



The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



Volume 40 Issue 11

November 2020

We meet at 7:00 most Thursdays at Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran, 7860 Southside Blvd, Jacksonville, FL
Guests always welcome Call 355-SING No Experience Necessary

WHAT'S INSIDE

Title	Page
Chapter Shows During COVID-19	1,3
Editorial	2
Member Center Upgrade	3
Singing With An 'Open Throat'	4-9
Magic Choral Trick #392	10
Walking The Dog	10
A Counter-Intuitive Way To Build	11-12
A Voice Teacher's 4 Tips For Relaxing	13
Chapter Quartets	14
Free Your Voice	15
Free Singing Tips	15
Quartet Corner	16
Chapter Member Stats	16
Upcoming Schedules	17
Birthdays / Guests / New Members	17
Directing Team / Other Leaders	18
Chapter Officers / Music Team	19

CHAPTER SHOWS DURING COVID-19: REMAINING IN COPYRIGHT COMPLIANCE

by Janice Bane
from barbershop.org

In an effort to prevent spreading the COVID-19 virus, many of our chapters have canceled, rescheduled, or modified their show events. As ASCAP and BMI/SESAC reports are often submitted and paid well in advance of a show date, below are some suggested steps to ensure a chapter's public performance records remain in copyright compliance:

If a chapter reschedules a previously approved/paid show to a future date, they should submit a copy of the original BMI/SESAC report to their District Secretary (or assignee) with the revised date(s) and include a letter with it to explain the change. Upon the DS' approval, they (or their assignee) should forward a copy of the updated BMI/SESAC report form and letter to Harmony Hall. In turn BHS will update the performing rights organizations and our local records regarding the updated information. The chapter does not have to submit a new fee payment, unless the details of the new show(s) require(s) additional fees to be paid (a higher ticket price/venue, show added, etc.).

If a chapter cancels a show (or shows) and they do not reschedule them, they should notify their District Secretary (or assignee) who in turn should notify Harmony Hall via email to library@barbershop.org. The Society's local BMI/SESAC records will be updated and the performing rights organization will be notified of the cancellation(s). Unfortunately, refunds cannot be issued for any ASCAP or BMI/SESAC payments already submitted to Harmony Hall due to the copyright agreement terms with these organizations. Chapters may want to consider rescheduling their show(s) to apply the show payments already made and processed.

(Continued on page 3)

WANTED!!

MEN WHO LIKE TO SING!



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The Orange Spiel is published monthly and is the official publication of the Jacksonville Big O Chapter of the Sunshine District of the Barbershop Harmony Society, the home of the Big Orange Chorus. The chapter and chorus meet most Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm at the Shepherd of the Woods, 7860 Southside Blvd. For more information visit our website, <http://www.bigorangechorus.com>. Articles, pictures and address corrections may be sent to the editor.

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For more detailed,
timely information
see my weekly
publication:
Orange Zest

EDITORIAL

It's been a while since we were able to perform. So, we've lined up a Christmas Show and we're working on several more. They'll be masked and distanced (and likely outdoors). Let's make plans to be there. It'll be fun, and it's what we do. The set list has been out there (Orange Zest) for some time. Are you ready? You've got a month.

Those who have opted for COVID or other reasons to not be attending rehearsals during this troubling time, please keep in mind how much fun we have had singing together. If you get out of the habit of joining with us or start a new habit on "our" day, we could lose each other. At least, keep singing.

We have some positions (both board and committee) that need filling. If you can help, as a leader or a helper, please see Jason.

We need more members. Please invite friends, acquaintances, and even strangers to come as a guest. Many of those who try what we do, will enjoy what we do. Let's not be a well-kept secret.

Continue looking for gigs (both paying and not). We enjoy performing, more people will see and hear us, and some of them might want to join in the fun.

Each and every man, improving, just a little, each and every day, will result in huge advances for the chorus.



CHAPTER SHOWS DURING COVID-19 (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

Chapters located in Canada should contact SOCAN directly for guidance regarding their cancelled or re-scheduled shows.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding your show reports or other copyright-related matter, please contact library@barbershop.org.

HAVE YOU HEARD? WE'RE MAKING PLANS TO IMPROVE MEMBER CENTER!

from barbershop.org

BHS staff and a team of volunteers are working with partners Cloud for Good and Salesforce Community Cloud to improve the functionality and user experience of Member Center.

Since the launch of Member Center in July 2017, we have been logging feature requests from chapter and district leaders, members, and other volunteers that lead our local singing communities. These requests have come to us in a variety of ways: through forms in Member Center, calls to customer service, and conversations that staff have had with volunteer leaders and other tech-savvy members.

Some of those features have been rolled out in updates throughout the past few years, but we knew we had many golden ideas waiting in that list that needed to be addressed. In the planning stages of this major update, we were able to go through each individual piece of feedback and distill the major themes as well as define specific pain points that we wanted to address.

In fact, technology upgrades are an integral part of our Strategic Plan, so it was important to have as much input “from the field” as possible. We’ve engaged a number of non-staff volunteers to help us with requirements and testing. In addition, our customer service team has been heavily involved in the design discussions as they are frequently chatting with chapter leaders and other members, helping

them with any issues they might run across in Member Center.
When will I notice a change?

We’re aiming to roll out the new improvements in late 2020. We’ll keep this page updated as things progress.

What does this mean for me and my chapter or singing community?

Our ultimate goal is to make Member Center easier to use for leaders and members. We’re also expanding the choices you’ll have for membership payments and more features that will help you barbershop your way.

Singing community and volunteer leaders will now have access to:

- More robust reporting options to help you manage your roster
- Chatter groups: similar to a social media chat group, Chatter groups will allow community leaders to correspond with boards, committees, and more all in one place

Plus, everyone will get:

- Access from your desktop, tablet, or cell phone
- Easier and more intuitive account access, where you’ll be able to update your contact information, view your subscription status and groups, access your membership card, set your privacy settings, view past payment records, and more.

IMPORTANT: When logging into our upgraded Member Center for the first time, you will be asked to reset your password.

READ MORE: BHS Contact Center Success Manager Rich Smith explains what’s new for Member Center (<https://www.barbershop.org/member-center-is-getting-an-upgrade>) in late 2020.



SINGING WITH AN 'OPEN THROAT': VOCAL TRACT SHAPING PART 1

by Karyn O'Connor
from singwise.com

'Opening the throat' is defined as a technique whereby pharyngeal space is increased and/or the ventricular (false) vocal folds are retracted in order to maximize the resonating space in the vocal tract. Opening the throat involves raising the soft palate (velum), lowering the larynx and assuming ideal positions of the articulators (the jaw, lips and tongue), as well as shaping of the mouth and use of facial muscles.

The expression also describes the sensation of freedom or passivity in the throat region that is said to accompany good singing. The technique of the open throat is intended to promote a type of relaxation or vocal release in the throat that helps the singer avoid constriction and tension that would otherwise throttle or stifle the tone.

An 'open throat' - a misnomer for a few reasons - is generally believed to produce a desirable sound quality that is perceived as resonant, round, open, free from 'constrictor tensions', pure, rich, vibrant and warm in tone. It also produces balance, coordination, evenness and consistency, and a prominent low formant, which prevents the tone from sounding overly bright, thin or shrill. Additionally, if singing is performed with an open and relaxed acoustical space, the singer will experience a smooth blending of the registers.

This sound quality is linked to the vocal actions that take place during the preparation to sing (inhalation). The larynx lowers automatically when breath is taken in, and the soft palate naturally lifts at the same time. Because the events of singing are more demanding than those of speaking, requiring deeper inhalation, greater energy and further laryngeal depression, there is a corresponding increase in pharyngeal space that occurs somewhat naturally.

When a vocalist sings with a so-called 'closed throat', imbalance of registration is likely to occur. The chest register will be taken too high and the up-

per register becomes more and more harsh and strident because the singer creates a tone that is merely imitative of the head voice. Intonation becomes harder and harder to achieve because the larynx is too high and the soft palate too low, resulting in a feeling that the voice is being squeezed from both the top and the bottom. In other words, registration shifts cannot occur in a healthy manner if the throat is closed, nor if the vocal sound is driven toward the point of nasality.

The goal of every singer should be to achieve tonal balance. Many of the popular techniques that vocal teachers use to help their students improve the quality of their voices are devices for directly or indirectly enlarging and relaxing the throat during singing. The use of imagery, such as 'drinking in the breath', in their teaching is very common. Enlarging the throat space involves conscious inhibition of some of the natural reflexes, such as the swallowing reflex, a condition that is nevertheless essential to good tone production.

There is no science to refute that the teaching of the open throat is good pedagogy. The intricate relationship of muscles in the throat is positively affected when the head is allowed to be free on the neck. Each muscle achieves its proper length and connection with the others in an optimum state for functioning well. The muscles work together, each set meeting the opposing pull of the other, which allows the larynx to become poised, balanced and properly suspended. The vocal folds are actively lengthened and stretched by this action, and thus brought closer together. In these favourable conditions, they can close properly to execute the sound quickly and efficiently, and thereby produce a clear, clean tone with a minimum amount of effort. The throat is then properly 'open'.

However, relying upon the open throat technique as the cure for all singing problems is potentially short-sighted and problematic, as a 'closed throat' neither causes nor explains all vocal issues.

HOW TO - AND HOW NOT TO - ACHIEVE AN 'OPEN THROAT'

There are many opinions on how to achieve an open throat, and just as many methods of trying to create it. Unfortunately, along with the correct ideas that are backed by real acoustical and anatomical science come strange, ineffective and potentially damaging ones. The popular internet site on which numerous

(Continued on page 5)

SINGING WITH AN 'OPEN THROAT'
(continued)

(Continued from page 4)

voice teachers claiming to be 'experts' on the topic of singing present short video clips containing advice or 'mini lessons' on how to sing is full of such ideas. I've watched video after video of teachers (whose own voices typically sound terrible) demonstrating singing technique that involves overly wide buccal (mouth) openings and other such faulty practices. (A common mistake is equating an open mouth with an open throat. In reality, a jaw that is too low actually places tension on the larynx, lowers the soft palate and inhibits the effective closure of the vocal folds, which is the opposite of the desired effect.)

I am not terribly fond of some of the methods of creating an open throat space, particularly those involving imagery or shaping of the vocal tract that encourages the distortion of vowels. For instance, yawning, which is by far the most popular approach to teaching an open throat, tends to produce an overly open pharyngeal space, and thus a hollow, 'throaty' tone. It also tends to be accompanied by a flattening or retracting of the tongue. Whenever a teacher instructs a student to yawn in order to 'open the throat', he or she overlooks the injurious ramifications of such a technique when it is applied to the tasks of singing. The yawn is not intended as a sustained maneuver for the kind of phonation that occurs during singing. Retaining the posture of a yawn, even just a partial one, during speech or song induces hyperfunction in the submandibular musculature and hinders or prevents natural-sounding voice quality.

Even when students are encouraged to only imagine and generate the first part (beginning) of a yawn, there is the tendency for the opening up to be taken too far, which may include an overly lowered jaw that is accompanied by an unhinging of the jaw joints, as in a full yawn. The tongue generally flattens, pushes back into throat and depresses the larynx, which creates a new obstruction in the singing pathway rather than freeing up the voice. We have all heard others trying to talk while stifling a yawn, and the tone and the diction are both terrible because the natural phonatory laws have been compromised by the incorrect articulation of the words. The mouth should not be overly open while singing.

If the student reaches the point where he or she really feels a hugely open space in the throat - the feeling that he or she is 'swallowing an egg' or some other piece of fruit, for example - it is actually likely that the tongue root is so out of the way of the

mouth cavity that it is depressing the larynx. What is an effort to free up space for the voice to resonate better actually ends up placing tension on the throat, tightening it, and producing a hollow, throaty timbre.

Assuming a facial posture of surprise, as some teach, is just plain silly from both an aesthetic and a practical standpoint, as no singer would ever apply it during a performance because they would both look ridiculous and sound no better. Raising the eyebrows, frowning the brow, creasing the forehead, flaring the nostrils or widening the eyes are not linked to the lifting of the soft palate nor to enhanced resonance balancing. Instead, they produce tension. These exaggerated facial postures are not to be confused with the elevation of the zygomatic muscles of the face that is associated with a more open resonating space.

If a singer would never employ a certain technique during his or her public singing performances, then it is not likely to be a useful tool to use during lessons, and it thus makes no sense to teach it. There are some exceptions, of course, but unnatural facial expressions should never be included in technical training. A singer needs to learn to adopt and vocalize with singing postures that are favourable to resonance balancing and tension-free singing. Correct vocal posturing should be the starting place in vocal training, and a student of voice shouldn't waste his or her time assuming silly facial expressions if that part of his or her technique training will later be done away with.

When I was a new student of voice, the first stage of technique that I learned was what my Bel Canto instructor called 'lifting'. I was taught to assume a pleasant facial expression (not an actual smile) during singing by gently and subtly lifting the cheeks with the zygomatic muscles - those that wrap around the sides of the mouth and lift the corners of the mouth during smiling. I remember my facial muscles quivering and twitching uncontrollably during the singing of my vocal exercises for the first several lessons as I trained them to naturally and more comfortably assume this position. Like most people, my facial muscles had a tendency to pull down somewhat during speech and singing, and the muscles needed to be strengthened and retrained.

Additionally, I was taught to 'inhale' a soft, quiet 'k' sound. (This is kind of like the imagery of 'drinking in the breath' or 'inhaling the breath'.) This technique lifts the soft palate further, separating it from the

(Continued on page 6)

SINGING WITH AN 'OPEN THROAT'
(continued)

(Continued from page 5)

tongue, and lowers the larynx during inhalation. (Inhaling a loud or forceful 'k' sound not only makes for noisy and inefficient breathing, but it also contributes to the build up of tensions.

What I appreciate most about this method of achieving an open throat is how effortless and natural it is for the singer. It is based on anatomical science, since the soft plate naturally rises and the larynx automatically lowers during inhalation, and since a pleasant external facial posture directly affects the position of the soft palate, raising it slightly. (Yes, it's as simple as that.) In my opinion, any teaching on the opening of the throat need not go much further than this simple concept of 'lifting', as it is effective and likely to be sufficient for nearly all students.

The key is learning to maintain this initial 'open' posture of the vocal tract for the duration of the sung phrase, not allowing any tension or constriction to enter the throat. Any persistent issues with 'closed throatedness', which are most prevalent during register changes, particularly as the scale ascends into the upper middle and head registers, can be addressed if they present themselves during vocalizing. (More often than not, these tensions and technical difficulties are the result of a 'naughty tongue' and/or a raised larynx, which will be diagnosed and addressed by a trained vocal instructor.) Otherwise, a singer need only open the resonating spaces of the vocal tract in preparation for singing and then continue vocalizing with freedom in the throat.

One helpful technique for ensuring that the resonating spaces are open is using the neutral vowel 'uh' in the larynx and pharynx - that is, assuming this shape within the throat - before bringing focus into the tone and singing the desired vowel. This technique allows the open pharynx to be established first. The brilliance of the tone can then follow while the open feeling in the throat is retained. For training purposes, it often helps to actually sing the 'uh' sound, then position the tongue appropriately for the desired vowel. Sing 'uh-[e]-uh-[i]-uh-[o]-uh-[u]' repeatedly on a single breath, aiming to maintain the openness of the 'uh' while singing the other pure Italian vowels. Starting with [a] is also good, as it is a similar vowel form to the 'uh'. Once this exercise becomes easier, the student can then

'open the throat' using the (silent) 'uh' position, quickly move the tongue and the lips into position for the desired vowel, and begin to phonate on the vowel. For example, start with the 'uh' posture in the larynx and then bring the tongue forward and up as in the [i] vowel. In time, this technique will come naturally, requiring little pause for thought, and the student will be able to vocalize with an open acoustical space.

It has been my observation that whenever too much attention is drawn to what must happen at the back of the throat (the pharynx) and the larynx while singing, exaggerated results, along with unwanted tensions, are produced. I've had students come into my studio who have been taught by their previous teachers to focus so much of their attention on consciously attempting to manipulate the position of their larynxes and on actively 'opening their throats' that they end up experiencing a lot of tension in the jaw, neck and tongue, as well as a feeling of tightness and discomfort in the throat. In an effort to create more space, pharyngeal tension results as the tongue gets pushed back, and a hollow, throaty sound is produced. Registration, particularly the transition into head voice, becomes impossible because the root of the tongue depresses the larynx when it should otherwise be 'rocking' or 'tilting'.

The greatest danger of this imbalanced teaching philosophy, though, is that many students are only being offered incomplete information about vocal science and good technique. Their teachers encourage them to open their throats and lower their larynxes, but they don't actually tell them how to do so correctly and naturally, and they don't pay attention to the other components of the vocal tract, such as the tongue, that could be contributing to closed throatedness and tension. When singers attempt to locally enlarge the space in the throat, they do not actually create more space. Instead, they simply rearrange the components of the vocal tract, mostly in disregard of the laws of acoustics. When they attempt to spread the pharyngeal wall, for example, they end up tensing it. In the end, the students fail to progress and find vocal freedom because they haven't been given enough accurate information, and more harm is done than good. Stressed out and frustrated students with poor tone and unhealthy technique are the results.

The fact of the matter is that a singer needn't do anything substantially different with the jaw, mouth, tongue or larynx during singing within speech-

(Continued on page 7)

SINGING WITH AN 'OPEN THROAT' (continued)

(Continued from page 6)

inflection range - the range of notes that a singer would use during normal speech - than what he or she would do while speaking within the same range of pitches, (unless his or her speaking technique is also faulty). There must be constant flexibility during articulation, which is impossible to achieve if the throat is being forced to remain in one (unnatural) position during singing or speech. Instead, the spacial arrangements of the pharynx and the mouth should follow the phonetic requirements of linguistic communication. Unnatural adjustments of the vocal-tract during singing should be avoided, although some modifications of this principle occur when a vocalist sings above speech-inflection range (i.e., head register). (I explain this further in the section that discusses the unique acoustical circumstances of the female upper register in the follow-up to this article, to be posted on this site in mid June of 2009.)

In the following sections, I will focus more directly on the natural and ideal positions of the vocal tract while singing, as well as some popular, though incorrect, ways of shaping the articulators. In Part II of this article, I will examine vowels and vowel modification, and explain the concept of formants in relation to tone balance and how they are directly affected by specific vocal tract shaping.

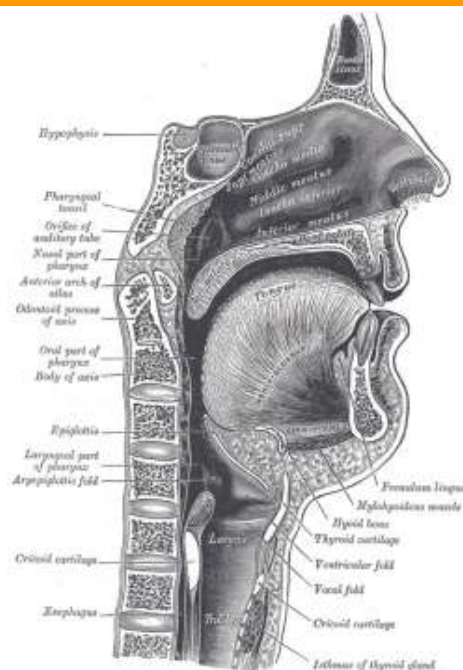
First, however, I'd like to discuss the anatomy of the throat so that the location and structure of the individual components are not a mystery to my readers.

VOCAL TRACT ANATOMY

To help my readers better visualize the structure of the throat and understand the anatomy terminology that I will refer to in this article, I have included diagrams for study and reference. The first shows the entire vocal tract in profile. The second diagram narrows in on the structures of the larynx ('voice box'). The third diagram shows the basic structure of the soft plate and its location inside the oral cavity.

ANATOMY OF THE VOCAL TRACT

from the 20th U.S. edition of Gray's Anatomy of the Human Body



The throat, which generally refers to both the pharynx and the larynx, is a ring-like muscular tube that acts as the passageway for air, food and liquid. It is located behind the nose and mouth, and connects the mouth (oral cavity) and nose to the breathing passages (trachea/ 'windpipe' and lungs) and the esophagus (eating tube). The throat also helps in forming speech.

The throat consists of the tonsils and adenoids, the pharynx, the larynx, the epiglottis and the subglottic space.

The tonsils and adenoids are made up of lymph tissue, and both help to fight infections. Tonsils are located at the back and sides of the mouth and adenoids are located behind the nose.

The pharynx is the muscle-lined space that connects the nose and mouth to the larynx and esophagus. The pharynx extends from the base of the skull to the sixth cervical vertebra, with pharyngeal dimensions determined by the structure of the individual. The pharynx consists of three parts: the nasopharynx, lying above the lower border of the soft palate; the oropharynx, located between the soft palate and the upper region of the epiglottis, and opening out into the buccal (mouth) cavity through the palatoglossal arches - the velar region; and the laryngopharynx, extending from the top of the epiglottis to the bottom of the cricoid cartilage - the lower border of the larynx. The posterior larynx projects into the laryngopharynx.

(Continued on page 8)

SINGING WITH AN 'OPEN THROAT' (continued)

(Continued from page 7)

THE LARYNX from Wikimedia Commons (Olek Remesz)



(I have also written an article detailing the structure and function of the larynx, which includes many of the structures discussed only briefly here in the paragraphs that follow.)

The larynx, also known colloquially as the 'voice box', functions as an airway to the lungs, and also provides us with a way of communicating (vocalizing). It is a cylindrical grouping of cartilages (including the thyroid, cricoid and arytenoid), muscles and soft tissue that contains the vocal folds, which produce the voice by their vibrations when they are stretched and a current of air passes between them.

The larynx is the expanded upper opening of the trachea (windpipe). The thyroid cartilage, attached to the hyoid bone or cartilage, makes the protuberance on the front of the neck known as the Adam's apple (or Eve's apple in women), and is connected below to the ring-like cricoid cartilage. This is narrow in front and high behind, where, within the thyroid, it is surmounted by the two arytenoid cartilages, from which the vocal folds pass forward to be attached together to the front of the thyroid.

From the outside of the neck, the larynx can be seen to rise when we swallow and lower when we

inhale. Some elevation during phonation is often seen, as well.

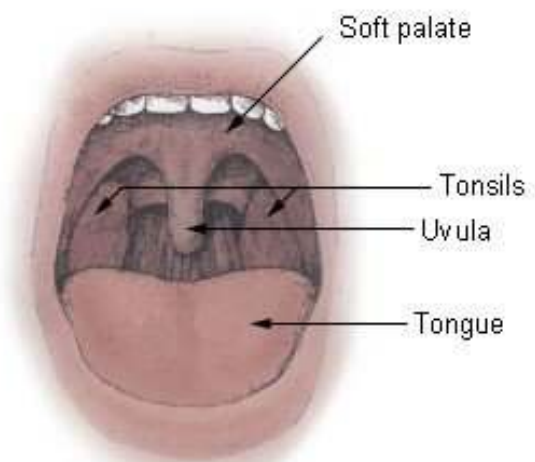
The larynx is connected to the pharynx by an opening - the glottis (the vocal folds and the space between them) - which, in mammals, is protected by a lid-like epiglottis.

The epiglottis is a small flap of soft tissue and elastic cartilage that acts to cover the upper opening to the larynx whenever we swallow. It folds back and down to guard and protect the entrance to the larynx, thus preventing food, drink and irritants from entering the respiratory tract. (The larynx also aids in this closing by drawing upward and forward to close off the trachea, or windpipe, when the hyoid bone elevates during swallowing.) Food and drink are then directed to the esophagus (eating tube) instead. After each swallow, the epiglottis returns to its upright resting position - the larynx also returns to rest - allowing air to flow freely through the larynx and into (and out of) the rest of the respiratory system. The epiglottis is one of three unpaired cartilages of the larynx, the others being the thyroid and cricoid cartilages, and is one of nine cartilaginous structures that make up the larynx.

Subglottic space refers to the space immediately below the vocal folds. It is the narrowest part of the upper airway.

Supraglottic space refers to the space immediately above the vocal folds.

SOFT PALATE from the National Institutes of Health



(Continued on page 9)

SINGING WITH AN 'OPEN THROAT' (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

The soft palate (or velum, or muscular palate) is the soft tissue that makes up the back of the roof of the mouth. It is suspended from the posterior, or rear, border of the hard palate, forming the roof of the mouth. The structure is movable, is composed of mucous membranes, muscular fibres (sheathed in the mucous membranes), and mucous glands, and is responsible for closing off the nasal passages from the oral cavity during swallowing and sucking (and during the speaking and singing of nonnasal sounds).

The soft palate is distinguished from the hard palate at the front of the mouth in that it does not contain bone.

When the soft palate rises, as in swallowing, it separates the nasal cavity and nasopharynx from the posterior part of the oral cavity and oral portion of the pharynx. In sucking, the soft palate and posterior superior surface of the tongue occlude the oral cavity from the oropharynx, creating a posterior seal that prevents the escape of fluid and food up through the nose and, with the tongue, allows fluid and food to collect in the mouth until swallowed. During sneezing, it protects the nasal passage by diverting a part of the unwanted substance to the mouth.

The soft palate's motion during breathing is responsible for the sound of snoring. Touching the soft palate evokes a strong gag reflex in most people.

The soft palate retracts and elevates during speech to separate the oral cavity (mouth) from the nasal cavity in order to produce oral speech sounds. If this separation is incomplete, air escapes through the nose, causing the speech to be perceived as hyper nasally. In the case of nasal consonants and vowels, it lowers to allow the velopharyngeal port to open.

The 'fauces' are defined as the lateral walls of the oropharynx that are located medial to (through the middle of) the palatoglossal folds. The areas lateral to (to the sides of) the palatoglossal fold are not the fauces. The term 'fauces' refers to the narrow passage from the mouth to the pharynx (sometimes call the 'isthmus of the fauces') that is

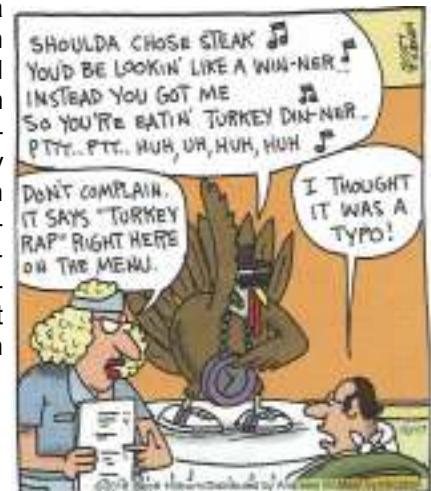
situated between the velum and the posterior portion of the tongue. The fauces are bordered by the soft palate, the palatine arches, and the base of the tongue. Two muscular folds - the pillars of the fauces - lie on either side of the passage.

The uvula, (Latin for 'little grape'), is a fleshy piece of muscle, tissue and mucous membrane that hangs down from the soft palate. When we swallow, as well as when we say or sing nonnasal (oral) vowels and consonants, such as "Ah", the uvula flips backward and upward, which helps close off the nasal passages (at the velopharyngeal port), preventing unwanted nasality from entering the tone.

When the zygomatic muscles are raised during inhalation, the fauces elevate as well, thus playing an important role in 'opening the throat'.

The two zygomatic muscles (major and minor) have their points of origin on the zygomatic bone and insert in the skin and muscle at the corners of the mouth. The zygomatic muscles retract and pull the lip corners upwards.

The zygomatic major is a paired muscle of facial expression that extends from each zygomatic arch (cheekbone) to the corners of the mouth. It blends with fibres of the levator anguli oris, the orbicularis oris, and the depressor anguli oris. Its participation in facial expression is determined by the emotion to be expressed. It draws the angles of the mouth superiorly and posteriorly, raising the corners of the mouth when a person smiles. It draws the angles of the mouth upwards and, as in full laughter, laterally. Like all muscles of facial expression, the zygomatic major is innervated by the facial nerve. The minor and major zygomatic muscles (assisted by the levator muscles) can raise the fascia between the lips and the maxilla (area between the lips and cheeks), much as when a fragrance is slowly inhaled through the nose, producing a pleasant facial expression, but not a full-blown smile.



MAGIC CHORAL TRICK #392 LOW REGISTER BUBBLING WARM UP

by Janet Kidd

from betterchoirs.wordpress.com

Many thanks to my friend Jill Woodley for revitalizing my enthusiasm for warming up the voice by bubbling.



She told my chorus that she's discovered that bubbling (or doing a lip trill) for the length of an entire song, sung in your low register works the best.

Although I've always realized the value of the technique I'm not sure I've ever done it for the full length of Billy Joel's *The Longest Time* – a fittingly appropriate reminder for the recommended duration of the exercise.

And bubbling it in a low register kept everything so relaxed that our voices warmed up significantly faster. (Yes – this is a rangy song, but easily manageable if the first note is right near the bottom of your range)

However, for the folks who simply cannot bubble in a relaxed, easy way I've tried a very gentle Zzz instead – and as long as the Zzz is kept light and very legato it works almost as well.

I've done this now with several of my groups in their Zoom rehearsals. Three minutes on Zoom seems like an eternity, but that amount of low bubbling was enough to get almost everyone to a self reported warmed up level of 7 or 8 out of 10. Sometimes I just had them bubble through a simple song multiple times (you don't have to use Billy Joel's song)

We tested for warm up level by singing through *You Are My Sunshine* to see how everything was feeling.

After that it took only another minute or so of bubbling or lightly Zzzing a simple two or three note exercise for people to start reporting that their voices were warmed up to a 9 or 10 out of 10.

All in less than 5 minutes!!

WALKING THE DOG

by Brody McDonald

from choirbites.com



I used to have a dog. His name was Marcus, and he was a black miniature schnauzer. That's his picture. Marcus and I got into the habit of taking long walks when he was younger, and during those walks I listened to a lot of things - podcasts, radio shows, and music on which my choirs

were working. My a cappella group, *Eleventh Hour*, was allowed to suggest songs for consideration in our set. I loaded all those suggestions into a playlist, and when I walked Marcus, I would listen... with one goal in mind: musical intimacy.

I set the playlist so that each song would play on repeat. At the start of the dog-walk, I'd start listening to a song over and over again. If I liked the song enough that I could listen to it on repeat through the ENTIRE dog-walk, it would move into serious consideration for arrangement.

I have often stressed to my a cappella groups/choirs that if they are performing a piece of music, they need to be intimately familiar with the end product. There's so much to be learned from listening to a polished, professional performance of the piece you are preparing. Since everyone is busy, I now suggest that my singers do what I did: build a playlist of the material on which you are working, and listen to it - over and over. On dog-walks. In the car. While doing homework. In the shower. I don't care when or how or where, just listen to it a lot. On repeat. And listen for more understanding each time. Go deep.

Form, style, dynamics, tuning, diction, rhythm, balance, and so much more become obvious when one is familiar with the polished end product. Architects not only create blueprints, but renderings of the final project so that everyone involved can see what they are building. Cookbooks contain photos of completed dishes... nailed it!

As musicians, we must become intimate with the music we are striving to create, so we know best how to direct our practice efforts. When we are intimate with the music we are striving to perform, errors of execution are much easier to spot in the crucial early stages of learning.

A COUNTERINTUITIVE WAY TO BUILD CONFIDENCE, A TINY BIT EACH DAY

by Dr Noa Kageyama
from bulletproofmusician.com

When you look at your to-do list for the day, and think about where to begin, what tasks seem the most attractive to you? Do you like to start with the easy tasks, and build up some momentum before taking on the more difficult tasks? Or do you prefer to get the biggest, most dreaded task out of the way first, so it's all downhill from there?



There's an old saying that "If it's your job to eat a frog, it's best to do it first thing in the morning. And if it's your job to eat two frogs, it's best to eat the biggest one first."

Productivity gurus often reference this saying, suggesting that "eating the frog first" helps to not only increase productivity, but also build confidence.

And when it comes to productivity, one probably could make a strong case for frog first (though I think there's also something to be said for minimizing friction, by starting with the easiest task). But what about confidence?

If the primary goal is to build confidence and a sense of self-efficacy (i.e. how confident you are in your ability to achieve a goal), is it better to go through your tasks from easy-to-difficult? Or difficult-to-easy?

Analogy challenges

A pair of UC Berkeley researchers (Habbert & Schroeder, 2020) recruited 200 participants to complete some word puzzles.

Specifically, they were presented with three rounds of six analogies – an easy set where most people get all or nearly all correct, a medium set where most folks get about half correct, and a difficult set where most people are hard pressed to get more than one correct.

If you can remember taking the SAT's way back when, this will be familiar, but it looked something

like this:

"Orange is to fruit as _____ is to vegetable"

- a) apple
- b) rabbit
- c) carrot
- d) house

(The correct answer is carrot)

Which method did people predict would lead to more confidence?

Then the participants were presented with a series of questions that asked them to predict how confident they would feel after completing the word puzzles in a particular order. Like "If you were assigned to see the practice rounds from easy to medium to hard, how confident do you think you would feel about answering analogies correctly, after completing all three rounds?" Or "If you were assigned to see the practice rounds from hard to medium to easy, how much would you trust your ability to answer analogies correctly, after completing all three rounds?"

Preferred order

The participants were also asked what order they would prefer to complete the analogies in, if their goal was to maximize confidence:

"Your goal is to feel the most confident and the most skillful after completing all three rounds of these analogies. To achieve this goal, in which order would you prefer to see the practice rounds?" Easy, then medium, then hard? Or hard, then medium, then easy?

Results

Most participants predicted that their sense of efficacy would be greater if they completed the analogies from easy-to-difficult. So it's not surprising that most (60%) said that this is the order they would prefer to do the puzzles in.

So were they right? Would completing analogies from easy-to-difficult lead to greater confidence than doing them from difficult-to-easy?

Which method actually led to more confidence?

(Continued on page 12)

BUILD CONFIDENCE (continued)

(Continued from page 11)

The researchers recruited a new set of 363 participants, who were randomly assigned to one of three groups. An easy-to-difficult group, a difficult-to-easy group, and a control group.

The easy-to-difficult group completed the easy analogies first, then medium, then hard. The difficult-to-easy group on the other hand, did the hard analogies first, then medium, then easy. The control group's analogies were all mixed up – each round had 2 analogies of each difficulty level, presented in random order.

Self-efficacy ratings

Before testing began, and again after each round, the participants were asked to answer questions related to their sense of efficacy. Questions like “How skilled do you think you are at these analogy tasks?”, “How confident do you feel about these analogy tasks?”, and “How much do you trust your ability to answer these analogy tasks correctly?” – where 1=not at all skilled/confident and 10=very skilled/confident/much.

So did the order of tasks make any difference?

Results

In terms of performance, there was no difference between groups. As in, whether participants started with the easy analogies or difficult analogies, their scores were all about the same (10.23 out of 18 for the easy-to-difficult group, and 10.60 for the difficult-to-easy group, and 10.39 for the control group).

Interestingly, even though there was no real difference in performance between the groups, it was a different story when it came to confidence.

The group that started with the difficult analogies and ended with the easy analogies reported feeling significantly more confident and efficacious by the end of their practice, than the group that started with easy analogies and ended with the most challenging ones (6.13/10 vs. 4.62/10). While the control group's efficacy ratings were right between the two (5.26/10).

So what are we to take away from all of this?

What does this all mean?

Well, the study suggests that our natural preferences and assumptions about what builds confidence may need adjusting.

That while we may prefer to start with our easiest tasks and gradually work our way toward the most difficult ones, it may be more confidence-enhancing to start with our biggest challenges, and end with the lowest hanging fruit.

But...why?

Psychological momentum

Well, research in tennis, basketball, and rowing have found that a string of successes and tiny wins leads to a greater feeling of “positive momentum” and self-efficacy than wins that are more evenly spaced out, or multiple losses in a row.

So it may be that our most recent successes, and how we end, has a greater impact on our confidence and sense of effectiveness than how we begin.

Caveats

That said, you're not going to build much confidence if you procrastinate so much that by the time you get around to practicing, it's late in the day, and you're too tired to be effective at much of anything.

So while building confidence and self-efficacy is nice and all, if getting started is the primary challenge you're facing, beginning the day with your easiest task might be the best way to reduce friction (umm... chocolate cake for breakfast vs. eating the frog first?).

And then, once you've built up a little momentum, maybe this is the point at which it makes sense to take on the gnarliest, most difficult challenge on your todo list. After which you can proceed in order of descending difficulty, ending with the easy tasks that make you feel pretty awesome about yourself, and totally deserving of some guacamole to go with your overstuffed Chipotle burrito.

References

Habbert, R., & Schroeder, J. (2020). To build efficacy, eat the frog first: People misunderstand how the difficulty-ordering of tasks influences efficacy. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 91, 104032. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2020.104032>

A VOICE TEACHER'S 4 TIPS FOR RELAXING YOUR SINGING MUSCLES

by Andrew Byrne
from backstage.com

Our brains do crazy things to our bodies when we're nervous. How many of you have experienced shaking limbs, sweaty palms, and panicked breathing when the pressure is on? For a singer or an actor, one of the most troubling aspects of getting nervous is a throat that tightens up. We have a series of muscles that run down the back of our throats called constrictors, and they contract when the "fight or flight" response kicks in from our sympathetic nervous system. These constrictor muscles are very strong and are part of swallowing; to get a sense of how much you don't want these muscles on when you're singing or speaking, just try to talk and swallow at the same time. Not so easy, right?

There are lots of great ways to release muscle tension, like meditation, mobility work, and awareness modalities such as the Alexander technique. Another great thing to try is a laryngeal massage. Many performers aren't even aware of what the structures of the larynx (voice box) are, so learning to do some self-massage can help to reduce strain and also make you more knowledgeable about your throat. The rules of this practice are:

- Be precise with your movements.
- Use firm pressure, but not enough to cause pain.
- Assess and reassess after each part of the massage. Pick a phrase to sing or speak before and after you work with each body part. Use your voice to notice improvements.
- Keep track of what works for you, and repeat these massage elements before you perform.

Jaw

There are three jaw muscles that exert a great influence on the larynx. The first is the masseter, which clenches your jaw. To massage this muscle, run your thumbs down the sides of your cheekbones in front of your ears, from your temples to the bottom of your jaw. Now find the pterygoid muscles, which are attached below your cheekbones and help you with chewing. Make small circles in this area in both directions. Finally, take

your hands above your ears on both sides to find your temporal muscles. (If you open and close your mouth, you'll feel movement here.) Make broad circles here in both directions.

Tongue

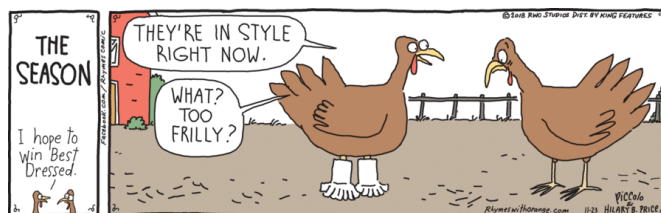
Place both thumbs underneath your chin and make circles in this area (the root of your tongue). Now stick your tongue out and repeat the circles. Try this with the tip of the tongue pointing down and then the tip pointing up.

Hyoid bone

The hyoid bone is a U-shaped bone in the crook of your chin that attaches to the larynx. If you're male, find your Adam's apple (thyroid cartilage) with your finger and move your finger up a little. Then, press back until you feel a bone. If you're female, it's easier to start with your finger on the cricoid cartilage (a protruding bump about in the middle of your throat), and then move up to the thyroid cartilage and eventually the hyoid. Once you are there, put your finger and thumb on the bone (slide your finger and thumb backward from the front of the bone—it will feel firm under your fingers) and move it side to side.

Larynx

Take the backs of your hands on either side of your throat, and move the larynx from side to side (the backs of your hands should be touching the middle part of your neck). Notice if your larynx moves easier to one side or the other. Now, hold the larynx to your right and take several slow, deep breaths through your nose. Repeat to the left.





Here's a simple way to financially support the Big Orange Chorus, at no cost to you! If you shop on amazon.com you can sign up for the Amazon Smile program, and designate the Big O as your charity of choice. Then anytime you make a purchase on Amazon (Smile), they make a donation to us! No cost to you, and a donation to us: win win!

To sign up, visit smile.amazon.com/ch/59-1981228 and sign in to your Amazon account.

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Thanks in advance!!

FlipGive

Here's a simple way to financially support the Big Orange Chorus, at no cost to you! If you shop at any of the more than 400 merchants or like to purchase eGift Cards, FlipGive will give us back from 1% to 20%, depending on the merchant.

To sign up, visit <https://www.flipgive.com/f/570688> and start shopping.

Thanks in advance!!

Editor's Note: The latest version of the Amazon app (both android and iOS) now has an option to activate smile in the app, so that you can get the charity donations for purchases made in the app (if you enable it). Open the app and find 'Settings' in the main menu. Tap on 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to turn on AmazonSmile on your phone.

CHAPTER QUARTETS



On Point

Dillon Tidwell, tenor
Daniel Pesante, lead
Timothy Keatley, baritone
Alex Burney, bass

Slice!

Terry Ezell, tenor
Eric Grimes, lead
Jason Dearing, baritone
Ryan Feeney, bass

No Name Yet

? tenor
? lead
? baritone
? bass



FREE YOUR VOICE

by John Newell, Lead, *Realtime*
from Let It Out ©2013 Used by permission

Your staple liquid intake should be plain water. Not juice or fizzy drinks or coffee or flavoured water. Drink plain water every day, not just at performance time. Starting a hydration program on the day of a performance is too late. Proper hydration should begin weeks before a big performance, if it is not done already in daily life.

There is a saying: 'pee clear, sing clear' or 'pee pale, sing clear' or other variations. Your urine should be as pale as possible. Unless you recently consumed a lot of vitamin B, yellow urine can mean you have not consumed enough water. The brighter or darker the yellow, the more water you need.

Consuming alcoholic drinks should be minimized or even avoided. Do not believe any old wives' tales about certain alcoholic drinks being good for your voice. They are not.

As for your food, eat what you know is good for you. This includes using nutritional information we learn through our lives about the foods that are 'good' and those that are 'bad'. Use experience and sensations as a guide. Eat what makes you feel good, alert, and balanced. Avoid foods that give you're a quick burst of energy or alertness but then produce a 'crash' after. Notice the effect various foods have on your general well-being and on your voice. You may wish to eliminate or reduce eating foods that cause you acid reflux, excess phlegm, dry mouth, dehydration, lethargy, hyperactivity, sleeplessness, bowel irritation, a sense of heaviness, ... you get the picture.

Try to avoid junk food and fast food. Such food is dreadful for general health and can cause problems for your voice, also. A poor diet can definitely affect your singing in a negative way. Good diet will not make you're a more skilful singer, but it can help your vocal stamina and consistency. Avoid, or eat in moderation, foods that are heavily processed and high in salt, sugar, and chemical additives. Whole fresh foods are better for general health and better for good singing.

For me personally, I know I should eat a diet full of fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and lean proteins.

The importance of good diet was driven home to me recently after I completed an intensive three-month fitness program. During the following three weeks, I attended a convention, went camping with my family, and enjoyed some relaxing vacation time at home. While I did not gain weight and I maintained my strength, the three weeks of 'relaxed' diet affected my mental motivation when I returned to working out. I felt lethargic during the workout, sometimes a little dizzy, and wanted to give up. If poor diet can do this to my workout concentration and motivation, imagine what it can do to my singing. Imagine what it can do to my voice over a long period of time.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Yvonne DeBandi
from a2z-singing-tips.com

G = Guessing Games. Never guess the pitch you are about to sing. Hear the note in your head before you open your mouth.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Nicole LeGault
from a2z-singing-tips.com

G is for Grace. When singing, the sound should flow with ease - do not force. Volume comes from the manner in which the sound resonates, and each note has its "happy place". Even to sing with a raunchy sound is a manner of technique, not force.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Mick Walsh
from a2z-singing-tips.com

G. Guide your voice to where you want it to go. Our bodies (very conveniently I think) are full of nooks and crannies where, with careful guidance we can change the sound, timbre and resonance of our voices. Find out where these places are and experiment placing the sounds in different areas of your head and chest. Try singing like Yogi Bear, (with an open throat) then try as if you are looking over the top of a pair of glasses. Notice any difference? actually where are my glasses?

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Teri Danz
from a2z-singing-tips.com

G=Get out there-- The best way to create your own style as a singer is to do it. If you're a beginner, work with nurturing people (and a coach). You can play coffeehouses, open mikes, sing with friends, but just get started.



QUARTET CORNER

Our quartets are practicing social distancing.

What is YOUR quartet doing? Don't have one? Find three other guys and start one! Can't find a match? Drop me a line and I'll run a list of guys looking to quartet up here in the bulletin. It's one of those really fun things that you don't fully understand until you've done it.

It's never too early to be thinking about Singing Valentines. Quartets are always needed, officially formed or pickup. It's only a few easy songs. Learning more than one voice part to these songs can help make you easier to fit into a quartet.



CHAPTER MEMBER STATS

The following are our current membership statistics:

type	active	lapsed
Lifetime 50-Year	1	0
Lifetime Regular	0	0
Regular	17	1
Senior 50-Year	4	0
Senior Legacy	1	0
Senior	11	0
Youth 1st year	0	1
Youth	4	0

Total Membership	38	2
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PAST DUE MEMBERS

The following members are listed separately on the BHS website as past due or within two weeks of due. They will automatically be removed from the society roll at 30 days overdue.

Ryan Feeney
Howdy Russell

COMING DUE MEMBERS

The following members are coming due in the next 60 days.

Eric Grimes

Big Orange Chorus

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Thu	05 Nov	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	12 Nov	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	19 Nov	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	26 Nov	No Rehearsal, Thanksgiving
Thu	03 Dec	St Mark's Episcopal
Thu	10 Dec	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	17 Dec	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	24 Dec	No Rehearsal, Christmas
Thu	31 Dec	No Rehearsal, New Year

BIRTHDAYS

James Hughes	11 Nov
Brett Flowers	15 Nov
Chuck Griffith	24 Nov

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Sat	24 Oct	Sunshine Fall Conv. Cancelled
Fri	04 Dec	Christmas Show
??	?? Dec	Christmas Show(s)
Sat	10 Apr	Sunshine Spring Convention

⇒ **BIG O BUCK\$** ⇐

BIG O BUCKS SCHEDULE

Sat	07 Nov	Florida v Georgia
Sun	08 Nov	Jags v Houston Texans
Sun	22 Nov	Jags v Pittsburgh Steelers
Sun	29 Nov	Jags v Cleveland Browns
Sun	13 Dec	Jags v Tennessee Titans
Sun	27 Dec	Jags v Chicago Bears

...more to come

See Mike Sobolewski to help fund your experience

I'll talk to anyone about anything,
but sooner or later I'll tell him I sing.
I'll invite him to visit on Thursday night
and if he likes what he hears, he just might
become a member and maybe
he'll bring another good man
who likes to sing.

RECENT GUESTS

Chuck Cashin	Jim Akers
Willy Vidmar	Mike Morgan
Dale Pratt	Hudson Pratt
Dan Newsom	Trans Maynard
Asrul Dawson	Bill Caruso
Ethan Erastain	Alex White
Tristan Arthurs	Mark Murillo
Josve Jorpe-Silva	Roger Erestaine
Jon Greene	Jim Harper
Ron Blewett	Dave Scott Sr
G Lane	Brandon Edwards
Joe McLean	Adom Panshukian
Christian Cornella-Carlson	

WELCOME

NEWEST MEMBERS

John Kauffman	Feb
Ryan Feeney	Oct
Joe Williams	Oct
Ian Le	Sep
Hunter Stanford	May
Tom Frutchey	Apr
Dillon Tidwell	Apr
David Scott	Feb

2020 DIRECTING TEAM



Jay Giallombardo
Front Line
Director

PHOTO
NOT
AVAILABLE

vacant
Assistant
Director



Chuck Griffith
Director
Emeritus

2020 OTHER CHAPTER LEADERS



Dave Walker
Uniform
Manager

PHOTO
NOT
AVAILABLE

vacant
Chorus
Manager



John Alexander
Bulletin
Editor



Frank Nosalek
Webmaster &
Technology

PHOTO
NOT
AVAILABLE

vacant
Show
Chairman



Mike Sobolewski
Big O Bucks
Coordinator

EDITOR'S NOTE

Article and column submissions are solicited.
Help make this a better bulletin. Send me stuff!
The deadline for December is 26 November.
Items without a byline are from the Editor.

The Orange Spiel
John Alexander, Editor
2429 Southern Links Dr
Fleming Island FL 32003

Back issues are available online at:
www.bigorangechorus.com/newsarchive.htm
More specific and timely performance information
is in my weekly sheet, *Orange Zest*.

**Print off two copies
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your family and
one with someone
you are bringing to
a chapter meeting.
Let them know they
belong here!**

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**IMAGINE 80 MEN ON THE RISERS
BE A SINGER-BRINGER**



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