

Penny Hock has been promoted to Assistant Director of the Grand Rapids Chorus of Sweet Adelines

By Colleen Pierson



All about Penny! Talents are Meant to be Shared. In the course of her lengthy musical history, Penny Hock has been an arranger, accompanist, choreographer, section leader, director, teacher, accomplished musician and a gifted performer. She will now continue to share all of her talents with the Grand Rapids Chorus of Sweet Adelines in the role of Assistant Director.

“I am privileged and feel a great sense of honor in being named to this position,” Penny said excitedly.

We are honored to have her in our chorus. Her qualifications are lengthy and impressive. 50 years of vocal performance, 15 years of classical piano instruction as well as woodwind, percussion instruction and serving as a vocal instructor. Penny has been a member of Melodeers Chorus, Choral-Aires Chorus, Spring Valley Chorus and served as an SAI approved music arranger under the mentorship of David Wright.

She began her extensive musical background beginning at the age of five when she sang during Christmas with her dad’s band at an orphanage in Saginaw, MI.

“I play multiple instruments and started teaching piano when I was in high school, and beyond high school started teaching voice, oboe, percussive accessories, rhythm, and adult education at Franciscan Rhythms,” she explained.

“My exposure to Sweet Adeline’s began in 1979 when my mother joined the Tri-City chorus in the east side of the state. She sings bass so I learned several songs in bass, the first of which being ‘How We Sang Today’ and I still sing it in bass as a tribute to her,” she reflected.

The enthusiastic Penny, after enough begging, was allowed to tag along with her mom and soon after that began her Sweet Adeline career as a feature dancer on the annual show until she was 14 and then was allowed to officially join the chorus.

Penny left the organization for a stretch after high school and landed in Grand Rapids in 1994.

“I was in and out of chorus with work, school, and life and eventually, our director Ann Jarchow made me Assistant Director alongside Judy Westers. The three of us formed her Director’s Resource Team, and Judy Westers and I became musical soul mates, and the creating started, and a whole new world of Sweet Adeline’s opened up, and the possibilities seemed endless. 30 years later, they still do,” she said emotionally.

In a jam-packed musical career, choosing a highlight may be difficult, but this one came to mind readily: “Singing with the Melodeers chorus was a surreal highlight of my Sweet Adelines career, for I had the privilege of singing on stage with my mom in Baltimore and walking away with a gold medal. To be able to experience that with my mom, the one who laid the path for me, is beyond what any words can convey. I am so humbled to have been taught by her and now all these years later to be the one doing the teaching, and she encourages me with every step.”

I have belonged to three high-level choruses but my Sweet Adeline home will always be Grand Rapids, for it is here that my foundation was built and I realized all that SA has to offer. And now I am an approved arranger, coach, teacher, section leader, former regional leader, and once again Assistant Director. To say it is an honor is an understatement.”

When she’s not singing—when does that ever happen?-- Penny Hock is an SIU Fraud Investigator, a cargo inspector, and the owner of a wedding business called The Penny Loafer.

Congrats Penny and thank you so much for all you do for the Grand Rapids Chorus of Sweet Adelines. We are so very proud of you.