

SOURCEBOOK



- SINGING WITH LAURA PALLAS SINGER EVENT
- NOVICE AND DOUBLE QUARTET CONTEST
- WINNERS' CIRCLE "HOMETOWN HARMONY"
 DINNER AND SHOW

HOSTED BY VOICES UNITED



JULY 24 - 27 2025 SUMMER SIZZLER SEMINAR WITH NIKK BLACKMER







2233 CESAR CHAVEZ BLVD, FRESNO, CA 93721

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Schedule of Events	Page 3
Schedule of Events (continued)	Page 4
<u>Faculty</u>	Page 5
Handouts: Sing a Tag With Me	Page 6
Handouts: Sing a Tag With Me (continued)	Page 7
Handouts: Semi-Occluded Vocal Tract Exercises	Page 8
Handouts: Semi-Occluded Vocal Tract Exercises (continued)	Page 9
Handouts: Semi-Occluded Vocal Tract Exercises (continued)	Page 10
Handouts: Semi-Occluded Vocal Tract Exercises (continued)	Page 11
Handouts: Warm-Ups	Page 12
Handouts: Warm-Ups	Page 13
Handouts: Warm-Ups	Page 14
Handouts: Warm-Ups	Page 15
Handouts: Warm-Ups	Page 16
Handouts: Warm-Ups	Page 17
Novice Quartet/Double Quartet Contest	Page 18
Novice Quartet/Double Quartet Contest (continued)	Page 19
Novice Quartet/Double Quartet Contest (continued)	Page 20
Novice Quartet/Double Quartet Contest (continued)	Page 21
Novice Quartet/Double Quartet Contest Backstage Schedule	Page 22
Winners' Circle Dinner and Show	Page 23
Quartet Spotlight	Page 24
Quartet Spotlight (continued)	Page 25
Swing Time T-Shirt Fundraiser	Page 26
Swing Time Fundraiser Save the Date	Page 27
Things To Do in Fresno	Page 28
Seminars Committee	Page 29
Region 11 Management Team	Page 30
Maps	Page 31



SCHEDULE - SUMMER SIZZLER 2025

REGISTRATION			
THURSDAY	6:00p-9:00p		
FRIDAY	8:00a-7:00p		
SATURDAY	8:00a-2:00p		

HARMONY BAZAAR		
THURSDAY	4:00p-7:00p	
FRIDAY	9:00a–7:00p	
SATURDAY	9:00a–6:00p	
SUNDAY	9:00a–12:00p	

NOVICE & DOUBLE QUARTET PHOTOS (Via Email)

	THURSDAY, JULY 24	-	
SCHEDULE	CLASS/ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR	ROOM
4:00p-5:00p	Seminar Committee Meeting	Martha Rasmussen	Luxury Suite # TBD
7:00p-9:00p	Learn and Sing Come learn some great skills and use them to sing with friends. Please be ready to sing "A Wink & a Smile" and "Let's Sing Again."	Laura Pallas-Singer	Sierra Room
	FRIDAY, JULY 25		
SCHEDULE	CLASS/ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR	ROOM
10:00a-11:00a	Directors Only Q&A	Nikki Blackmer Salon I	
11:15a-12:15p	Finding Your Place: The Art & Impact of Riser Placement Riser placement can dramatically shape your ensemble's sound— but how do you know what works best? In this interactive class, we'll explore different theories behind riser placement and experi- ment by moving singers around to hear the changes in real time. As riser singers, we'll also gain insight into what directors are lis- tening for, what they consider when placing singers, and how our placement helps shape the ensemble's sound. Together, we'll learn how to listen critically, identify the sound we're aiming for, and make informed choices that support a balanced, unified en- semble.	-	
12:15p-1:45p	Lunch on Your Own		
1:45p-3:00p	Sing for Life: Tools for a Healthy, Resilient Voice Your voice is a living, evolving instrument—and with the right care, it can stay strong, expressive, and joyful for a lifetime. In this class, we'll take a functional and evidence-based approach to vocal health and longevity. We'll explore common challenges singers face, strategies for maintaining vocal flexibility and strength, and practical tools for recovery and prevention. This class offers guidance and inspiration to help you sing efficiently, sustainably, and expressively—and sing for life!	Nikki Blackmer	Salon B&C
3:00p-4:00p	Breakout Sessions: Membership	Monica Tautkus	Salon D2
	Marketing/Communications	Shawnna Dechant & Lora Goodpasture	Salon D1
	Chorus Leaders	Kim Alley	Salon B&C
4:15p	Pre-Contest Inspection	Tina Rowley	Salon B&C
4:30p	Contest Briefing	Tina Rowley	Salon B&C
4:30p	Hostess Briefing	Tina Rowley	Salon B&C
5:30p-7:00p	Dinner on Your Own		
6:00p-10:00p	Quartet Warm Up Room		Salon D1, Salon D2
6:00p-10:00p	Quartet Photos		Hotel Foyer
7:00p-10:00p	QUARTET & DOUBLE QUARTET CONTEST	I .	Salon B&C
Immediately after contest	Winners' Circle Rehearsal	Mary Ashford	Salon B&C



SATURDAY, JULY 26			
SCHEDULE	CLASS/ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR	ROOM
9:30a–10:45a	Wicked Warm-Ups: Wake Up Your Body, Mind and Voice Come get energized! This high-participation class will get your body, breath, and voice fully engaged while exploring the "why" behind effective warm-ups. You'll experiment with new ways to prep your instrument—physically, mentally, and vocally—so you're ready to sing at your best. You will leave with practical tools and a take-home handout full of creative, effective exercises to keep your warm-ups fresh and purposeful.	Nikki Blackmer	Salon B&C
11:15a–12:45p	SWINGTIME Under Glass	Nikki Blackmer	Salon B&C
12:45p-2:00p	Lunch on Your Own		
	Luncheon – Front-Line Directors	Barb Schultz	Salon F
	Luncheon – Red Hot Rookies	Monica Tautkus	Sierra
	Luncheon – TC/Presidents	Kim Alley	Salon G
	Luncheon – Treasurers	Mary Beth Halsing	Tioga
2:00p	Harmony Hoopla - Come meet our newest members	Monica Tautkus	Salon B&C
2:15p–3:15p	Sing a Tag with Me Tags are a cornerstone of the barbershop art form—but in our busy schedules, we don't always get the chance to sing them. This fun, interactive class brings that joy back! You'll learn a variety of musically satisfying tags taught by ear, ranging from simple to more complex. Each one is a little gem, and none are overdone. Whether you're a seasoned singer or newer to tag singing, this class is always a hit and sure to leave you smiling.	Nikki Blackmer	Salon B&C
3:30p-4:30p	Rhythm's Gonna Get You: Understanding Rhythm, Groove and Pulse What makes music feel alive and irresistible? In this class, we'll explore the core elements of rhythm that give music its drive and character. You'll learn to recognize downbeat vs. backbeat, understand the concepts of tempo, pulse, and accent, and dive into what musicians mean when they talk about groove—that magical element that makes music move.	Nikki Blackmer	Salon B&C
4:30p-7:00p	BREAK		
5:00p-10:00p	Winners' Circle Warm Up Room	Winner's Circle	Salon B&C
7:30pm, doors open 7:00 pm	WINNERS' CIRCLE DINNER & SHOW	Winners' Circle	Salon B&C
Immediately Following Show to 12:30a	Winners' Circle Afterglow	Winners' Circle	Salon B&C
SUNDAY, JULY 27			
SCHEDULE	CLASS/ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR	ROOM
9:00a–11:00a	Roundtables reimagined	Regional Leaders	Salon C
11:00a	Drawings & Wrap-Up	Tammy Ragsdale & Voices United Chorus	Salon C

SOURCEBOOK | SUMMER SIZZLER 2025 | PAGE 5



FACULTY



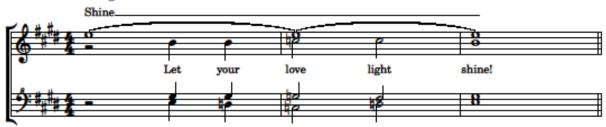
Nikki Blackmer is the Master Director of Region 13's A Cappella Joy chorus in Kirkland, WA. She is also the lead and self-proclaimed Diva of Frenzy, the hilarious 2017 Sweet Adelines international quartet champions. Her barbershop success starts with her roots in classical music. After receiving her Master of Music from the University of Washington, she spent a season singing with the Portland Opera before moving back to Seattle in 2002. The following year, she was asked to help a struggling seven-person barbershop chorus. Despite having no experience with barbershop music, she agreed to help them until they could find a qualified person to lead them — and now, almost 20 years later, she is still their director! The skills Nikki develops through her work as a private vocal instructor carry over into her directing and teaching. She is a highly sought-after coach for choruses and quartets all over the world, including North America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Germany. Nikki's perfect comedic timing when she performs with Frenzy hides a very active, inquiring mind. She continues to expand her knowledge and expertise of barbershop, directing, and vocal pedagogy by attending a variety of educational events. While she claims not to have an arranger's mind, the genius behind the many musical tweaks she makes for both her chorus and quartet ensures the music always highlights their skills. Nikki's enthusiasm is contagious, and her ability to teach and inspire is well-known. While her main focus is barbershop, she also devotes herself to Broadway musicals and serves as the assistant director of Seattle Women's Chorus (the largest LGBTQ+ chorus in the world) and the director of their select subgroup, The Supertonics. Nikki creates communities and is never happier than when people find the joy of life while creating art.

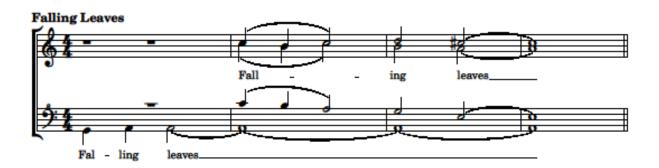


Tags

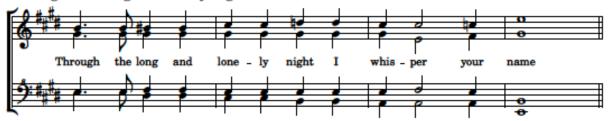


Let Your Love Light Shine



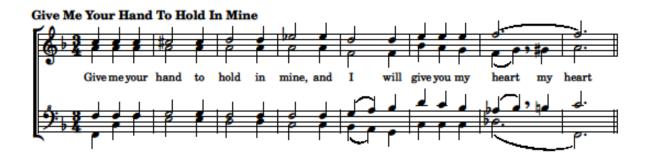


Through The Long And Lonely Night















Semi-Occluded Vocal Tract Exercises By Nikki Blackmer

What are SOVTs?

Semi-Occluded Vocal Tract (SOVT) exercises involve partially closing off the vocal tract to create beneficial back pressure on the vocal folds. This back pressure helps the vocal folds vibrate more efficiently, with less effort and strain. SOVTs are excellent tools for warming up, cooling down, or safely rehabilitating the voice.

The Science Behind It

When singing with an open mouth, air pressure from the lungs impacts the vocal folds from below and exits directly through the mouth. While some pressure naturally reflects back, a semi-occluded tract (partially closed mouth or lips) increases this reflection. More of that energy is redirected toward the vocal folds, helping them align more efficiently, like a gentle support from above.

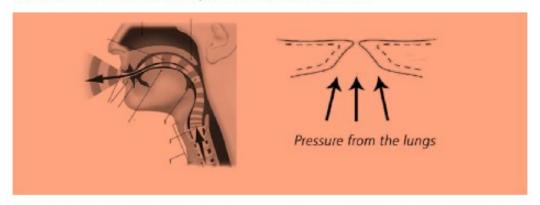
Benefits of SOVT Exercises

- Reduce impact, collision, and stress on the vocal folds
- Encourage a balanced, efficient vocal fold posture
- Improve register transitions and promote mix coordination
- · Aid in recovering from vocal fatigue or overuse
- Increase vocal flexibility and range with less effort
- Useful for accessing and smoothing out range extremes
- Safe and effective for daily use



Creating the right space and pressure in the vocal tract = less impact on vocal folds

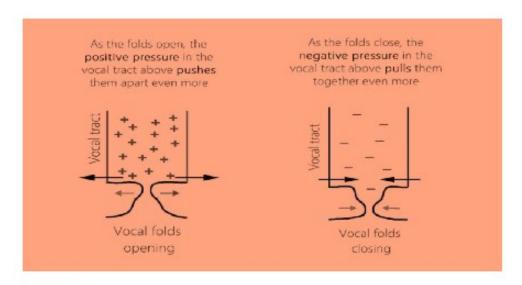
When the mouth is open, air pressure comes up from the lungs, impacts the bottom of the folds and is expelled through the mouth.



While some pressure always returns, when the mouth is more closed (semioccluded), more pressure is reflected at the lips and returns to the folds.

This back pressure helps *align* the vocal folds in a more balanced, squared-up position.

SOVTs are great for transitions in the voice and finding a mixed register.





Best Practices for SOVT Use

- Aim for 10–15 minutes daily as part of your warm-up and/or cooldown
- Alternate between SOVT exercises and open-mouth singing maintain the same sensations of ease and resonance
- Use SOVTs to reduce or prevent vocal fatigue during heavy vocal load
- Try glides/slides (sirens) through register breaks to smooth transitions
- Experiment with different straws (varying lengths and diameters)
- Keep the cheeks neutral (no puffing)
- Avoid throat tension
- · Consider using two straws (side-by-side or combined for resistance)
- Ensure a complete seal around the lips and avoid nasal air leakage for full benefit
- Be intentional—engage full respiratory support and focus on the sensations of vibration and ease in vocal production

Hierarchy of SOVT Exercises from Most Occluded to Least Occluded



SOVT Exercises Order of Hierarchy



- · Smaller diameter straw
- Large diameter straw
- Tubes
- · Cup with hole in bottom (can articulate while in SOVT)
- · Standing wave
- Bilabial / Labiodental fricatives (F, SH, VV)
- · Lip and tongue trills (aka Bubbling, Rolling RRs)
- Nasal Consonants (N, M, NG)
- Closed Vowels /u/ and /i/
- Open Vowels /a/



Warm Ups by Nikki Blackmer





ming - en mong - en ming - en mong - en









23. 24. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31.







Warmups v2

Nikki Blackmer











Judging Panel:

Sound: Bobbette Gantz

Expression: Tammy Ragsdale

Music: Mary Ashford

Visual Communication: Shawnna Dechant

Panel Chair and Page: Pat Vincent, Panel Secretary: Laura La Borde

Emcees: Debi Bitterolf

Mic Testers: Surprise!

SANDSATIONS - Novice (Golden Sands, Chapter-at-Large)

Joyce Bigby-Spillane Tenor

Gin Lee-Hong Lead

Jamie Irvine Baritone

Judy Phillips Bass

BEST KEPT SECRET - Double Quartet (Agoura Hills Harmony)

Kathi Evans Tenor

Tina Rowley Lead

Bridget Mistry Lead

Jennifer Ellsworth Lead

Becca Youhanaie Baritone

Sarah Harris Baritone

Linda Demyan Bass

Mieke Miller Bass

4'S COMPANY - Novice (Verdugo Hills Chorus)

Wenonah Echelard Tenor

Chelsea Young Lead

Karen Wirick Baritone

Gaby Patao Bass



(continued)

DECIBELLES - **Double Quartet** (Agoura Hills Harmony)

Sally McLeish Tenor

Sarah Harris Tenor

Julie (Jules) Cavanaugh Lead

Susan Gladden Lead

Barbara Schultz Baritone

Monica Tautkus Baritone

Linda Demyan Bass

Elizabeth Frank Bass

GIN & TONIX - Novice (Golden Sands San Diego Chorus)

Gin Lee-Hong Tenor

Lisa Capata Lead

Jamie Irvine Baritone

Sue Woo Bass

NEON NOTES - Double Quartet (Lady Luck Showtime Chorus)

Anita Treichel Tenor

Rosalia Salazar Lead

Marilyn Kujat Lead

Joanne lanacone Lead

Amanda Guimont Baritone

Dana Freeman Baritone

Marla Mumford Bass

Joy Beth Clarno Bass

(continued)

MOONLIGHTING - Novice (Santa Monica Chorus)

Kate Kohler Tenor

Jo Rochelle Lead

Catalina Langen Baritone

Laura Pallas Singer Bass

ANYTHING GOES - Double Quartet (Agoura Hills Harmony)

Bernie Cole Tenor

Valerie Steinfeld Lead

Julie (Jules) Cavanaugh Lead

Susan Gladden Lead

Linda Parkinson Baritone

Julie Milligan Baritone

Tricia Horton Bass

Julie Feinberg Bass

SITCOM SISTERS - Novice (Verdugo Hills Chorus)

Wenonah Echelard Tenor

Paige Wright Lead

Karen Wirick Baritone

Ellen Totleben Bass

SOCKAPELLA - Double Quartet (Voices United)

Brenda Garnas Tenor

Cheryl Schultz Lead

Maureen Norton Lead

Chris Dailey Lead

Robin Briggs Baritone

Ginger Early Bass/Baritone

Nancy Holland Bass

Paula Trent Bass



(continued)

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER - Double Quartet (Santa Monica Chorus)

Megan Lynn Tenor

Michele Roberts Lead

Esther Alva Lead

Carolyn Yoshida Baritone

Nancy Schwartz Baritone

Lora Goodpasture Bass

Mira Wilder Bass

Wendy Cutler Bass





BACKSTAGE SCHEDULE NOVICE & DOUBLE QUARTET CONTEST FRIDAY JULY 25, 2025

7/9/2025	CONTESTANT	CHORUS	ARRIVE WARM-UP	РНОТО	BACK STAGE	ON STAGE
МТ			6:30	6:45	7:02	7:05
01	SANDSATIONS (N)	GOLDEN SANDS & CAL	6:41	6:56	7:13	7:16
1	BEST KEPT SECRET (DQ)	AGOURA HILLS HARMONY	6:52	7:07	7:24	7:27
2	4'S COMPANY (N)	VERDUGO HILLS	7:03	7:18	7:35	7:38
3	DECIBELLES (DQ)	AGOURA HILLS HARMONY	7:14	7:29	7:46	7:49
4	GIN AND TONIX (N)	SANTA MONICA & SAN DIEGO	7:25	7:40	7:57	8:00
5	NEON NOTES (DQ)	LADY LUCK SHOWTIME	7:36	7:51	8:08	8:11
6	MOONLIGHTING (N)	SANTA MONICA	7:47	8:02	8:19	8:22
	15 MIN.	INTERMISSION				
7	ANYTHING GOES (DQ)	AGOURA HILLS HARMONY	8:13	8:28	8:45	8:48
8	SITCOM SISTERS (N)	VERDUGO HILLS	8:24	8:39	8:56	8:59
9	SOCKAPELLA (DQ)	VOICES UNITED	8:35	8:50	9:07	9:10
10	BETTER LATE THAN NEVER (DQ)	SANTA MONICA	8:46	9:01	9:18	9:21

SAT 07/26/25 7:00 PM

DINNER & A SHOW!



The Winners' Circle Presents...

HOMETOW Winners' Circle Diner

Delicious sounds from...

VERDUGO HILLS CHORUS

SWINGTIME region 11 champs

TWILIGHT

region 12 champs

THE WINNERS' CIRCLE CHORUS

and more!



Tickets

\$80

Don't miss the afterglow and sing with the champs!

Quartet

Performing for the Dinner Show!

Spotlight









SoloVoce is the 2025 Region 21 Golden West second place medalist Quartet. Their score qualifies them for the international contest as a Wild Card. In 2023, the foursome was named Region 21 Quartet Champions. A registered quartet of Sweet Adelines International, **SoloVoce** formed in 2015. The quartet includes members from three choruses. Tenor Kim Alley commutes via plane to sing with A Cappella Joy based in Seattle. Lead Tracey Sandberg sings with Harborlites based in Anaheim, California. Baritone Jennifer French and Bass Marina Hayden both sing with the San Diego Chorus. The quartet is also registered with the Barbershop Harmony Society and has qualified for the Far Western District contest in the Fall.

The award-winning quartet performs frequently at choral, community and private events, and hosts an annual Music on the Porch Day festival in Harmony Grove, California on the last Saturday in August. This year will be their 6th annual event. Find them on FaceBook, YouTube, or at their website,

www.solovocequartet.com.

SwingTime Quartet is a dynamic and award-winning vocal ensemble known for their tight harmonies, engaging performances, and deep-rooted passion for barbershop music. Hailing from Central/Southern California and Arizona SwingTime has captivated audiences and judges alike, earning **Regional Champion** titles in **2019,2022, 2023,** and **2025.**

With a blend of classic barbershop charm and contemporary flair, the quartet delivers performances that are both technically polished and emotionally compelling. Their chemistry on stage is matched by their dedication offstage, with each member bringing years of musical experience and a shared commitment to excellence.

Whether performing on competition stages or for community audiences, **SwingTime Quartet** continues to swing hearts and steal the show—one chord at a time.





A lawyer, a microbiologist, a hypnotherapist, and a bagpiper walk into a bar... and bust out a tag that brings the house down!

Twilight blends brains, harmony, and heart with a splash of hops and hypnosis. Featuring hypnotherapist Anna-Pia Hubacher (Tenor), microbiologist Kristi Penelton (Lead), public media attorney Bridget Barrett (Baritone), and bagpiper Jennifer Febre (Bass), this Region-spanning foursome unites voices from Diablo Vista, Sacramento Valley, and Harborlites choruses.

You'll be shaken, you'll be stirred—and you'll leave humming the tag

Quartet

Also representing at International Contest

Spotlight









By Special Request is honored to be representing Region 11 as a wildcard contestant at the International Contest in October!

Tenor, Janet Schwartz is the tenor section leader of the Harborlites Chorus and is the daughter of former Sweet Adelines International President and Queen of Harmony, Joan Boutilier. Lead, Robin Beers is a member of the Winners' Circle (Senter Stage, 1976), is a Queen of Harmony (4 for the Show, 1984), and is the daughter of Region 11 Noteworthy Award recipient, Bette Carpenter. Baritone, Billye Johnstone joined RiverOaks as a 11-year-old and has been heavily involved with all forms of music her whole life. Bass, Cindy Chrispell was introduced to barbershop as a 13-year-old high school freshman (singing bass, right from the start) and currently sings with the Harborlites Chorus.

The Valkyries are a Southern California-based barbershop and a cappella quartet made up of Grace Lueck, Emma Castillo, Sarah Morehead, and Kayla Quilantang. Their journey began in 2016 during high school choir, when they were introduced to barbershop by their inspiring substitute teacher, Janice Kueppers. A passionate music educator and Sweet Adelines member for over 40 years, Janice became the heart of their barbershop beginnings, igniting a love for harmony that continues to guide them. Her legacy lives on in every chord they sing.

From winning the Rising Star Quartet Contest to proudly wildcarding for the Sweet Adelines International Contest this fall, **The Valkyries** are dedicated to sharing joy, connection, and musical excellence. Their name was inspired by their high school mascot, the Viking, and the Norse legend of the Valkyries—brave warrior women who sang fallen heroes to Valhalla. Their logo reflects this spirit, with a sun symbolizing both their Southern California roots and the Filipino heritage of their baritone, Kayla.







Save the Date!! October 4th for a SwingTime Fundraiser!



Join the us for the Celebration

More information coming.





FOR THOSE WHO DONT WANT TO DRIVE CONSIDER TAKING THE AMTRAK.

IT IS ONLY A HALF MILE FROM THE HOTEL AND MAYBE WE CAN FIGURE OUT SOME VU CHAUFFERS



I'M GOING TO FRESNO... NOW WHAT?

COME A DAY EARLY

FRESNO CHAFFEE ZOO (New baby lions & elephants!)
GHOST GOLF

ISLAND WATERPARK
RAGE ROOM (BREAK STUFF, FEEL GOOD)

YOSEMITE 1.5-2 hrs from Fresno
MUSEUMS & LOCAL THEATER
TOWER ART DISTRICT / GREAT CLUBS
ESCAPE ROOM
AEREAL SPACE (LEARN AEREAL SKILLS)

GOOD EATS & DRINKS

CHEZ MARYSE - French Cafe
COSMOPOLITAN - Italian

EL COCHINITO CONTENTO - Mexican

MAD DUCK'S - Brew Pub

PISMO'S - Seafood

VENI VIDI VICI - American farm to table

YOSEMITE RANCH - Steakhouse

AMPERSAND ICE CREAM FULL CIRCLE BREWERY

LIBRARY AT DETENTION COCTAILS

LINCOLN PUB LUCYS LOUNGE

TIOGA SEQUOIA TAPROOM

VIBEZ LOUNGE



SEMINARS COMMITTEE

Seminars Manager	Martha Rasmussen
RMT Events Coordinator	Patti Gomeztrejo
Assistant Seminars Manager/Awards/Novice Quartet Regi	strarMarilyn Kujat
Registration	Laura La Borde
Facilities	Tina Rowley
Communications Coordinator	Sue Walker
Sourcebook Editor	Judy Mellick
Regional Sales	Sue Matus
RMT Finance Coordinator	Mary Beth Halsing
RMT Education Coordinator	Tammy Ragsdale
Secretary	Donna Seale
Winners' Circle Liaison	Sally McLeish
Winners' Circle President	Mary Ashford
Assisting Chorus Co-Chairs	. LouAnn Wright, Martha Rasmussen

REGION 11 MANAGEMENT TEAM



TEAM COORDINATOR: Kim Alley



COMMUNICATIONS: Lora Goodpasture



FINANCE COORDINATOR: Mary Beth Halsing



MEMBERSHIP: Monica Tautkus



EDUCATION: Tammy Ragsdale



MARKETING: Shawnna Dechant



DIRECTORS:
Barbara Schultz



WEBMASTER: Lora Goodpasture



REGIONAL SALES: Sue Matus



EVENTS—CONVENTION: Debbie Curtis



EVENTS—SEMINARS: Patti GomezTrejo

