



# The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



Volume 41 Issue 6

June 2021

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
Big O Returning To Live Rehearsals	1
Editorial	2
Chapter Eternal	3
Two Voices	4
How To Develop Better Internal Rhythm	5-7
Magic Choral Trick #383	7
Good Singing Is Measured By Feeling	8
How Your Group Can Make 'Em Laugh	9-10
The Circle Of (Almost) Fifths	11
Learn To Love Your Voice	12-13
Chapter Quartets	14
Free Your Voice	15
Free Singing Tips	15
Quartet Corner	16
Upcoming Schedules	17
Birthdays / Guests / New Members	17
Directing Team / Other Leaders	18
Chapter Officers / Music Team	19

## BIG O RETURNING TO LIVE REHEARSALS

The Big Orange Chorus will be returning to live, in-person rehearsals on Thursday June 10. We'll be meeting on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month at 7pm



# WANTED!!

## MEN WHO LIKE TO SING!



## 2021 Board of Directors

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## 2021 Committees

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Community Outreach:  
vacant

Show Chairman:  
vacant

**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

I really hope y'all have been singing. We've only gotten together, physically, a few times in over a year, and not everybody showed up. Your voice is a muscle, use it or lose it. Warm ups are a must, singing songs (especially keeping our repertoire fresh), learning new songs (we've got a few on the list that it'd be good to already know when we do start back in earnest) these are all extremely important. We could even be trying to form new quartets.

We've started experimenting with Jamulus, a free-ware program that allows real-time, live audio jamming. We should be able to rehearse with everybody hearing each other, from home. Lots of choruses and bands are using it. Check it out.

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.

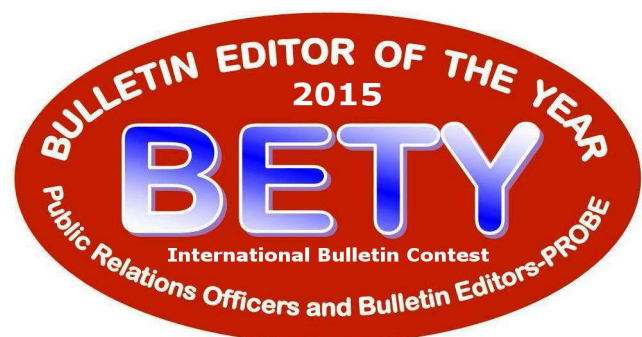
Please check in on our Zoom sessions, even if it's only to see each other and say, "Hi." It's important for us to connect with each other.

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.





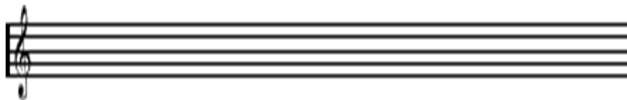
## CHAPTER ETERNAL



### Charles Lynn Griffith



Charles "Chuck" Lynn Griffith passed away on April 23, 2021 at the age of 75 due to complications of Parkinson's disease. Chuck battled this disease for 27 years.

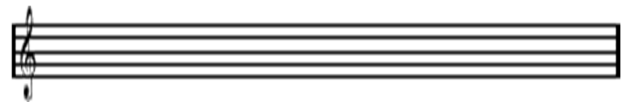


Chuck was born November 29, 1945 in Pasadena, California, the son of Robert and Lone Griffith. He graduated from Ribault High School in 1963 and received training at MIT to become a successful National Accounts Manager before retiring from AT&T in 1989. Afterwards he took on a similar position with Sprint for five years where he attained

the distinction of being part of the Pinnacle Club and Achievers' Club. He was an avid Florida Gators fan and loved watching them play football, basketball and baseball. Chuck's drive, determination and perseverance helped him to become a black belt in Tang Soo Do karate and to finish races which included the River Run, the Disney Half Marathon and local 5Ks. He rescued several cats and dogs. He loved to hike in the national parks, play golf, fish for bass in the river and surf fish for whiting at Hanna Park. He also loved to mountain bike, NASCAR and drive high performance cars. Chuck had an artistic eye and, along with his handyman skills and ability to visualize, created a beautiful home for his wife of 32 years, Stephanie. Chuck is survived by his brother Dennis (Rita), and by his first marriage to Evelyn Baker (Dale), mother of his son Vince (Kellie), and daughters Julie Stanton (Brad) and Angie Byerly, many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Chuck was a great dancer, which included clogging, beach bop and square dancing. He was gifted musician first playing the violin and then the clarinet and baritone saxophone in the Ribault High School band. He was also in the symphonic and jazz bands and became student conductor in his senior year. Chuck also sang in Ribault's chorus and later worked as minister of music in many local churches on an interim basis while they searched for full time directors. In 1980, Chuck became the founding director of the Big Orange Barbershop Chorus. He produced, choreographed and directed many shows at UNF, the Florida Theatre, the Performing Arts Center and other local venues. He brought his chorus to such a high level of quality sound and creative stage presence, the Big O won SPEBSQSA state competitions many times and qualified to compete at the international level. Chuck also became a sound judge, judging chorus and quartet contests in various cities in the US and Stockholm, Sweden and was sought after by other choruses and quartets for coaching, traveling to London and Ottawa to share his talent at no charge.

A Celebration of Life was held on May 8, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at Hardage-Giddens Funeral Home of Mandarin, 11801 San Jose Blvd, Jacksonville, Florida 32223. In lieu of flowers please make donations to The Michael J. Fox Foundation.





**TWO VOICES**

by Brody McDonald  
from choirbites.com



My hands are up like sock puppets. The class is too young to really know the full impact of Robin Williams, but nonetheless I feel like I'm channeling him. My left hand moves and I speak in a casual, low voice: "Hey... what's up?" My right hand moves and I sing a forte AAAAAHHH on a B-flat. Not a high B-flat. I'm not channeling Pavarotti.

Why is this happening?

Some years back I got good and tired of my choirs sounding great, then losing their tone after a rest. I noticed that if one phrase ended and the next phrase came in on the same note (or higher), there were scoops up to pitch, or just lackluster tone. WHERE DID IT GO? IT WAS JUST THERE!!!

It hit me like a ton of bricks. At the beginning of the song, the singers were purposeful with their singing. Over time they would mentally slip. During rests, they allowed their singing voice to fall back down into speaking position. (I know we could go down a pedagogy rabbit hole here; stay with me.)

What helped me realize this was when I would have the students count rhythms. In the absence of pitch, it was like the entire choir was comprised of James Earl Joneses. (Now I say "chant" the rhythm so they know to stay out of the basement, or just have them count-sing on a unison pitch, but I digress.) My experience with middle- and high-school singers is

that most of them talk in the bottom of their ranges.

Back to my hands. I tell the choir they have a speaking voice and a singing voice. I demonstrate. Then I ask them to make the two different sounds when I cue them with my hands. We go back and forth. "Hey, what's up?" "AAAAHHHH" "Hey... what's up?" "AAAAHHHH" Back and forth, faster and faster. I shake up the pattern at the end so they are tricked and laugh.

Then I ask them: "Can you feel the effort it takes to shift from speaking to singing voice? You must engage quickly, right? IT WOULD BE FAR EASIER TO JUST MAINTAIN SINGING VOICE POSITION THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE SONG. And that means across each breath, and then also to be mindful during long rests." It's a bit of a mental trick, an awareness builder... but it works for me.

### Barbershopping is not a Spectator Sport.

#### Be a Part of it!

- Be at all rehearsals
- Learn your music
- Participate in rehearsal activities
- Bring a guest
- Volunteer to help your chapter
- Form a quartet (formal or informal)



*Look Here Guys,  
Do The Write Thing  
Help Your Chapter With A News Item  
For the Next Issue  
Come on, you can do it.*



## HOW TO DEVELOP BETTER INTERNAL RHYTHM AND AVOID CLIPPING NOTES (AND RESTS) SHORT

by Dr Noa Kageyama  
from [bulletproofmusician.com](https://bulletproofmusician.com)

The third movement of the E minor Shostakovich piano trio begins with the pianist playing a series of whole note chords, all by their lonesome, before the violin finally comes in at the end of bar eight (click here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8F5IH3fvawg> to take a quick listen).

The tricky thing, is that each of those whole notes is held for quite a long period of time. Like anywhere from 4 to 6 seconds per note or longer, depending on what tempo the group chooses to take. Which is a lot of time for your mind to play tricks on you and make you wonder exactly where to place that next note.

Or at least, that's what I remember the pianist I played this with one summer stressing about before a performance...

In any case, that's the first thing that came to mind when I was talking with a pianist recently who noted that the legendary pianist Artur Schnabel once said something to the effect that "When you play fast, you should think slow, and when you play slow, you should think fast."

In essence, that when you have a lot of *fast* notes, it helps to think about the longer arc of the phrase, and when playing *long* notes, it helps to fill them in by thinking in terms of smaller subdivisions or pulses. And not for metronomic precision of course, but to facilitate playing in a more musically compelling way.

Indeed, this is something that is evident in Leon Fleisher's teaching as well (who studied with Schnabel). You can hear him speak to this a bit in this master class from 2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGRnYBxx2Y8> (starting at about 50:50 through about 1:05:00).

Countless other musicians have spoken about the value of subdividing too – but does it actually work? Like, if we have long notes or rests to deal with, and there's no conductor or other player to cue us in or keep us from distorting time without realizing it, is there any research supporting the use of subdividing as an effective tool for maintaining more accurate time and rhythm?

*Oh, and if you were wondering what the deal is with my recent fascination with rhythm, well, in researching last week's article, <https://bulletproofmusician.com/for-better-rhythm-and-timing-count-with-your-body-too-not-just-your-mind/> I kind of got sucked down a whole trail of other studies on rhythm... Turns out there's actually quite a bit of intriguing research out there on rhythm amongst musicians. Don't worry – I'm sure it's just a phase that will pass soon enough. =)*

But in the meantime, let's take a look at some research on subdividing!

### A subdividing study

A Yale researcher (Repp, 2010 <https://doi.org/10.1525/mp.2010.27.5.389>) recruited six graduate students from the School of Music – two pianists, a harpist, and a mix of string players.

All were asked to complete a series of four weekly test sessions, in which they were presented with forty 30-beat sequences. Where essentially, each sequence was like having seven bars of 4/4, with two quarter notes to set the tempo and lead you into bar one.

The beats in each sequence were held constant, and maintained a set tempo. But the researcher did vary the tempo of the sequences from one to the next. Where the time between beats ranged anywhere from 1 second to 3.25 seconds. In other words, some sequences were faster, and some were slower, as the researcher was curious to see if subdividing might be more useful, the slower the tempo. Which seems totally in line with Schnabel's idea of thinking fast when playing slow, whether the researcher knew about this or not.

### Four strategies for keeping time

Anyhow, each week, the musicians tried keeping consistent time using a different strategy. One week, they were asked to tap in sync with each beat. They were also *explicitly* instructed to avoid subdividing in any way – "DO NOT SUBDIVIDE intervals in any way (either mentally or by moving)." (On-the-beat tapping)

Another week, they were asked to tap in sync with each beat, while mentally *imagining* a sound or movement on the offbeats – but without actually moving or making any sort of sound. (On-the-beat tapping with mental subdivision)

*(Continued on page 6)*

## HOW TO DEVELOP BETTER INTERNAL (continued)

*(Continued from page 5)*

In another one of their sessions, they were asked to tap in sync with the downbeat, and also the offbeat. (Double tapping)

And on yet another week, they were asked to remain still on the downbeats, and tap only on the offbeats. (Offbeat tapping)

Then, the researcher measured how far off their taps were from the actual tones, and whether each of the taps were early or late (ahead of or behind the beat).

And did subdividing lead to more accurate tapping?

Did subdividing help?

Well, as you are undoubtedly not at all surprised to hear, yes. Subdividing did indeed lead to more accurate rhythm.

But let's take a closer look, as some of the details are kind of interesting.

One thing that I thought was intriguing is that overall, across all tempos, participants' taps tended to come *before* the beat. As in, there was a tendency to come in too soon, rather than too late. And apparently this is consistent with previous research too.

Which made me think of something Fleisher once said. My brain is a little fuzzy on the specific wording, but the gist was that we should place notes as late as possible – without actually being late.

So taken together, I guess maybe this means that our natural tendency is to compress time? I'd be curious to hear if that's consistent with your own experience...

Further evidence that  
moving your body helps

Anyhow, before I go off on too much of a tangent, yes, the main finding was that whether subdividing mentally without any sound or movement, or physically tapping on the offbeats, subdividing did lead to taps that were significantly closer to the beat. That is to say, more accurate timing. And for what it's worth, being allowed to subdivide the offbeats while moving their body did seem to be

substantially more effective than having to remain completely still and only subdividing mentally (which is consistent with the study we looked at last week).

But either way, the data suggests that subdividing is indeed an effective way to ensure we don't compress time and clip notes or rests short.

And...when might subdividing  
be most useful?

One other interesting finding was that the benefits of subdividing became more and more apparent, the slower the tempo became.

In other words, when the tempo was faster, and there was just 1 second between beats, the difference in accuracy between subdividing and not subdividing was pretty small. But as the tempo slowed down, and there was in some cases as much as 3.25 seconds between the beats, the difference in accuracy between subdividing and not subdividing was really clear.

Based on the results, the researcher estimated that when beats are .9 seconds apart or less, subdividing might not lead to that much of a noticeable benefit in timing accuracy.

I'm still inclined to think there can be some benefits to subdividing even then, but as Schnabel suggested, there probably is a point at which the space between notes is so small that it makes more sense to switch over to thinking in terms of longer pulses rather than continuing to subdivide things into smaller and smaller pulses.

Take action

Ultimately, the goal with subdividing isn't to develop more metronomic precision, of course, but to develop a stronger internal sense of pulse and rhythm. If you haven't explored this sort of thing in a systematic way before, a good place to start might be to play a piece you know pretty well – musically, of course – but while bisecting each beat as the participants in the study did. And maybe even trisecting or quadrisecting (yup, that's a word – I looked it up!) some beats as Fleisher does in the video above (click here <https://youtu.be/EGRnYBxx2Y8?t=3179> to see the exact section)

Take it a step further

Have you done a lot of metronome practice, but still feel like your internal sense of time isn't reliable? I figured this might be a good time to link to a couple

*(Continued on page 7)*

## HOW TO DEVELOP BETTER INTERNAL (continued)

(Continued from page 6)

videos, where two musicians draw on their backgrounds in neuroscience and kinesiology/motor learning and a bit of research to explain why the conventional way of practicing with a metronome can lead to it becoming a crutch, rather than a tool for helping us develop a better sense of rhythm (and what to do instead).

Here's trombonist Jason Sulliman<sup>1</sup>: How to improve timing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwDB7aBcWfw>

And violist Molly Gebrian<sup>2</sup>: How to actually use your metronome <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KBAnSOjWmU>

The podcast for this article is at <https://traffic.libsyn.com/secure/bulletproofmusician/2021.01.24.how-to-develop-better-internal-rhythm-and-avoid-clipping-notes-and-rests-short.mp3>



## MAGIC CHORAL TRICK #383 KEEPING IT SQUISHY

by Janet Kidd  
from [betterchoirs.wordpress.com](http://betterchoirs.wordpress.com)

**W**ant to increase your group's resonance instantly? (Although you'll still have to keep reminding them about this for months)

One of the biggest barriers to gorgeous resonant sound is tension in the tongue. And while we directors may talk about this non-stop, many of our singers really don't understand the

specifics of what we're asking for.

This is when the squishiness metre becomes a very useful tool.

With a bit of pressure, press the thumb up into the squishy underside of the chin – behind the V of the jaw bone. Swallow and feel that big hunk of meat, that is your tongue, tighten.

Say 'ee' normally and feel, with your thumb, the muscle (tongue) tighten. Sing that version of 'ee'. It'll probably sound edgy and not at all resonant.

Say 'ee' with the tip of the tongue relaxing on the lower lip (yes – this looks really, really dumb) and the back of the tongue being allowed to float up to gently meet the upper molars. Sing 'ee' in this position. Experiment until you feel **no** tongue tension with your thumb.

Now instead of resting the tip of the tongue on the lip, bring the tip behind the lower front teeth to the gum line, and let it relax there. Maintain the relaxation in the back of the tongue so that it still floats up to caress the upper molars. Sing 'ee' again and check for under-the-chin squishiness.

Do this with as many vowels as you can think up. 'ee' 'ay' 'ah' 'oh' 'oo' 'eu' 'ih' 'a' 'eh' 'aw' 'uh'

Some consonants need to tighten the tongue – but when you're singing a word, these should be released to the succeeding vowel as quickly as possible – 'D' 'the hard G' and 'T'.L' – with conscious relaxation and the use of only the tip of the tongue to form the 'L', can remain relaxed.

Another squishiness challenging sound is 'Y'. Say 'you' normally and feel it tighten – then try a fast 'ih' – opening immediately to an 'oo' ('ih-oo') and note how it stays more relaxed. This formation of the word 'you' has the added benefit of preventing singers from using the 'y' to slide up into the note.

It's a great idea to create a warm up that incorporates many opportunities for Squishiness Checks – so that singing without tongue tension becomes normal.

**He who does not bring his music to rehearsal because he thinks he already knows the songs may also be under the delusion that he's singing the correct notes too.**



## GOOD SINGING IS MEASURED BY FEELING, NOT SOUND

by Arden Kaywin  
from backstage.com

There's so much content out there with tips and tools for how to improve your singing performance. But over the years, there's one key thing I've learned, the first step a singer needs to take to unlock the potential of their voice, and I was reminded of it the other day when I heard this quote by poet Nayyirah Waheed:

"Listening is one of the only spaces where you can be still and moved at the same time."

I love this quote because it reminds me that when we allow the mind to be still and just listen, we create space for transformation.

Most singers think of listening as it relates to sound: listening to the sounds of the instruments accompanying us, the sounds we make when we sing, the sounds that others hear us making. This kind of listening is focused out on external sound and our external experience with it. When we listen this way, we tend to force, manipulate, and push our voice as a means of controlling an outcome.

But there is another kind of listening: listening to your body.

Listening in this way means being present to the sensations of your body—your instrument—in any given moment. It's focused *in* on our internal experience, rather than out.

Your job as a singer is to pay attention to the *sensation* of good singing, not the sound of it. Every time you have that specific sensation in your body (in your support, in your resonance), you will know it's the good sound merely by the way it feels. You won't even have to hear it.

In this way, your awareness shifts from being an outward-focused experience overwhelmed by attachments to expectations and outcomes to a more internal experience rooted in the present moment of the body. When singers shift their mindset from listening to the sounds they're making to "listening" to the feelings and sensations in their body when they sing, it's the first step to reaching their full singing potential.

When you sing, don't go on autopilot. Get present to the sensations in your body. Witness what you feel in the lower muscles of support, in the ribs, in your neck, jaw, tongue, and soft palate. Start listening to your body. Observe what it's doing (or not doing) without judgment. Learn to be a witness to what's happening.

In this way, you'll become acutely aware of what your habits and tensions are when you sing and can more readily seek out the appropriate remedies.

There's a deep connection between the mind and body that's incredibly transformative if you know how to tap into it. So it's time to become wiser, stronger, and happier in your singing. Breakthrough to new levels of singing by changing how you think about using your voice!

GOOD SINGERS THINK IN  
TERM OF HITTING THE  
NOTES.

GREAT SINGERS THINK IN  
TERMS OF TELLING THE  
STORY.

If you have to choose  
between tuning and heart,  
choose heart which will  
influence the world.

~Deke Sharon



## HOW YOUR GROUP CAN "MAKE 'EM LAUGH!"

by Shane Scott  
from The Harmonizer

**M**aking an audience laugh is one of a performer's most gratifying rewards, but with high reward comes high risk. Just exactly how do you "make 'em laugh" without falling flat on your face? Read on, or enroll in my Harmony University 2010 course for more details!

Incongruity—the basis for laughs

In *The Pink Panther Strikes Again*, the bumbling Inspector Clouseau spots a dog at a hotel desk and asks the clerk, "Does your dog bite?" He replies, "No," and Clouseau reaches down to pet the dog, only to be mauled.

Clouseau: "I thought you said your dog did not bite!"  
Clerk: "That is not my dog."

That dialogue illustrates a fundamental basis of comedy: Incongruity. Humor is usually built on the premise of leading an audience to expect one outcome only to deliver another one. There are several ways this can be done:

Exaggerate what was expected.

Hotshots took this approach with their ingenious 2008 riser set, lampooning the stereo-typical chorus choreography to perfection.

Reverse what was expected.

Max Q's 2007 gold medal-winning "Here's to the Losers" celebrated those who didn't win, in a self-deprecating style that was the antithesis of what was expected from such accomplished singers.

Replace what was expected.

Storm Front demonstrated this technique in their 2009 semifinals set with their hysterical performance of "Lida Rose," filling in for a missing female soloist with their own frantic soprano stylings.

Choose a comedy style

There are many ways to be funny. Get a feel for the style that would best suit the natural talents of the quartet. For example:

Cartoon.

Cindy Hansen points to Metropolis as a master of this performance style: A conventional song with an unconventional and exaggerated visual presentation, as with their fear of women in "They Go Wild Over Me.

"Tragedy over time."

That's Carol Burnett's definition of comedy, and 1999 international champ FRED excelled at this style by botching songs, either visually (confusing pictures in "I Can't Give You Anything But Love"), vocally (making a mess of the call and response of "Sweet Adeline"), or rhythmically (ruining the rhythm in "I've Got Rhythm"). More recently, Storm Front has used this style with their lead getting pushed out of the picture in "Don't Fence Me In."

Parodies.

Some comedy hangs on altering familiar lyrics for comedic effect. FRED mastered topical parodies that skewered fellow competitors and judges; however, my favorite parody (for obvious reasons) is Hot Air Buffoons' "South Rampart Street Buffet. "Does your quartet have the ability to do exaggerated physical gestures and expressions? Maybe the cartoon style would work. Does the quartet love words? Parodies might be the way to go. Does the quartet have an unusual physical makeup—really tall or short, big or skinny? I can personally tell you this can be exploited to great advantage, especially with self-effacing humor. Play to your strengths. And of course, if the quartet can do all these things and sing well (like FRED, Storm Front or Metropolis), you have the makings of a medal!

Tips for performing comedy

Once you get a feel for your particular style, here are some tips for getting the most out of your performance.

Know your individual roles and personas

In all successful comedy teams (think Laurel & Hardy, Abbott & Costello or The Three Stooges), each player had a clearly defined role. Each member of your group must understand his: Straight man, funny man, pratfall guy, innocent bystander, etc. Not every man needs to be equally funny, but remember, the straight man in comedy teams often gets paid more because he's the one who makes the "funny guy" funny. Determine your persona and understand your role in setting up a joke, reacting properly to incongruities, or leading the audience to expect something or look somewhere just before you pull the rug out from under them.

(Continued on page 10)

## HOW YOUR GROUP CAN MAKE 'EM LAUGH (continued)

*(Continued from page 9)*

Know your audience.

Be concerned about both taste and relevance to your audience. "Inside" barbershop humor that works well on a contest stage would confuse most show audiences. Similarly, matinee show audiences tend to be older, so references to current pop culture may be ineffective. Be sensitive to which gags the audience will or will not "get."

Sing well!

Poor singing distracts from the comedy, so work hard on the fundamentals of good singing. Especially work on synchronization and proper word sound connection, as the clear delivery of lines is crucial.

Focus on the set-up.

Successful delivery of a punch line hangs on a successful set-up. It is critical to carefully set up the audience to clearly expect one thing before you deliver the incongruity. This must be done visually (what you do), verbally (what you say), and vocally (how you say it).

Pace the comedy.

Give the audience time to absorb an incongruity once it is revealed. And if your comedy is lyric-driven, it is vital to allow the audience time to process punch lines. If you pack too much in the piece, the audience will become frustrated because it is missing some of the verbal gags. Good comedic timing involves two elements: The timing of the set-up relative to the punch line (whether verbal or visual), and the timing between punch lines.

Tell a story.

The overall presentation must tell a story that has a destination, rather than just string together a series of disconnected funny moments. In other words, the song in its entirety must have the feel of one long set-up leading to one grand punch line.

Most of all, have fun!

There is no magic to comedy. It is enormously risky, and the possibility of failure (what if they don't laugh?) combined with the challenge to stay

fresh (what do we do next?) makes it doubly tough. But it is also a blast! If you remember to have fun, your audience will pick up on your joy and want to have fun with you.

### Tips for writing parodies:

- Pick songs familiar to your audience
- Follow the original lyrics and rhyming scheme as closely as possible
- Choose easily singable words
- Ensure the parody tells a story, with a plot and destination
- Visually support the parody lyrics

### My favorite comedy performances:

I am a fan of all quartets, especially all comedy quartets, but here are three of my favorites:

- Chordiac Arrest (1988 international bronze medalists from Illinois), "The Barbershop Squat." The perfect combination of lyrics and visuals, hilariously sending up the odd moves we barbershoppers seem to instinctively do while singing.
- Cornerstone (1995 Buckeye Invitational champs), "I'm Alone Because I Love You." These fine singers performed a classic ballad while pulling off the classic hat routine. It is a model of timing.
- The Aliens (Evergreen District legends), "Boston Common Set." The single funniest barbershop performance of all time, combining great singing (well, Boston Common's great singing), with the most entertaining slapstick comedy ever done on a contest stage.

## THE CIRCLE OF (ALMOST) FIFTHS

by Jerry Frank  
from Down Our Way

If you Google the “circle of fifths”, you will find pages and pages of “simplified” music theory. Why am I attempting to write another? Good question. What follows may be an acceptable answer.

In an earlier article, I wrote how the Western Diatonic Scale is built from two rules: Rule one is that one octave must double the frequency of the starting note of the scale. Rule two is that starting at any note, the fifth note of that scale must have a frequency of three halves of the starting note. Of course the two rules are mathematically impossible to achieve at the same time. On the basis of “close enough counts” the tempered scale was created. The number one rule was paramount and the fifths were trimmed to fit. The mathematical purity was sacrificed to achieve the ability to start anywhere in the range of hearing and create a tolerable scale. The circle of fifths started with a standard (arbitrary selected by committee) frequency of 440 Hertz (cycles per second) which is a nice round number. The next fifth should then be  $3/2$  times 440 Hertz or 660 Hertz. A quick check of the Standard Tempered Scale shows a “close enough” fit to an “E” at 659.26 Hertz. Taking this fifth note as a root or starting note of a new scale, we look to 659.26 times  $3/2$  which should be 988.89 Hertz. Looking again at our table of the “close enough” scale we find a “B” at 987.77 Hertz.

Doing this same dance, we find that we can walk up the keyboard wandering farther away each step. In order to preserve the octave, the fifths are trimmed to a “suitable” approximation. This monster that we created is the circle of “almost” fifths. This circle is the best we have to work to write music but it is NOT the best that we can do while singing our barbershop arrangements. For instance let us sing the “A Major Triad with an Octave” to achieve the beauty of the real fifths.

Note	Tempered Hertz	Pure math Hertz	Octave
A	440	440	4
C#	554.37	550	5
E	659.26	660	5
A	880	880	5

The math chord will ring like a bell.

The mathematics look pretty but remember that

there is no magic in whole numbers. The whole numbers are due to the standards we have chosen for our measurement of time and the committee choice for our standard “A”. Note the sum and difference frequencies (easy arithmetic).

These variations from the tempered scale look to be small but the difference is between “good enough” and “excellent”. You will never find this chord on a properly tuned piano but you may hear it on a Dixie District stage.

Addendum for the unimpressed:

If you still don’t believe in sum and difference frequencies look at this:

A5 minus E5 equals A3	880-660=220
E5 minus A4 equals A3	660-440=220
A5 minus A4 equals A4	880-440=440
A4 plus E5 equals C#6	440+660=1100
C#5 times 2 equals C#6 (harmonic, octave)	550 * 2 = 1100
A4 plus A5 equals E6	440+880=1320
E5 times 2 equals E6 (harmonic, octave)	660 * 2 = 1320
E5 minus C#5 equals A2	660-550=110
C#5 minus A4 equals A2	550-440=110

All of these interactions reinforce the chord.

Note: Octaves change at “C” and what is true for one key signature is true for all. If you can, try a note between an “F#5” and a “G5” at 770 Hertz to really mess up your mind.



## LEARN TO LOVE YOUR VOICE

by Kathleen Hansen  
from [barbershop.org](http://barbershop.org)

**Y**ou sing because you can — because you must. What about people who are afraid of their own voices?

Many of us LOVE to sing in groups, but become emotional ...or insecure... or just less satisfied when we sing alone. Now, I know that singing alone is certainly different than raising your voice with others — but wouldn't it be great to experience even just a little more joy while you're practicing, singing along with something, or busting out a tune while you're folding your laundry?

I realize the bold statement of loving your voice might be a daunting thought or feel unachievable. I'm here to tell you, you CAN learn to love your voice. But first I'd like to tell you that the phenomenon of not really liking your own voice is common! It is TOTALLY NORMAL! It's so common that it has a name: voice confrontation.

Voice confrontation:  
we're not what we expect

*Voice confrontation is the phenomenon of a person not liking the sound of their own voice. It is generally caused by disappointment due to differences between what a person expects their voice to sound like to other people and what they actually hear in recordings.*

Remember that the sound we hear when we speak or sing is different than what others hear. Whenever we speak or sing, we hear (and feel) vibrations routed INTERNALLY, AS WELL AS vibrations that leave our mouths, bounce around the room, and come back to our ears. *No one else in the world can hear us as we hear ourselves. Which is more real—what they hear, or what we hear? Does it matter?*

### A culture of shame around singing

Getting past the science, we need to take a moment to address the collective hurt that many of us have experienced directly or witnessed indirectly. I have SO many adult voice students come to me with stories about how when they were eight or six or sixteen they were told by someone that they couldn't sing, or that they had a bad voice. Not only do many of you share this experience, but also have in common that the person giving that

very mean feedback was someone that you trusted or admired. This kind of blow to the ego can leave people silent for years.

THEN we have the harsh critique of reality singing competitions shows. Many of these shows have hosts that make faces and roll their eyes, videos are edited to showcase or mock performances that are less than amazing ... they make it seem like there are those who can and those who can't — and if you are in the can't column, social media seems to think it's fair game to rip you apart publicly.

The good news is that this is NOT real life, and all of us can fight against this culture of shaming to find beauty in our own voices and voices around us. People have been singing for AGES, and it is a fairly recent phenomenon that has de-centered the communal aspect and the culture that singing is for everyone.

People are not unable, they are unpracticed

Singing is a ALSO skill that can be developed. Yes, some people start from different place, but it's the same as something like riding a bike or learning to write by hand. Some take to it naturally, and others have to work harder. And how hard you work, how much dedicated time you spend on it WILL make a difference.

Modern studio recordings use all kinds of pitch correction. Just a handful of decades ago that wasn't the case. We are expert listeners with high expectations. So the first thing I'd like to encourage you — wherever you are — is to have a beginner's mindset. One of my favorite illustrations of this is thinking about a small child learning to walk. They fall down, they get back up. You ENCOURAGE THEM. You say, YOU CAN DO IT! That's ok! You're ok! Get back up and try again! Walk to me!

You would NEVER SAY "You're a TERRIBLE walker. You should just give up now". ...So why would we do that to ourselves as singers?

### Love your own distinctive voice

Every voice is unique. Your instrument is physiologically different than anyone else's — as with standard instruments: you may be more of a piccolo or a saxophone or a tuba. Don't expect to sound like another instrument. Be the best YOU you can be. And as we get older and our voices change, we need to know that the timbre of our instruments may change as well. And that is ok. That is beautiful.

(Continued on page 13)



## LEARN TO LOVE YOUR VOICE (cont)

(Continued from page 12)

I have a challenge for you. I really want you to do this.

- Record yourself singing something simple, something that is in the middle of your range. It might be a children's song or maybe an easy hymn – try to pick something that doesn't have a famous voice associated with it. Mary Had A Little Lamb or Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.
- Play it back. **Find one thing you like about your performance.**
  - Was it full of heart?
  - Could you hear a smile in your sound?
  - Did it sound authentic?
  - Was there a single word that had good character?
  - Was there a lightness or a richness?
- Say it out loud.** "I liked the way I sang the word "star" – it had a sparkle to it".
- Then BUILD on this.

Encourage yourself, encourage others

When I was studying music education in college, my major instrument was trumpet. I was NOT a singer. I sang. I didn't hate singing. I just wasn't "a singer." We had to take one semester of "class voice." We learned vocal basics, warmups, and some fairly simple art songs. THEN.... Then we had to sing for each other. People kind of collectively freaked out. But, we had a very kind and encouraging teacher, and a good group of students. When we sang for each other, we were ONLY allowed to give each other positive feedback. When it was my turn, I sang. Kind of quietly, kind of awkwardly... my voice sounded young... probably a little thin. ...I took a breath and waited for my feedback.

You know what someone said? She raised her hand, looked right into my eyes, smiled adoringly, and said, "You sounded like an ANGEL!" How could this classmate, who I barely knew, interpret what I heard as kind of a small and thin and under-developed sound as beauty. It blew me away and taught me a lot – not only about looking for the good in my own voice, but about how important a little encouragement can be.

So what comes next?

- Take that exercise I gave you earlier and do it again. Record yourself singing! Play it back. Make some adjustments.
- Play with your voice! Make weird sounds that go too far with a goal of experimenting. Like a young child would while learning a new skill – sometimes you don't want or need to critique... just play.
- Then when you're ready, listen again and state what you love...or like... or can tolerate. That is absolutely an ok starting place!
- You don't need to imitate other singers, but you can emulate the good things you hear. Listen to singers you like – what do you like about their voices?
- Be your own best coach. Learn to give yourself a voice lesson, and a safe, practical, and positive self-critique. I have a video dedicated to that.
- Learn how to change things safely – work with a vocal coach or teacher for fastest results – right now there are a lot of people teaching online (I'm one of them) or make an appointment in person when the time comes to do that.

I hope I've given you some good things to think about. Be brave. You have nothing to lose. I hope to hear from you about what is working for you.



**Work the hard parts of a song. It doesn't do any good to keep singing through a song without getting the hard parts correct.**



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!

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Thanks in advance!!



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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.

For those of you who are signed up with Amazon Smile and have designated your charity as the Big Orange Chorus, THANK YOU! Since we registered and started getting "donations", we have collected \$141.74. That may not seem like a lot, but every little bit helps. Again, thank you for choosing to help the Big Orange Chorus!  
Rick Morin, Treasurer

## 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  
vacant, bass

### No Name Yet

? tenor  
? lead  
? baritone  
? bass



**FREE YOUR VOICE**

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

How you breathe is how you sing. Free intake of breath fosters free singing. Free expulsion of breath fosters free singing,. Laboured intake fosters labored singing,. Restricted intake fosters restricted singing. Pushed, squeezed expulsion fosters pushed, squeezed singing.

Your goal is simple: efficiency. That means being able to inhale quickly and exhale slowly with consistency. It also means being able to do these things with minimal physical effort.

Do not make breathing complicated. Simplicity is often best, especially in your mental approach to breathing. As was said earlier in this book, it's all mental.

While free intake is crucial for good singing, so also is a consistent outward flow of breath. From the beginning of a phrase right through its ending, aim for the outflow to be at a consistent speed. Many singers decrease or constrict the air flow for high notes or for soft volumes. This diminishes resonance drastically. Many hesitate with the breath flow before a high note, not only diminishing resonance but also adversely affecting the flow of the music and making the upward interval sound awkward. Some singers break up the breath flow by disconnecting words from each other in staccato fashion. Unless you are aiming for a particular staccato effect, and know what you are doing, this can be most unmusical.

Do you 'tank up' when you inhale? Do you 'suck in' the breath? Try muscling less.

Do you stand against a piano and try to shift it by the power of your diaphragmatic and abdominal exertion? I have heard of singers using approaches similar to this, if not identical. But unless you are training to be a great opera star and must fill massive concert halls without amplification and over the sound of a full orchestra, try muscling less.

Do you think breath that is placed under pressure and pushed harder will make for better singing? Do you think you must make it happen? If so, you will only cause problems for your singing.

Do you push and hold the abdominal muscles out when you sing? Or do you pull them in tightly to pressurize the outward flow? I used to do the former. I had been taught to do that. Since then I have learned that such heavy muscular effort causes tension in many areas of the body and thus affects vocal quality. Try muscling less.

Do you think you need Olympic-standard muscle strength to be a good singer?

**FREE SINGING TIPS**

by Yvonne DeBandi  
from a2z-singing-tips.com

N = Never sing if it hurts to swallow.

**FREE SINGING TIPS**

by Nicole LeGault  
from a2z-singing-tips.com

N is for Name. What's in a name? Lots if you're a singer! You know how there are just some names you remember easily, and some you don't? Many musicians have "stage names", also known as "pseudonyms" ("pen names" are for authors). You do not need to legally change your name; it is extremely common and accepted for musicians to have an a.k.a. if they so desire.

**FREE SINGING TIPS**

by Mick Walsh  
from a2z-singing-tips.com

N. Nodules. These are nasty little suckers that grow on your vocal folds if you don't learn how to use your voice organ properly. Dehydration, alcohol abuse, shouting, screaming, smoking (especially if all of the above are done simultaneously) can ruin your folds and you end up with having to have them scraped. Many of the old school of "screaming" rock stars have had nodules removed. In my opinion once this happens the voice organ is never quite the same again. Better to avoid nodules in the first place by learning to sing correctly.

**FREE SINGING TIPS**

by Teri Danz  
from a2z-singing-tips.com

N= Not Efforting -- This is a concept of using your body as an instrument. Not efforting involves holding up (standing straight, having a support of air in your body), doing a proper placement of pitches, dropping your jaw, riding the air up and over, and relaxing into the groove.



## 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.



## DONOR CHOICE FROM HARMONY FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

In recognition of donations to Harmony Foundation International, with a percentage of their Donor Choice going back to our chapter. We just received a check for \$456. The following is a list of those donors:

Alexander, John and Margaret  
Giallombardo, Jay and Helen  
Gipp, George and Cathie  
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Russell, Howdy and Teresa  
Sobolewski, Mike and Jan

Jazz musician  
explaining  
a chord

Computer  
generating  
a password



F#7b9/Db



# Big Orange Chorus



**REHEARSAL SCHEDULE**

Thu	03 Jun	Zoom / Jamulus
Thu	10 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	17 Jun	Zoom / Lamulus
Thu	24 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	01 Jul	Zoom / Jamulus
Thu	08 Jul	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	15 Jul	Zoom / Jamulus
Thu	22 Jul	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	29 Jul	Zoom / Jamulus

**BIRTHDAYS**

Rick Ard	05 Jun
Jay Giallombardo	10 Jun
John Humble	11 Jun

**PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

...more to come

**⇒ BIG O BUCK\$ ⇐**

**BIG O BUCKS SCHEDULE**

...more to come

See Mike Sobolewski to help fund your experience

**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	
Ray Parzik	Michael Reynolds

**WELCOME**

**NEWEST MEMBERS**

Les Mower

April

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

## 2021 DIRECTING TEAM



Jay Giallombardo  
Front Line  
Director

## 2021 OTHER CHAPTER LEADERS



Dave Walker  
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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 July is 26 June.  
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](http://www.bigorangechorus.com/newsarchive.htm)  
More specific and timely performance information  
is in my weekly sheet, *Orange Zest*.

**Print off two copies  
of this newsletter  
to share – one with  
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**



John Alexander, Editor  
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Orange Park FL 32003



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