



The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



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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

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THE HARMONY UNIVERSITY WARM-UP SERIES

from barbershop.org

Good performers become better performers by rehearsing a little bit every day, forming good habits that carry over when they sing with their groups.

You can enjoy a FREE month of high-quality warm-ups via the Harmony University Warm-Up Series on YouTube. Top-notch faculty lead you through vocal warm-ups, mental exercises to clear the cobwebs, physical warm-ups, and more. These are great for use in weekly rehearsals, too.



https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcwXdNVvSNbgOXbqqzGmbLPTaSzvRFu_

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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timely information
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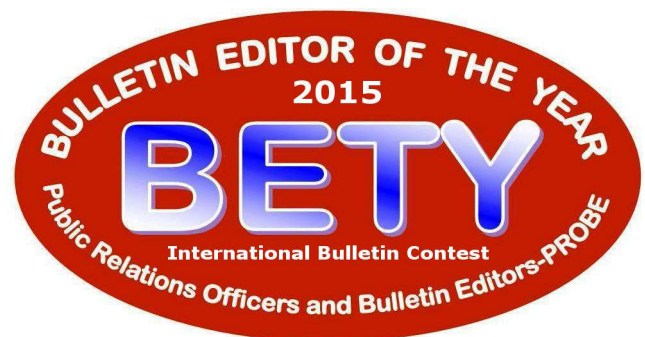
EDITORIAL

We've got music selected (some new) for a spring show, and also for the coming fall convention. We are, however, still struggling to get our numbers up to where they should be.

Let's see if we can get more people interested in coming to our rehearsals. Ask anyone you know who likes to sing. Invite friends, acquaintances, and even strangers. Singing is fun. Singing well is even better. Performing in public shares that fun with lots of people. Everybody wins.

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

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



SINGING WITH EMOTION

by Ken Taylor
from askavocalcoach.com

One of the best definitions I've ever heard of music came from one of my college classes where a student defined music as, "*Emotion that you can hear.*"

And really, when you sit back and think about why we enjoy the different music we listen to, it's usually because it makes us feel something or because it's in line with what we're feeling. Sometimes we're aware of this, and sometimes we're not, but think about it...

What type of songs do you listen to when you are happy? Sad? Frustrated? Excited? Angry? Overwhelmed? Intoxically in love? My guess is you probably have certain songs or artists that you listen to for each of these.

So why does this work? Well, psychology teaches us two things:

1. We like people that are like us, and,
2. The most dominant emotion in the room is the most contagious.

So, if you're in a mood that's portrayed well by an artist, then you're going to be drawn to their music. But at the same point in time, if an artist connects well with a song, they can start to pull you in that direction emotionally as well, helping to bring you deeper into the song.

Truth is, you have the power to do this as well. If you're performing, you are automatically the dominant emotion in the room because you have a mic. From there, all you have to do is choose the right songs to connect with your audience, then sing your song in a genuine and therefore contagious way, and your audience will be eating out of the palm of your hands.

So now that we understand that music is about more than just notes and words on a page that can be translated into flowing melodies, let's talk for a minute about what we as singers can do to make our voices connect with others even more on an emotional plane.

Analyze the Song

In order to help your listeners fully feel a song, you've got to know on a deep level how you, the singer, feel when you say each part of the song. Some songs have a consistent emotional feel, but most will evolve into different emotions throughout the course of the song.

For example, take the song "Forget You" by Cee Lo

Green (which I'll admit to indulging in from time to time). In it, I'd argue that the main emotion of the chorus is hurt/angry, while the verse tends to be a little bit more frustrated in feeling, and in the bridge he's so upset, he breaks out into sounding like a blubbering fool... all the while, the music is fun, upbeat, and makes people feel good (ironic, isn't it?).

Which brings me to my next point... the emotion portrayed in the singer's voice doesn't always have to be in line with the lyrics. Sometimes we use sarcasm to evoke emotion in a song (listen to Cake's "Never There").

So, before you start to *really* sing a song, sit back and take a few minutes to break down each line of that song so that you know exactly what feeling you want to portray during in that line. Once you do that, you're ready to start adding the emotion.

Different Ways to Add Emotion into Singing

Adding emotion to a song can be done in so many different ways that it'll make your head spin. You can use variations of dynamics and tone, you can speak the words in different ways focusing on the vowels or consonants, you can color the tone by using vocal fry, growling, breathiness, cracking... the list is endless.

But here's the deal... if you have to manufacture it, it's fake.

Said differently, if you *create* these different tones and colors in the voice, but there's no emotion behind it, then your listeners will know and you can kiss that connection goodbye. Think about it... has someone ever told you that they loved you, but you knew in that moment what they were saying wasn't genuine? Same thing.

We can go through the process of manufacturing these sounds all day long, but without us genuinely feeling what we're saying, it's all for naught. That's why it's so important for us as artists to wear our hearts on our sleeves.

Wearing Your Heart On Your Sleeve

This can be one of the most difficult things for an artist to do. In order to be successful, we have to make ourselves vulnerable in a way that shows people how we really feel.

Anna Nalick addresses this in her song Breath

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SINGING WITH EMOTION (continued)

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(2am) when she says,

“And I feel like I’m naked in front of the crowd
cause these words are my diaries screaming out
loud and I know that you’ll use them however you
want to.”

Honestly, not everyone can do this. Not everyone can let the world in. Not everyone is willing to give others a window into their soul and show them what it’s like when they’re not wearing their everyday “*everything’s alright*” mask. But, not everyone can touch their audience in a real way either.

Good singers are a dime a dozen... Great singers that connect with their audience in a real way are rare indeed. To me, Singing with Emotion is one of the biggest differences in the two.

So, how do we share that emotion?

Singing with Emotion

There are songs that you have first hand experience with... in other words, you’ve experienced nearly the exact same scenario discussed in the song. It’s by far easiest to connect emotionally to these songs. All you have to do is go back in your head and relive that experience in your mind. But don’t just visualize what happened... feel it in your body. Make it as real as possible to you. Once you’ve done this, your voice will naturally take over.

However, there are some song plots that you haven’t experienced directly. In this situation, it’s easiest to define the main emotions, and try to feel them in your body as well. You can do this by reliving another experience that may have made you feel a similar way, or simply imagine what that emotion would feel like and take it from there. To me, the biggest key is finding a way to physically feel it within your body. If you can do this, you’re golden.

Application

All of this is worth nothing if you don’t take the time to apply it to your singing. So, go now and find a song that you can connect with. Analyze it so that you know specifically how every line should make you feel. Start making yourself feel those emotions and sing through it a time or two and see what comes out. Play with the dynamics, the color of the tone, different inflections, and the length that you hold different notes until

you’ve created your own version of the song that is so contagiously emotional that your listeners become putty in the palm of your hands.

Follow these guidelines on singing with emotion with each song you perform, and if you really allow yourself to be vulnerable (and you choose songs that will connect with your audience), then you’ll see a huge difference in the response the crowd gives you. Guaranteed.

IT’S YOUR
CHAPTER...
DO SOMETHING
WITH IT...



BREAKING OUT OF COMFORT ZONES

by Karyn O'Connor
from singwise.com

Some artists seem to have never struggled with self-confidence. They've never felt constrained by inhibitions or confined by 'rules.' They take artistic risks and push the boundaries of interpretation and style. They thrive in the spotlight.

And then there is the majority. They wrestle with self-doubt and fears of inadequacy. They wonder if what they have on the inside is worth sharing with others - with strangers, in fact. They prefer to play it safe... because 'safe' has already been tried and because 'safe' doesn't seem to carry with it the same risks of criticism, misunderstanding, etc..



Popular wisdom contends that in order to find out who we truly are we must go way out beyond the edges of our comfort zone. For some individuals, simply setting foot in a voice studio for the first time is more than enough to create in them uncomfortable feelings such as vulnerability and panic. They do it, anyway. They do it because they understand that stepping outside of their comfort zones will lead to personal growth and is the only way to achieve their goals and make their dreams happen.

There are those who are already performing but are still playing it safe (e.g., with choice of repertoire, vocal range, style, vocal effects, etc.). Perhaps they are being limited by their underdeveloped technique. Or perhaps they are stagnating as artists -

technically capable of painting with a much broader spectrum of colours and textures but failing to use many of those colours for fear that the resulting work of art will not be well-received by the listening audience. They may, in fact, have an undeveloped sense of who they are as vocal artists, (which is not the same as knowing who they are as vocal technicians). 'Safe' is the waiting room in which they sit while trying to find themselves and 'experimentation' is the magazine that they peruse with great interest... but promptly return to the magazine rack when their names are called. Rather than becoming excited at the grand ballroom of possibilities that trying something new and scary can open up, the singer may convince himself/herself that the door may merely open up to a janitor's closet.

With all the e-mails and personal messages that I receive from singers around the globe who are at varying stages in their vocal development and careers, I feel as though I've been able to get a fairly comprehensive look at the psychology of singing. Many singers feel trapped in their comfort zones, unable to break free because their thinking has remained unchallenged and unchanged. Whether it was a negative reaction to their singing early on, a cruel teacher with inflexible ideas about what a voice should sound like, introversion or shyness, etc., we are all products of our hardwiring (e.g., personalities), cultures, and cumulative experiences. While no two singers or their backgrounds are alike, there are some commonalities that many share when it comes to moving outside their comfort zones.

That's the funny thing about artists. We tend to be highly sensitive (and sometimes insecure) people. When we receive negative feedback about our latest creation, it hits us right in the heart and soul of who we are because that external work of art is a reflection of who we are on the inside - of what we have to offer the world. Poor reviews have the potential to destroy us on the inside because we allow them to hold so much clout (influence) when it comes to our self-worth. Likewise, when our song or performance receives rave reviews, we are elated - overjoyed because this culmination of all our time, hard work and creative energies has received confirmation that it is indeed 'good.' And for the professional vocalist, this feedback, whether positive or negative, is critical. After all, we do not sing only for ourselves. Our audience, which purchases our music and tickets to our shows, is our bread and butter and a good part of the reason why we work so hard to master our craft and mold our creativity into something that pleases. (Of course, we do also sing for the intangibles that we receive out of the act, such as personal and artistic satisfaction, positive emotional and phys-

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BREAKING OUT OF COMFORT ZONES (continued)

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ical benefits, intimacy and connectedness with the One being worshipped, etc..)

So, how does the singer break out of his/her comfort zone as a vocal artist? The following are exercises that I've borrowed from the method acting classes that I teach and that I use in my voice studio.

In your imagination, venture to a place that I like to call the "Magic What If Land." In this place, anything can happen. There are no expectations of proper conduct. There are no rules to follow, and therefore no rules to break or consequences for breaking them. There is no audience to judge the sounds that you make, and you are completely free to be whatever it is you have the potential to be. Now ask yourself:

- What if you were a Neanderthal or wild animal, grunting and communicating merely with primal sounds and body language?
- What if you were that other singer whose voice is so unrestrained in its ability to convey emotion (yet controlled at the technical level)?
- What if you were to exaggerate the natural qualities of your voice or be overly dramatic in your expression and phrasing?
- What if you were a voice over artist, relying solely on your voice to build a character, convey intention, etc.?
- What if, while in the privacy of your practice space, you were to make a sound that is aesthetically offensive to your own ears? With no one listening, what would the risk be (any vocal health concerns aside)?
- What if you were to sing that higher-than-your-usual-high note without flinching - without squeezing and otherwise throttling the sound? What if you were to sing it like a Gospel diva or call up your inner operatic tenor or soprano, just for fun? What if your voice soared freely?
- What if you were to try singing that song that you are convinced doesn't really suit your voice, but sing it like it does?
- What if you absolutely hated the experimental sounds coming out of your mouth? What harm resulted from making a sound that you didn't like?
- What if you loved the new sounds or could hear their potential for becoming practicable (viable)?

Oftentimes, how far you venture outside of your com-

fort zone depends on how safe you feel making unpleasant, unmusical, off-key, unfamiliar sounds. (This is why I always encourage singers to carve out a space for their practice times where they can feel free to vocalize without worries of disturbing anyone else or making embarrassing sounds.) If you are willing to shake off all inhibitions in a private setting and take your singing into uncharted territory - to places where it will likely never need to go in a public performance - you'll be able to strike a healthy and artistic balance between the two extremes of inhibition that makes for a very uninteresting vocal performance and poor musical taste with a lack of refinement in your performance.

One exercise that can help singers break out of their comfort zones is listening to another singer whom they enjoy and breaking down one of their songs into its individual vocal lines. Line by line, the singer would copy (mimic) the sounds, the dynamics, the 'textures,' etc. of the other vocalist. This may not ultimately be how the singer will choose to colour those vocal phrases to make the song his/her own, but it is an exercise in making sounds or qualities that he/she would otherwise not make because he/she hasn't yet explored them. Very often, singers are surprised that their voices can actually make those sounds and be as expressive as those other singers whom they admire.

Some of us will never be the type to voluntarily jump out of a plane and plummet to the earth at terrifying speeds trusting only in the safety of the nylon parachute strapped to our backs - trusting that it will open (not malfunction) and carry us safely to the earth far, far beneath us. And we will not be able to breathe a sigh of relief until the ordeal is over and the adrenaline has started to wear off. Riskiness is a matter of one's perspective and one's experience level, however. The veteran skydiver, acknowledges the risks associated with skydiving, but makes preparations (e.g., checking his/her parachute) prior to jumping, and therefore keeps the risks to a minimum. He/she experiences the exhilaration of falling through the clouds and viewing the world from a unique vantage point. The rookie jumper, on the other hand, might be so overwhelmed with fear that he won't experience the exhilaration until after his feet are on solid ground. For this reason, the new singer or relatively new performer should remember the following:

- Tether yourself to something solid first, before stepping out on that limb. The most solid foundation that a singer can build is a consistent, effective technique. Having a consistent technique that enables you to make the sounds that

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BREAKING OUT OF COMFORT ZONES (continued)

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you desire generally leads to having more confidence that the voice will 'cooperate' when it matters most, which in turn will relieve most nerves.

- Don't take unnecessary or uncalculated risks. When I was an elite gymnast learning a new skill on the balance beam, I started first by practicing that skill on a line on the floor. Then, I moved to a wider, slightly elevated surface (a practice beam), gradually reducing the amount of mats and other devices of protection. In some cases, I involved my coach, who would 'spot' me and ensure my safety. Only when I was confident that I was ready did I perform the skill unassisted with the beam raised to Olympic height. A new skill was not considered 'competition ready' until it was being landed consistently in practice. There were no guarantees that I wouldn't still fall off the beam in front of the judges and audience at a competition - a mistake that would have cost me several points and likely any shot at an all-round medal - but by ensuring that I had properly prepared myself, that risk was greatly reduced. If you do not feel as though a particular skill or sound is performance ready, keep it in the studio or practice room until it is. There is a difference between stepping out of one's comfort zone and stepping off a curb into a busy street.
- Do all of your requisite 'noise making' in the studio or practice space, not on the stage. The stage is not the place to try out a new sound for the first time. It is the place to skillfully present that new sound. All experimentation should happen during the singer's practice sessions. What you present to the audience should be a polished, confident sound, even if that sound is unconventional or unique.
- The more performances you have under your belt, the more comfortable you will feel being in front of an audience.

On the June 29, 2015 episode of So You Think You Can Dance, team leader Twitch counselled a dance contestant who was having a crisis of confidence at the Las Vegas round of auditions. He told her, "Whether it goes well, or whether it doesn't, you owe it to yourself to have this experience." The same is true of singers. Whether it is an audition, a performance or a new sound, you must find it in you to take that leap of faith at some point. As an (aspiring) artist, you owe it to yourself to take that experience, run with it and see where it leads you.

ED SHEERAN IS PROOF THAT NO ARTIST WAS BORN WITH A PERFECT VOICE

by Chelsea Wilson
from thebalancedsinger.com



"When people say artists are born with natural talent, you're not. You have to really learn and really practice." —Ed Sheeran

We guarantee that all your favorite singers worked for years to get the voice they have today.

Whether it was formal training with a teacher, or practicing along to Whitney's riffs and runs in their bedroom for years on end, no one just #wokeuplikethis.

The best time to start your vocal training was three years ago, but the second best time is NOW.

Right this minute! Don't wait until your dream role audition comes up or until you're walking in to record your debut album next week.

A great voice takes **REAL** time to train.

If you want to be a professional singer, or even just a good amateur singer, take **RESPONSIBILITY** for the time and effort it takes to accomplish something worthwhile.

Recognize you won't get there on your own.

If you value something, give it the time, energy, and even the money it deserves.

In the case of your voice—book regular lessons and practice every day! We're here to help you in every step of your singing journey.

ROW YOUR BOAT

by Adam Christie
from choirbites.com

We need to look at this choir like a rowing boat. You can talk and still row (within reason). You can laugh and still row. But if you're looking at your phone, you aren't rowing. If you're laying down, you aren't rowing. If you don't wanna be on the risers or aren't in your spot, you may be rowing but it doesn't help much because we aren't rowing together. If you're eating, you can't be rowing. If you're singing but nobody can hear you, that's like dipping your oar in the water but not actually helping the boat move through the water.

Sometimes a boat needs one side to row forward and the other side to row backwards to make a turn to avoid trouble. But if all you're doing is talking and you don't hear the captain say something is changing in the rowing, you actually end up working against what the boat is trying to do.

You're in the boat. That's this class. That's this group. That's this ensemble.

Now what could happen if people don't row?

It makes it harder for those that are rowing because they have to pick up the slack. It's easier to row when everyone is rowing. If people don't row, we don't get to where we are going very fast. We may not even get to our destination.

Let's say Maria's rowing and the rest of her section isn't. Maria just may give up because it's too hard or she thinks we'll never make it. Then the boat sits there. And how fun is a boat that's not moving in the middle of the deep water? People get cranky. Then people don't talk to each other or they say hurtful things. Maybe people try to jump overboard. And some make it to other shores but most don't. It's amazing that people are willing to swim on their own to reach somewhere, which is much more labor intensive, than row with everyone in a boat.

So how's your personal effort in rowing? And what are you doing that's stopping you from rowing? What could you do to make you a better member of the crew?

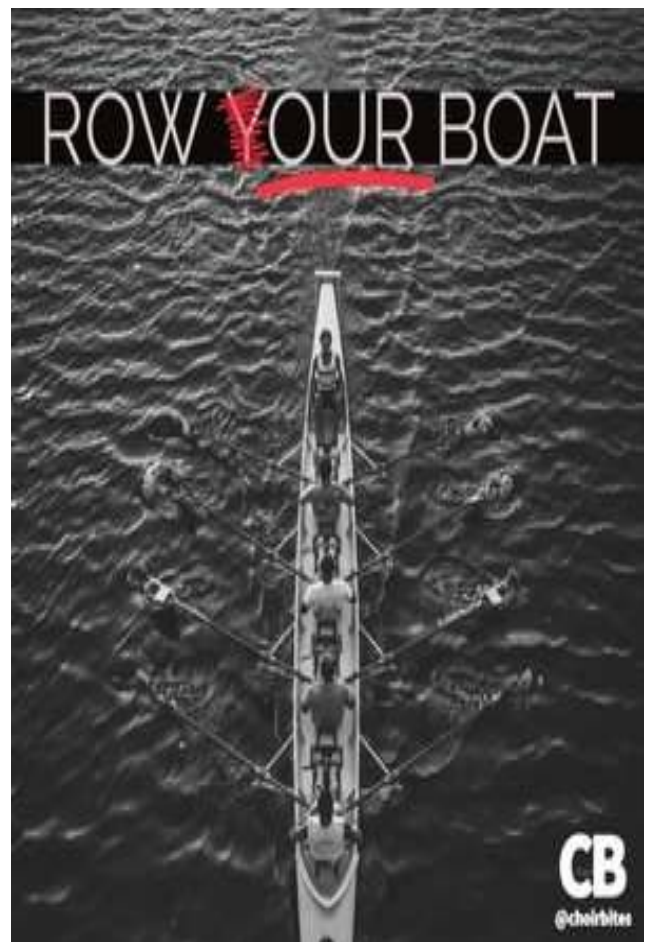
And remember that people in the boat have been to where you're going. But they don't quite remember how to get there. That's why you need the captain. He or she has been there once and it was so amazing, they spend the rest of their life taking

other people there. Remember that when you're tired of rowing and start complaining about a place you've yet to visit: It must be worth it if this person would devote their whole life, giving up money, opportunities, comfortable living, and an easier life. If they would devote their whole life, then I would be willing to row for an hour a day to see what was so special.

We need to adopt a philosophy. Everyone rows with maximum effort.

Eventually, you realize that the destination was incredible, but that's not what the best part was. The best part was in the rowing and in the people you were rowing with and the obstacles you overcame together. Then you decide you wanna get on the boat again and visit that special place. Not only to see the destination, that's a byproduct, but because being apart of that crew gave your life purpose and eased the pain of loneliness.

Everyone rows with maximum effort and in order to row with maximum effort, we need everyone. Every. One. Now put your phone away.



DO YOU STRUGGLE WITH UNRELIABLE MEMORY ON STAGE? PERHAPS YOUR MEMORIZATION STRATEGY IS MISSING THIS KEY INGREDIENT...

by Dr Noah Kagyama
from bulletproofmusician.com

For most of my musical life, my go-to memorization strategy was to play things over and over, and hope for the best on stage. I mean, maybe it was slightly more involved than that, but it was definitely not the most thoughtful or sophisticated memorization strategy ever.

Plus, because I wasn't very fond of practicing (never mind playing things through over and over), I tended to do as little of this as possible. So thinking back, it's kind of surprising that I didn't have as many memory slips as I probably should have.

I mean, sure, I did have a few pretty mortifying memory failures along the way (and plenty of near-memory slips, which can be almost as terrifying), but it wasn't generally a recurring issue.

However, as averse as I was to physical practice, I did do quite a bit of *mental* practice. Whether I was driving to lessons, sitting in the orthodontist's chair, or walking around campus, I was often going through the different pieces I was working on in my head.

Research suggests that the combination of physical and mental practice is more effective than either one by itself. So could it be that this blended approach to practice applies not only to our ability to *play* the notes on the page, but our ability to *remember* these notes as well?

A guitar study

A team of European researchers (Iorio et al., 2021) recruited 26 classical guitarists from two music universities in Italy and Denmark, who were either pursuing their bachelor's or master's degree in performance.

The guitarists were divided into two groups – a **physical practice group** and a **mental practice group** – and tasked with learning the “Sarabanda” by Giovanni Zamboni Romano.

Day 1

On Day 1, the guitarists came to the lab to practice for 30 minutes. The physical practice group practiced normally for 30 minutes, while the mental practice group did 20 minutes of mental practice first, then were allowed 10 minutes of physical practice.

And what did their mental practice look like? It probably varied a little from guitarist to guitarist, but their instructions were to “[focus] on the pitch, finger movements, rhythm or any other mental [technique] they liked, but without physically playing the instrument or writing the piece.”

When their 30 minutes were up, they were tested in two ways. First, they did two recorded run-throughs to see how many notes they could recall. And then, they were given some blank staff paper, and asked to write out as much of the music as they could remember.

Days 2-6

The participants repeated their 30-min practice sessions at home for the next few days, with the physical practice group doing normal practice, and the mental practice group continuing their 20/10 split of mental and physical practice.

Day 7

And then on Day 7, the guitarists returned to the lab for one last 30-min practice session, after which they once again did two recorded run-throughs of the piece, and wrote out as much as they could remember on blank staff paper.

Day 17

Of course, it's one thing to be able to play a piece right after you've had a chance to practice it for 30 minutes with the music in front of you, and a whole other challenge to play it out of the blue, without having touched it for 10 days.

So to see how much learning really took place among each group of guitarists, they were all asked to return to the lab 10 days after their last day of practice, where they once again recorded two run-throughs of the piece, and wrote as much of the piece down on staff paper as they could remember.

So...was there any difference in memory performance between the two groups?

Memory differences

To find out, the researchers measured memory performance in two different ways.

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STRUGGLE WITH UNRELIABLE MEMORY (continued)

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They started by listening to the recordings, and tallying up all of the correctly played notes. Then, they tallied up all of the correctly recalled notes on the staff paper, and averaged the two tallies together to come up with a blended measure of memory performance.

Day 1

And at the end of practice on Day 1, there wasn't much of a difference between the two groups. The physical practice group recalled **39.47 notes**, while the mental practice group recalled **44.61 notes**. And yes, 44 is more than 39, but this was not a statistically significant difference.

Day 7

However, by Day 7, the learning gap began to diverge a bit. The physical practice group averaged **91.84 notes**, while the mental practice group averaged **114.89 notes**. Of course, this difference wasn't quite statistically significant either – though it was close ($p=.10$, if you were wondering).

So the next question was...what would happen if participants took at 10-day practice break from this piece? Would either group do a better job of recall than the other?

Day 17

As you can imagine, 10 days of not practicing the piece did lead to some forgetting. But this time, there was a pretty significant difference between the two groups. While the mental practice group managed to still recall an average of **100.28 notes**, the physical practice group could recall only **55.91 notes**!

If you want to dig into the numbers a little deeper, there were some interesting differences in recall

between the two different types of memory tests, which you can check out in the chart below:

So what can we take away from all of this?

Takeaways

I think the big takeaway, is that there is not just a physical (i.e. motor memory) component to memorization, but a cognitive or conceptual component as well. And that including both elements in one's memorization process could lead to much more durable, long-lasting, and reliable memory than either one alone.

So if you've struggled with memory in the past, and your approach to memorization has prioritized the physical part of memory over the mental, I hope you'll find this study really encouraging, and perhaps inspire you to include a little more mental practice into your routine.

Umm...but what should mental practice for memorization look like?

Well, aside from regular old mental practice where you imagine playing a piece away from the instrument, retired UConn psych professor Roger Chaffin has done a lot of terrific work in this area – which you can read more about [here](https://bulletproofmusician.com/regular-memorization-works-ok-but-heres-why-deliberate-memorization-is-way-better/) (https://bulletproofmusician.com/regular-memorization-works-ok-but-heres-why-deliberate-memorization-is-way-better/) or [here](https://bulletproofmusician.com/musicians-seem-memorization-naturals-can-become-one/) (https://bulletproofmusician.com/musicians-seem-memorization-naturals-can-become-one/).

And University of Arizona viola professor/"brain enthusiast" Molly Gebrian (with guest co-host, percussionist Rob Knopper) did a whole [podcast episode on the neuroscience of memory](https://bulletproofmusician.com/molly-gebrian-on-efficient-effective-and-reliable-memorization-strategies-for-musicians/) (https://bulletproofmusician.com/molly-gebrian-on-efficient-effective-and-reliable-memorization-strategies-for-musicians/) a couple years back, and has a great [video series on performing from memory](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7PO5fyuz1-xCNCZ9hii7SUpwQzLUZIU3) (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7PO5fyuz1-xCNCZ9hii7SUpwQzLUZIU3) which gets into the mental aspect of memorization too.

	Day 1	Day 7	Follow Up
Performance Modality 1 (notated)			
Mental Practice	43.43 ± 9.58	115.06 ± 10.03	95.50 ± 10.31
Physical Practice	31.03 ± 9.58	73.17 ± 10.03	33.43 ± 10.31
Performance Modality 2 (played)			
Mental Practice	45.78 ± 8.72	114.11 ± 8.82	107.07 ± 11.47
Physical Practice	47.91 ± 8.72	110.50 ± 8.82	78.39 ± 11.47

COUNTERINTUITIVE SINGING TIP: STOP LISTENING (AND START FEELING)

by Michael Gallant
from discmakers.com

Focusing on how your singing feels rather than how it sounds can help you create a more nuanced and personal vocal performance.

"How's my pitch?"

"Is my tone too gritty?"

"Do I need to sound breathier?"

When you're working on vocals for your recordings or live shows, it's easy to ask yourself a million self-critiquing questions and end up feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or even paralyzed. That's why it's sometimes best to ignore how your singing *sounds* and focus only on how it *feels*.

I originally heard this singing tip from my father, a long-time vocalist who has sung with large and small choruses across a variety of genres. At first, the approach felt counterintuitive, but after spending time singing and paying attention only to how I felt, not how I sounded, I found the experience to be transformative.

Here are a few reasons why not listening to yourself can actually elevate your singing — and some advice on how to put the strategy into action.

Learn to trust yourself

In general, the more singing you do, the more you'll be able to rely on muscle memory to guide you through your performance rather than having to consciously think about the process every time you open your mouth. As you put in hours singing with the singular goal of feeling relaxed, fluid, and comfortable — and not worrying about actively managing or judging any aspect of your sound — you may find yourself thinking less about the mechanics each time, which is a very good thing. The more you can make healthy singing technique a default reflex, the freer you'll feel as a performer and artist.

Your audience hears you differently
than you hear yourself

The way your ears interpret your singing in real time can be quite different from how others experience it. Even if you perform with high-quality in-ear monitors, you're still only getting an approximation of [what your audience takes in](https://blog.discmakers.com/2016/12/more-performance-tips-for-singers-with-cari-cole/%20target=) (https://

blog.discmakers.com/2016/12/more-performance-tips-for-singers-with-cari-cole/%20target=), since your monitor mix inevitably blends in with the sound carried straight to your ears from within your body.

Some may see this dynamic as a curse, but it can be freeing as well. Unless you record yourself and listen on playback, you can't know exactly what your audience hears when you sing — so what happens if you just stop worrying about your audience's perception entirely? Less energy spent trying to twist your vocal performance into how you think you *should* sound means greater energy to pour into the emotion of the song itself.

Reduce vocal tension

When I actively worry about intonation or vocal tone, I find myself trying to micro-manage my delivery and technique, which can easily lead to physical tension. If I'm hyper tuned-in to my own vocal sound and perceive myself falling slightly flat on a high note, for example, an unhealthy level of throat tightness can be the next breath away.

Ignoring how you sound and focusing only on how you feel can change the equation. If you're not actively worrying about hitting a note spot on, there's nothing to correct, and no muscles to squeeze to get there. And the more you're able to relax and enjoy the experience of singing itself, the better your pitch will naturally become.

Similarly, the more you can focus on singing in a way that just feels good, the better you'll sound overall. I recently recorded myself singing without listening to myself and was pleasantly surprised by the result; on playback, my voice had layers of resonance and richness that I hadn't heard before.

Less sound, more emotion

As mentioned above, if you spend your energy trying to tweak your tone or pitch as you sing, you're ignoring the most important part of your performance — delivering a powerful vocal that means and communicates something. See what happens when you forget about everything other than melting into the song you're singing and communicating something true and meaningful through your vocals.

Own your sound

It's entirely normal to want to emulate your singing idols. The problem is, you live in your own body, not theirs. While some singers can [develop the skills to become true vocal chameleons](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Q8uYUjUo54) (https://

(Continued on page 12)

COUNTERINTUITIVE SINGING TIP (continued)

(Continued from page 11)

blog.dismakers.com/2014/05/singing-tips-for-vocalists-in-any-genre/), most are best served developing their own unique voices — not trying to mimic others.

As you practice, perform, and record, see what happens when you ignore how you sound in the moment and focus purely on a relaxed and healthy vocal technique. Feel the message and emotion of the song, and pour 100 percent of yourself into your performance. You may be surprised at how uniquely your voice develops as a result.

In my own experience, when I started singing without caring about how I sounded, singing became easier. But more than that, when I'd hear myself on playback, I noticed subtle shifts in my pronunciation and phrasing that made my vocals sound more vivid, more like *me*.

Keep context in mind

Singing without listening to yourself is not an excuse to deliver a bad, ear-rending performance. It's also not a license to throw good technique, pitch, and taste to the wind and wail like a dying cat (unless it serves your song!). Rather, it's an intriguing strategy to experiment with — and if you like the results (as I did), keep going.

Due to inflation and food price increases the 5 second rule has been extended to 10 seconds

HOW TO SOFTEN YOUR SINGING VOICE

by James Mann
from becomesingers.com

People who can sing softly like Don Mclean or Elvis Presley, for example, are pleasant to listen to. In fact, listening to them can really relax your mind and make you swoon. They are undoubtedly gifted with golden voices. Singing softly is a learnable skill although it is challenging. Once you learn how to sing softly, you can reach out to the emotions of other people. You can connect deeply with them. Thus, if you want to become an expert singer, you should learn how to sing softly in more natural and professional ways without been sounded too weak in your voice.

The act of singing has its physical aspect which means that we can never really sing without the essential organs that make singing possible. These organs are the lungs, larynx, chest, head cavities, skeletons, and the tongue. Singers, however, vary in their singing styles and voices. Some have vocal ranges of more than three octaves. Dimash, for example, an exceptional Kazakh singer, has a vocal range of 6 octaves. Some singers, however, have limited vocal ranges; but they can also sing well. They can sing softly, and they are also well-applauded by their audience. It doesn't matter, therefore, whether your vocal range is wide. As long as you can sing softly, you will be very much appreciated by your audience.

Simple Techniques on How to Sing Softly

The ideal voice is balanced with the different parts of your body that contribute to creating good sound all working in perfect unison. It requires achieving balance in your resonating cavities, achieving free flow of air. Attaining perfect resonance, producing pure timber, and obtaining proper breathing. Here are some simple tips on how to sing softly:

- 1) Don't be Embarrass to Open Wide Your Mouth When You Sing

The quality of your voice, however, is substantially determined by how much you open your mouth. Many singers don't realize this. Because they need to look good while singing, they usually tend to open less their mouth when they sing. In a way, this compromises the sound that they produce.

Try the usual test on how to determine if you are opening your mouth correctly when you are singing. Take a video of yourself while you are singing. You can also sing while standing in front of a mirror. You

(Continued on page 13)

HOW TO SOFTEN YOUR SINGING VOICE (continued)

(Continued from page 12)

will readily notice that your mouth isn't moving much when you sing. So, try to open wide your mouth. Drop down your jaw when you sing. You will notice a significant improvement in your vocal tone and your vocal placement. Always practice singing with a more open mouth. Soon you will see enough improvement in your voice.

2) Develop Your Breathing from Diaphragm

Breathing is crucial to producing a soft voice. If you don't have good breathing habit, you will end up unable to prolong your notes and losing breath while singing. But if you want to make your voice more listener's friendly, you need to be aware of your breathing, and you need to control your breathing perfectly. Various breathing exercises could help you develop a stronger diaphragm and abdomen.

Remember to do at least several minutes of breathing exercises daily. You should develop the habit of breathing from your diaphragm by exercising in front of a mirror. If your chest and shoulders rise, your breathing is too shallow. You should practice using your diaphragm by putting your hand on your abdomen. Then, try to push your hand using your abdomen as you breathe. Do this every day for a few minutes, and you will undoubtedly improve your breathing eventually.

3) Develop Natural Vibrato

Enhancing your voice with a little vibrato can undoubtedly improve your voice and soften it. You can develop your vibrato by practicing in front of the mirror likewise. So, take your stance in front of a mirror. Then, press both your hands to your chest. Lift your chest high. Then begin to breathe in. Afterward, you exhale slowly without dropping your chest. With your chest lifted, sing a note and prolong it. Halfway along the note, you should press on your chest while keeping your jaw open. Relax your neck likewise as you sing. You will surely produce a good vibrato. As you practice this, you will notice that your voice will gain enough vibrato. You should not, however, overdo your vibrato because if you do, you may sound awkward along the way.

4) Try to Sing High Notes while You think Low

The mind is full of programs. One mental program

is quite obvious—the mind tends to get nervous whenever you are about to sing high notes. Now, if you can reverse or alter that program, you will surely not get nervous when you are about to sing high notes. So, the next time you are about to sing high notes, think of something that goes down. Think that you are simply transitioning from a higher place to a lower place. Think low therefore when you go on high notes. As your mind adapts to this new program, you will surely find it easy to reach high notes without a hitch.

5) Ensure that You are breathing in Enough Air

Good airflow and breathing are crucial to good singing. Many singers are often carried away by the excitement and fun of performing. More often, they forget to breathe properly. Hence, they sometimes quickly lose air. Thus, you should practice correct breathing. Make it a habit to exercise your breathing every day to ensure that when you are in an actual singing performance, you will not lose enough air.

6) Don't sing too Loud, But Instead, Use a Microphone!

As a singer, I tend to sing sharply if I overextend my vocal cords and sing at the top of my lungs. I've noticed that this is not good. However, if I am using a microphone, I can easily modulate my voice without straining my vocal cords. Decreasing one's volume allows me to relax my vocal cords and sing softly.

7) Shaping Your Vowels & Consonant Properly

Using the vowels properly through the song will help your singing voice sound more smoothly and softly. And it will make your singing voice flow across words without any sense of breaks and forcefulness. However, the vowels and consonants must be applied hand in hand to bring out the softness parts of your voice more effectively.

Extra Tips to Make Your Singing Voice Sound Soft

Aside from the first tips mentioned above for softening your voice, there are also other things that you can do to make your voice sound soft.

- Don't over-enhance your voice. Some songs are better sung with simplicity. Sometimes, the more you over-amplify your singing style, the more it becomes less soft to the ears. Thus, in many instances, it is better to let your natural voice come out untouched.
- Learn to transition from chest voice to head tone smoothly. You can do this by constant practice.

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HOW TO SOFTEN YOUR SINGING VOICE
(continued)

(Continued from page 13)

The smoother the transition from one pitch to another, the softer your voice would be.

- Learn to put dynamics into your singing style. You can do this by learning how to adjust your vocal cords properly from one pitch to another. You should also learn to prolong the singing of some words, moving from loud to soft voice smoothly.
- Sing more often on your most natural vocal range. This means that you should choose songs that are within your natural range. Your choice of songs will undoubtedly play well in enabling you to sing softly.
- Reduce singing into a level as if you are just speaking. If you can do this just like what Don Mclean or Karen Carpenter did before, you can surely make your voice sound softer. In your speaking voice, your larynx and vocal cords are in their most relaxed and balanced level. So, if you can make your singing voice to sound as if you are just speaking, your singing voice will surely become soft.

Things You Should Refrain from Doing

- There are also things that you should not do in order to make your voice sound soft.
- First, you should not overextend your vocal cords. This brings imbalance in the airflow and makes your vocal cords tense.
- You should not raise your larynx. This would prevent your natural tone from getting out of your mouth.
- You should not overly relax your vocal cords because you will lose more air if you do it.

**I've always wondered if
songbirds get a little
annoyed at hummingbirds,
because they won't learn the
lyrics.**



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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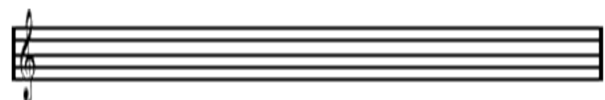


Here's a simple way to financially support the Big Orange Chorus, at no cost to you! If you shop at any of the more than 400 merchants or like to purchase eGift Cards, FlipGive will give us back from 1% to 20%, depending on the merchant.

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.



FREE YOUR VOICE

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

Breath Management (continued)

If you persistently run out of breath in phrases, your diaphragm muscles may not be strong enough. In this case, do the pressurized 'ssss' exercise mentioned a few pages back. Use your abdominal muscles to drive the breath with sharp, explosive power that instantly makes your entire abdomen 'rock' hard. Particularly feel your solar plexus, which is the fleshy part an inch or two below your sternum. when you hiss the breath out, you should feel the solar plexus press outward strongly. If it does not, adjust how you expel the breath powerfully until it does. check you are isolating the muscles properly and staying free in your neck and shoulders and not collapsing your torso. You will find your muscles tire quickly, but repeat regularly to improve your strength and stability. When you sing, you will not need to use such muscle power, but it is good to strengthen those muscles with exercises so they will be stronger than is perhaps needed. vary the speed of your 'ssss' pulses so some are longer and sustained and other are short and rapid.

Next month we will begin on The Jaw, Tongue, and Larynx.

As beauty and stability of tone do not depend upon excessive pressure of the breath, so the muscular power of the organs used in singing does not depend on convulsive rigidity, but in that snakelike power of contracting and loosening, which a singer must consciously have under perfect control.

-Lilli Lehmann

Crock Pox



FREE SINGING TIPS

by Yvonne DeBandi
from a2z-singing-tips.com

A = Airflow. Never hold your breath while singing. The airflow is what creates and carries your vocal tone, so keep it flowing. Avoid Clavicular Breathing and Belly Breathing -- instead, learn the proper way to breathe for singing, called diaphragmatic breathing. Fill the lower portion of your lungs as if you had an inner tube around your waist that you were **evenly** filling.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Nicole LeGault
from a2z-singing-tips.com

A is for Attitude. How many singers does it take to change a light bulb? Only one, but the world has to revolve around them, ha ha. All kidding aside, being a vocalist is a very courageous and naked way of expressing yourself. If you aren't open and unashamed, your audience will not be able to develop an empathetic rapport.

FREE SINGING TIPS

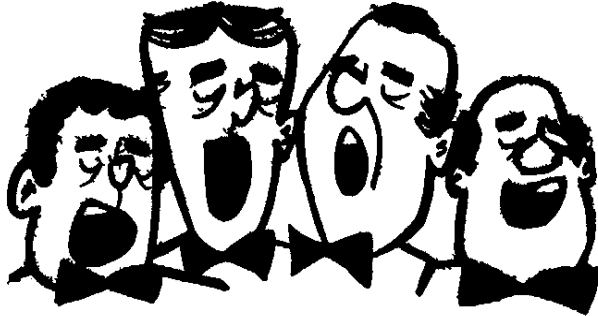
by Mick Walsh
from a2z-singing-tips.com

A. Air. Learn to control your airflow. Make sure you breathe from the diaphragm and not from the upper chest area (also known as Clavicular Breathing.). Try to imagine your lungs filling up from the bottom to the top.....OK, who's that student at the back standing on their head? That's not what I meant!

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Teri Danz
from a2z-singing-tips.com

A = Athlete -- Singers need to train their body like an athlete. Your body is your instrument. Put a priority on: 1) taking care of your body -- rest, food and warming up to sing, and 2) building and maintaining your instrument.



QUARTET CORNER

Our quartets are regrouping.

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 QUARTETS

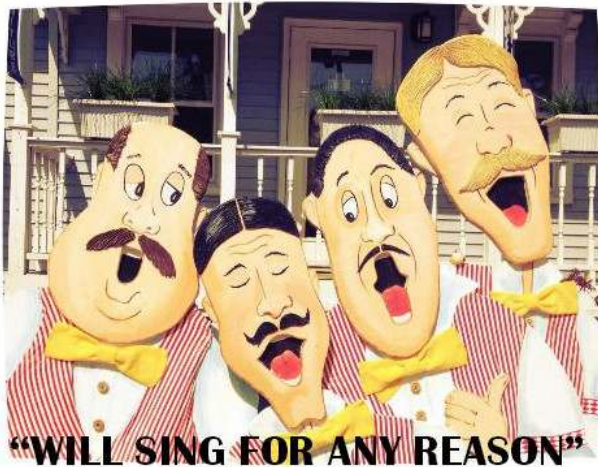


No Name Yet

? tenor
? lead
? baritone
? bass

No Name Yet

? tenor
? lead
? baritone
? bass



Big Orange Chorus

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Thu	02 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	09 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	16 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	23 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	30 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	07 Jul	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	14 Jul	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	21 Jul	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	28 Jul	Shepherd of the Woods

BIRTHDAYS

Bob Thau	05 May
Mike Sobolewski	13 May
Frank Nosalek	28 May

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Thu	28 Jul	Spring Show
Sat	30 Jul	Assisted Living Show
Fri	21 Oct	Sunshine District Convention
Sat	22 Oct	Sunshine District Convention
Sun	23 Oct	Sunshine District Convention

...more to come

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
Roger Erastaine	Ron Blewett
Jon Greene	Jim Harper
G Lane	Brandon Edwards
Joe McLean	Adom Panshukian
Christian Cornella-Carlson	
Michael Reynolds	Kyle Batchelder
David Brown	Thomas Barhacs
Pat McCormack	David Brown
Richard Breault	Justin McGhie
Emily Dearing	Sean Henderson
Doug Owens	Chris Redman
Steve Moody	Jeff Fullmer
Doug Schultz	Ryan Himes
Ron Geno	Mike Ryan

⇒ **BIG O BUCK\$** ⇐

BIG O BUCKS SCHEDULE

...more to come

WELCOME

NEWEST MEMBERS

Les Mower	April
Ray Parzik	August
Ed Fitzgerald	September

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.

2021 DIRECTING TEAM



Jay Giallombardo
Front Line
Director

2021 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



vacant
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 24 Jun.
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
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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