has created a culture centred on friendship, fun, and sharing their music around Calgary.

Alberta Gold always makes sure to get out in the community during the Calgary Stampede, including performing on the 'Window on the West' stage on the stampede grounds.



Nina Shimizu celebrates both Valentine's Day and her birthday

Their main clientele are senior's residences, which they visit on a regular basis. And of course they stay very busy during the holiday season with Christmas caroling and performances around the city.

When they aren't running around town sharing their voices, the women of Alberta Gold make the most of their rehearsals by reviewing current

repertoire, learning new songs, and celebrating. If there's a birthday or holiday to be acknowledged, you can bet Alberta Gold is going all out.

This past February, the chorus held a Valentine's Day themed rehearsal. The whole gang was dressed in red and pink, there were baked goods and chocolates for all, and on top of that, there was a birthday – so of course, there was cake too.

"It really does feel like a family," said the birthday girl, Nina Shimizu. The music is a big part of why she decided to become a member, but that's not the main reason. "There's a real connection here," she says.

Alberta Gold's director, Holly-Jean Kadonaga, has been at the helm for almost six years. "I've been singing since I was three," she laughs. With all those musical years under her belt, she recognizes the importance of friendship and support in a chorus too. The warm and welcoming atmosphere is the secret ingredient that brings the members together.

Lynn Piechotta, a member of 32 years, agrees that it's the friendships that are truly special. "It's a different culture here, it's about friends, not medals," she says. "Our motto says it all."

"We're called the little chorus with heart, and you can see why," says Kadonaga.



Long time friends and Alberta Gold members Pam Ostick (left) and Dallas Loschuk (right) get dolled up for Valentine's Day



Alberta Gold Chorus celebrates Valentine's Day with friends, fun, and music.

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