



# 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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## AHSOW - ANCIENT HARMONIOUS SOCIETY OF WOODSHEDDERS

from ahsow.org

In a sense, AHSOW began the night Owen Cash and his friends sang on that rooftop in Tulsa. The first song ever sung was "Down Mobile". There was no arrangement, no sheet music. The lead sang and the other three other parts harmonized by ear. And that's the way it went. For years and years after SPEBSQSA was founded, every song was harmonized by ear. Written arrangements were not used. In fact, there was quite an uproar around the Society when the first printed arrangements and songbooks were published. Today, the existence of written arrangements is accepted without question. And singing them is what a lot of Barbershoppers choose to do, in part because they have never been introduced to the idea that they don't NEED them.

Founded by Charlie Nichols at the 1977 SPEBSQSA International Convention, AHSOW originated from the vision of Barbershoppers who remembered that our Society began as a "woodshedding" organization. Authentic woodshedding has again caught on as a favorite activity for Barbershoppers.

The good news is that Barbershoppers have the opportunity to participate in the part of our art that got everything started — woodshedding. Authentic woodshedding is the heart of barbershop and is way cooler than just singing tags in the stairwell.

For too many years, opportunities to woodshed were unavailable to Barbershoppers except at Internationals, Mid-Winters, and Harmony University, functions that not all Barbershoppers could attend, or where they were otherwise obligated, and thus unable to indulge in woodshedding. AHSOW's District Woodshedding program has brought quality woodshedding to the District level. This has given many, many more Barbershoppers the chance to learn to woodshed and refine their abilities to create harmonies "by ear."

# WANTED!!

## MEN WHO LIKE TO SING!



## 2022 Board of Directors

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Webmaster:  
Frank Nosalek

Chorus Manager:  
vacant

Uniform Manager:  
Dave Walker

## 2022 Committees

Pole Cat Program:  
vacant

Community Outreach:  
vacant

Show Chairman:  
vacant

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see my weekly  
publication:  
**Orange Zest**

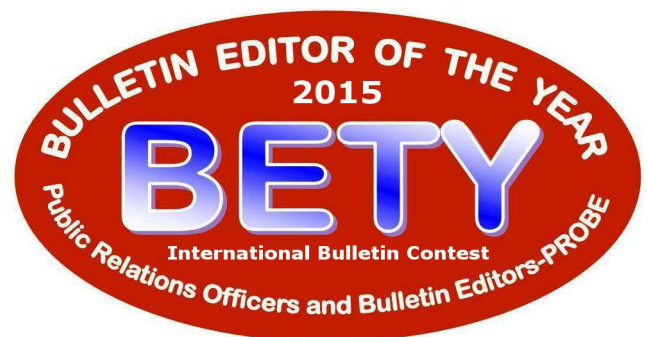
## EDITORIAL

We've got music selected (some new) for a summer 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.



## MAGIC CHORAL TRICK #384 UNTAPPED MAGIC

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

A few friends and I have made an amazing discovery. Perhaps there's no such thing as a community being chorally saturated. Perhaps there's always room for one more group, if the conditions are right.

Late last spring I was approached by several women who had had the idea to form a choir out in the community where they lived. I realized that it was true that most people who are involved in singing groups do travel in to the city to get their weekly fix.

Because I had run out of weeknights when I'd be able to direct such a group, I suggested something that I'd been talking about for years – a morning choir. In fact, for ages I'd been asking everyone I knew why it was that community choirs don't normally sing during the day, especially in light of the fact that a huge proportion of many of our choirs is the retired population. Many of our older people are no longer comfortable driving at night, and feel they have to drop out of the choirs they've enjoyed for decades.

My friends wanted to start a women's choir – so at 10:00 am on a Thursday morning in August we had a meeting for any women who might be interested. No audition, no judging, just singing. I had expected between 20 and 30, and 64 showed up.

Then at our first rehearsal last Thursday morning we had 80 women come to sing.

And it's crazier than that. When all the names from both the meeting and the rehearsal were tabulated, there were 105!!

I'm putting this out there for any and all directors and chorus boards who may be experiencing a scarcity of singers. They're out there!!! This was clearly a previously untapped resource.

What I don't know is if there would be the same kind of response for a men's or a mixed voice chorus.

Yes, I do have some crossover from my other singing groups, but there are also women who showed up to sing – for the first time since they were children, when someone had told them just to mouth the words.

Next target group? The early morning before work corporate crowd! The gyms downtown are full by 5:30. Surely there are people who'd love to sing for an hour before work. We could call it The Dawn Chorus!!

In fact, I'm issuing a challenge to all large companies out there. Form employee choirs, and have them compete in singing competitions against one another. A whole new level of fun and corporate pride!

The world is rich with singers, we just have to find the conditions that are needed and wanted, and provide them.

## IT'S SO HOT, THE DOG MELTED!!!





## THE CONCERT IS TOMORROW

by Brody McDonald  
from choirbites.com

The day before a concert, my singers are suddenly VERY CONCERNED. THE CONCERT IS TOMORROW! They rehearse with more energy and attention. They ask questions that have been answered many times before. Questions like...

- Where is that cutoff?
- Can you play my notes in this section?
- What time do we show up?
- Is it OK if I wear (whatever it is)?
- Can I be late if I'm coming from a game?

Does this happen to you? Even after years of teaching, this never ceases to amaze me. It happened with the Spring musical too... the calendar provided more pressure than I could. Does it have to be this way?



A friend of mine used to do this thing called THE PUSH. He would let certain aspects of rehearsal stay very relaxed for a long time. Talking was ok, poor posture was ok, etc. Then, two weeks before a concert, they had THE PUSH. In THE PUSH, everything had to be fantastic. I always thought, "This is a physical activity... so anything that's good two weeks before the concert is good all the time, no?" After all, practice makes PERMANENT (not perfect).

When I started teaching in Kettering, my students used to steer into procrastination. They called it THE

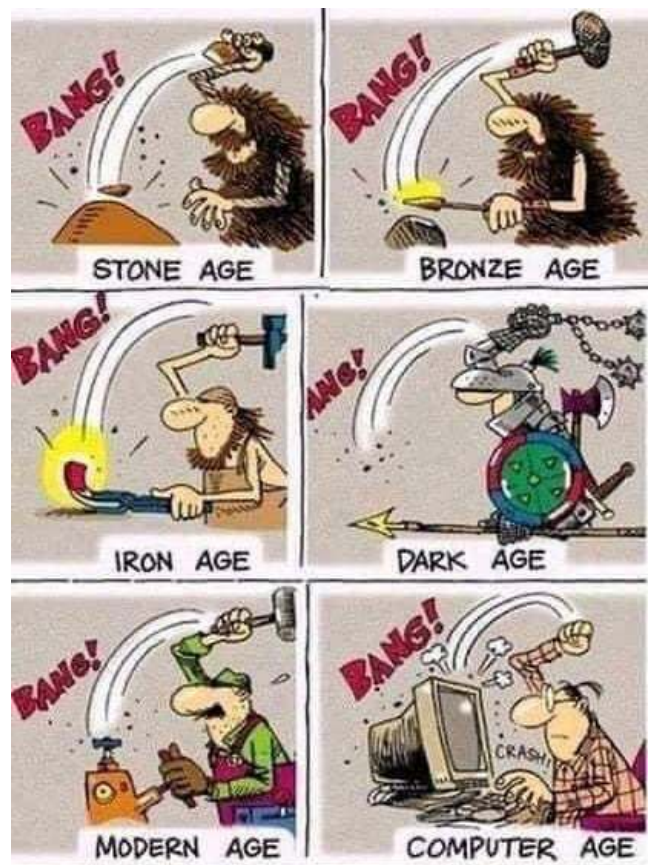
KETTERING MIRACLE. It referred to "everything being in bad shape but coming together at the last minute."

My approach is to be consistent - to train as one hopes to perform. As humans, that isn't always going to function at 100%, but it's a goal. I can't do THE PUSH. I can't do THE KETTERING MIRACLE. I do THE WORK ETHIC.

I once read "to be productive, treat every day at work like it's the day before vacation." That made sense to me. Usually before a vacation there is a mad scramble to get projects done, so they don't mentally weigh on a person trying to relax.

I have seen on several occasions (in bars and restaurants) the sign: FREE BEER TOMORROW. It sounds exciting but soon the gimmick is revealed...

I wonder if that's a mindset we should develop: THE CONCERT IS TOMORROW. I might even make a poster for my classroom. We (singers and director alike) should strive to always rehearse like THE CONCERT IS TOMORROW.



## BARBERSHOP QUARTET PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

from bqpa.com

The Barbershop Quartet Preservation Association (BQPA/PIONEERS) is an ever-growing group of singers dedicated to the preservation and perpetuation of the traditional style of barbershop quartet music described in our style definition. Barbershop harmony developed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries and is one of only two uniquely American musical art forms. We believe that barbershop harmony is an important component of the American cultural fabric. BQPA is committed to perpetuating the traditional style of barbershop quartet singing by performing the music as it was during its zenith of popularity. We do this for our own amusement and to educate and proselytize the American public. We encourage barbershop quartet activities based on the enjoyment of singing four-part harmony in an atmosphere of fun and good fellowship. We wish to serve and educate our communities through the medium of barbershop quartet singing.

### BQPA/Pioneers' Vision

The Barbershop Quartet Preservation Association / Pioneers is an organization of guys and gals who love to sing in quartets. We believe in doing, not just listening. We get together a couple of times a year to do just that. We don't assign any music, we don't set any pre-requisites. We sing all the old songs we know and love, in quartets that form spontaneously and last for a song, for an hour, for a day, for a weekend, and then melt away, perhaps to re-form in other, different combinations.

We come together to sing the old songs, from Stephen Foster's time to perhaps the 1960s or so. We love well-known, singable quartet arrangements from the 1940s to the 1980s. We do some woodshedding, from memory and from lyrics books, although that's not our primary focus. We do quite a bit of tagging, but there are many, many folks who very much prefer singing whole songs to crushing tags, and we love having organized quartets come to sing for us and with us. The one thing we don't do is chorus or gang singing: we're quartetters.

We generally prefer arrangements which are clearly less complicated than most of the songs performed in competitions these days. We tend to avoid the sophistication of which Val Hicks warned back in 1974, as well as the hyper-competitive mind-set that seems to prevail in recent times. We favor the chords that folks like Molly Reagan and Jim Richards describe as ringing the best, in simple progres-

sions that people like Bob Johnson and Dave Stevens have reminded us work the best. After all, they sound the best, don't they? Think of the barbershop songs sung by quartets such as the Buffalo Bills, the Confederates, the Suntones, the Nighthawks, the Cracker Jills, the Four Rascals, Dealer's Choice, Bluegrass Student Union, the Boston Common. Even Old School, albeit a recent Champ, is committed to singing arrangements sung by some of those famous old quartets.

We permit, yea, we encourage quartets to form, informally, and then to sing at will, for most of the hours during our festivals. That's what we come together for. We do assemble quartets by the luck of the draw for our Friday evening pick-up quartet contest. But that's the only organized construction of foursomes that's done, and even that is made possible by folks voluntarily dropping their names in the hat. The rest of the time, quartets form of their own volition, organically, and sing what they want.

Ultimately, we recognize that we are fellow travelers with men and women singers who belong to various other barbershopping organizations, and we welcome them all to join with us in making wonderful sounds, amazing music, in what we believe are the best of all a capella groupings: barbershop quartets. When you think about it, on a certain level we are actively engaged in preserving and encouraging barbershop quartet singing. But when it comes down to it, all we want is to find three other voices, pick a song, blow a pitch and let fly. All that other good stuff will simply follow along.

Let's sing...



**GREG CLANCY  
ON SINGING FREELY**

by Liz Garnett  
from [helpingyouharmonise.com](http://helpingyouharmonise.com)

I mentioned in my first post about BABS Directors Academy last month that I had a pile of notes about Greg's thoughts on freedom in singing that deserved a post of their own in due course. The moment has come to revisit these and reflect on them.

This theme emerged when Greg was talking about the importance of the warm-up (something on which our hearts beat as one). His goal is to get the chorus in a certain spot, 'vocally, mentally, spiritually,' and will often undertake this himself. If you do delegate the warm-up, he added, you need to be sure that it is someone who really understands what you're aiming for in this.

What I find so interesting with how Greg talks about his processes is that he so often starts with very practical matters – in this case, the Vocal Majority's approach to vocal production – but these always connect into more holistic questions. So his discussion of how they focus on a sense of lift, both physically (cheeks, soft palate), and psychologically (imagine the sound coming from your hairline) morphed straight into considering the chorus's emotional state.

People often arrive at rehearsal carrying a lot of stress from their daily lives. Singing with freedom isn't just about removing tension from the tongue and jaw, it's about the whole process of helping people shed that stress. (Which of course often settles in the tongue and jaw – the physical and the emotional work together.) He talked about the warm-up's role in developing emotional engagement: 'unlocking the emotional scar tissue' (he said that term was really too strong for what he meant but it expressed the idea clearly).

The goal of the warm-up is, he said, to help people sing 'out of their boxes'. Regular readers of this blog will know that this is a phrase that I have been thinking about a lot in the context of remote rehearsing. The zoom experience, of singing by yourself, often in a small room, visually cooped up in little squares on the screen can get people singing within themselves, and disconnecting the voice from both its physical support and its communicative intent. It's something The Telfordaires discovered had happened when we were able to meet for live rehearsals during the autumn, and has shaped our approach since.

So I was primed and ready for the wonderful realisation that Greg's use of the same phrase led me to that these boxes come to regular rehearsals too. They are the boxes of our own making that we build round ourselves, to protect us in daily life. We hide the most precious bits of ourselves in them – our joy, our hopes, our fears, our desires – to prevent them getting damaged by malicious, or simply uncaring, people we encounter. And it is those precious, most human parts of us that make our voices beautiful when we sing.

Greg went on to talk a lot about how freedom is thus a product of safety. The warm-up, and by extension the rehearsal as a whole, is about creating an environment in which people can feel safe to express themselves, supported by the group, which is bigger than all its members.

There were two specific things he mentioned as part of this process that readers of Daniel Coyle's *The Culture Code* will recognise. First is about how the response to error creates or destroys safety. Greg talked about not merely tolerating error but actively welcoming it. He spoke of asking, 'Who made that mistake?' and then celebrating when someone answered. The rationale was educational: if they know they did it wrong, I know they can fix it, so they're already half way there, whereas if people haven't realised they've made a mistake, we have a lot more work to do. But the trust that engenders goes beyond the educational.

The second was the importance of frequent positive reinforcement. You can't just say something encouraging once and expect it to create a safe space. You have to send the cues constantly, saturating the experience with the message that people are valued for themselves, with all their flaws, and that mistakes are part of the process.

The other thought I had about this integration of vocal and emotional freedom was that, while it's relevant for all singers, it may be particularly relevant to men. Western culture's standard models of masculinity often value stoicism, and devalue vulnerability. It may be harder for men to allow what's in their boxes to show because their socialisation has encouraged the building of strong boxes to remove emotionality from their public personas. One of the things that singing (and indeed the arts in general) offers is the opportunity to connect with that part of the self in a context where emotional literacy is not merely legitimated but valued.



## AN "AWKWARD" WAY TO INCREASE MOTIVATION AND MAKE MORE PROGRESS TOWARDS YOUR GOALS

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

Have you ever found yourself wanting to improve yourself or your skills in some way, but unable to make meaningful progress? Even though you know exactly what you need to do to improve?

Like maybe you want to be a better sight-reader, and know that you ought to read through more music with friends, but keep making excuses or avoid the uncomfortable situations that would involve sight-reading?

Or maybe you'd like to become more comfortable with public speaking, and know that it would help to participate in a local Toastmasters group, but feel really awkward when attending meetings and participating?

### The big challenge of personal growth

Whether we ourselves are trying to grow in some way – or trying to help our students improve in some area – it's pretty common to run into a lot of internal resistance.

Because the fundamental challenge with personal growth, is that it's really hard to know if we're actually growing or not in the moment.

Like, when you're reading through quartets with friends and quietly freaking out about having lost count of the rests and trying to figure out if you missed your entrance or not, how do you know if you're getting better or not? Because in the immediate present, it just feels super uncomfortable and awkward, right?

There's no way to know if experiences like this are helping you become a more effective sight-reader until days, weeks, or months later.

In other words, to quote the researchers whose work we'll look at today, "the benefits are delayed and the costs are immediate."<sup>1</sup>

### The need for progress feedback

And the problem with delayed benefits, is that we do need "progress feedback" or some indication that we're making progress towards our goals, in

order to have the motivation we need to keep putting ourselves in these uncomfortable situations.

So...is there anything we can do to stay motivated and persevere through the uncomfortable growth challenges that we must face on the path towards awesomeness?

### Embracing discomfort?

So...progress feedback is usually something positive that lets us know we are headed in the right direction. But these researchers wondered...could *discomfort* be used too?

Like, in the absence of any clear indication as to whether you're growing or not, could the experience of discomfort itself be used as a sign that you are indeed making progress towards your goal, and increase your motivation to continue?

What backwards bizarro-ness is this you ask? Well, let's take a closer look...

### An improv study

A pair of researchers (Woolley & Fishbach, 2022) recruited 557 participants in 55 introductory-level improvisation classes at The Second City Training Center in Chicago to take part in a videotaped improv exercise.

The exercise was called "Give Focus," and sounds a little like freeze tag, sort of. Basically, one person in each group "has focus" and gets to move around the room and make any physical movements they would like to, for however long as they want, while everyone else stays frozen. When the "has focus" person would like to pass that role to someone else, they do so by communicating this non-verbally (e.g. by pointing or nodding at someone), at which point they freeze, and the new "has focus" person is free to move around the room however they'd like.

### Two groups

Before the exercise began, each class was divided into smaller subgroups of 3-7 participants, each of which was assigned to either a **control** condition or a **"seeking discomfort"** condition.

The control groups were asked to pay attention to whether the exercise was **working** (i.e. "While you play, see if the exercise is working.") or whether they felt they were **developing new skills and improving** (i.e. "Your goal for the next exercise is to feel yourself developing new skills. Developing new

(Continued on page 8)

### AN "AWKWARD" WAY (continued)

(Continued from page 7)

skills is a sign that the exercise is working. In the next game, your goal is to push yourself to develop new skills and feel yourself improving.”).

On the other hand, the “seeking discomfort” participants were asked to focus more on doing things **outside their comfort zone** that made them feel **awkward and uncomfortable** (i.e. “Your goal for the next exercise is to feel awkward and uncomfortable. Feeling uncomfortable is a sign that the exercise is working. In the next game, your goal is to push past your comfort zone and put yourself in situations that make you feel awkward and uncomfortable.”).

Would there be any measurable differences in how they approached the exercise, or how they felt about the experience afterwards?

Persistence, risk-taking,  
and perceived achievement

To find out, independent coders were asked to watch the videos and evaluate participants’ a) persistence (the total number of seconds they held onto the focus role) and b) risk-taking (where 1 = no risks; the student with focus is walking around like normal; 4 = some risks; the student is pushing the boundaries somewhat, for example, walking very fast or very slow or moving arms around; 7 = many risks; for example, the student is pushing the boundaries and doing something extremely out of the ordinary or going out on a limb.).

And as the researchers suspected, participants who were encouraged to actively seek out discomfort did indeed spend **more time holding onto focus**. Anywhere from 1.41 seconds to 6.22 seconds longer on average, in each 3-minute exercise.

These “seeking discomfort” participants were also **more likely to take risks** than those in the control group.

And the “seeking discomfort” participants also seemed to feel like they **accomplished more** in the exercise than those who weren’t encouraged to do things that felt uncomfortable.

The researchers didn’t do this for all of the classes, but participants in one set of classes were asked to write down their goals for taking the im-

prov class, and wrote down things like “improve communication skills” or “be more comfortable in front of others.” When asked to rate to what degree they felt they accomplished this goal afterwards, the “seeking discomfort” participants rated their sense of achievement as a **3.52**, compared to 2.68 for the control participants (on a 0-6 scale, where 0=not at all, and 6=very much).

So what can we take away from this?

#### Takeaways

This study made me think of what it’s like to exercise. Like, if you go to the gym and a workout feels easy, you probably don’t feel as good about it as a workout that feels more challenging and physically uncomfortable in the moment (but always in a good “feel the burn” sort of way, rather than in an “injury-waiting-to-happen” sort of way).

So in the same way that we learn to embrace and enjoy a healthy dose of challenge when working out, maybe it could be gratifying and motivating to do so in other areas of our life in which we would like to grow as well.

#### Dosage

That said, I think it’s important to note that participants in this exercise had the ability to choose their “dosage” of discomfort. They didn’t have control over whether they were “it” or not, but they did have control over how far outside their comfort zone they went and how long they chose to stay there.

For instance, they could engage in very “safe” movements if they wanted, or experiment with more unusual movements if they were feeling a little more courageous. And they could easily pass the focus on to someone else immediately, or hold on longer if they were comfortable doing so. In other words, it’s not like they were thrown on stage, with the spotlight on them alone, with no option to leave or escape the spotlight for a fixed period of time.

So whether it’s becoming more comfortable on-stage, developing your sight-reading skills, or mastering the art of small talk, see what happens if you make discomfort itself the goal – while still giving yourself permission to choose your own discomfort “dosage.”

Like sight-reading duos with a really good friend before sight-reading quartets with strangers. Or picking things to sight-read that are just outside your comfort level rather than things with 5 sharps and

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## AN "AWKWARD" WAY (continued)

(Continued from page 8)  
2+ ledger lines.

Where your goal is not just to sight read effectively, but to feel awkward and uncomfortable too!

## HOW TO CONTROL YOUR VOICE AS AN ACTOR OR SINGER

by Joan Manna  
from backstage.com

Whether you're a singer, actor, or creator working in voiceover and audiobooks, knowing how to control your voice can elevate your performance. Exceptional vocal control can turn a good story into an immersive, unforgettable adventure or elevate a well-written lyric.

Our guide to vocal control covers everything you need to know, from preparation to pre-session exercises to pitch control.

### How to get better at controlling your voice

If you want to take your voice from fine to great, we can recommend a few exercises. Here's how to get better voice control for your next performance:

#### Prepare your lips, jaw, and tongue

Voice actor Marc Cashman recommends that vocal performers attempt to recite tongue twisters with their teeth closed tight. (Anything from "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers" to "How much wood would a woodchuck chuck?" will work just fine here.) This forces the lips and tongue to "wake up" so you can start exercising more control over the resulting sound; these benefits will carry over into your performance.

Note that the position of your jaw has a major impact on how sounds take shape as they leave your mouth. You should try to speak each word consistently, with your jaw roughly one or two inches open in order to achieve a clean, even sound. Cashman suggests reading a piece of writing aloud while holding a cork between your teeth. For an additional benefit, attempt to adjust your pitch at the same time: Read the same passages higher, then lower, and work on the parts that

cause you trouble.

#### Find your resonance

As a singer, achieving a loud, clear sound without straining your voice is all about controlling your resonance. Keep your chin pointed down, push air outward with your diaphragm, and sing a basic "do, re, mi" scale to find out where you're losing resonance and forcing yourself to strain. On higher notes, you'll have a natural tendency to push your chin outwards, but this actually requires your vocal folds to do more work. Lightly flexing your pectoral muscles can help keep everything lined up as you perform. When you can go through the whole scale several times without significant strain, you're ready to go.

#### How to control your pitch

Being able to control your pitch during a performance is all about muscle memory. But when you're practicing voice control, understanding a few basic points can help you get much further with each session.

1. Size and shape matter. Picture a trombone. When you pull out the slide, the space where sound resonates becomes larger, so the sound comes out at a lower pitch. The opposite is also true: With the slide withdrawn, the space shrinks, and the pitch grows higher. The pitch that you produce with your voice is similarly determined by the size and shape of your vocal folds and larynx; the larger the size, the lower the pitch, and vice versa.
2. Humming is your friend. Humming is an amazing warmup, because it can help you set your pitch and teach you a thing or two about how that pitch is generated. When you're practicing pitch control, hum a basic tone with one hand on your chest and one or two fingers on your larynx. As you hum, go lower. You should feel the resonance lower in your chest, and you should also feel your larynx (or voice box) fall lower in your throat. Continue to hum while taking your pitch up. The resonance will rise in your chest, and your larynx will rise toward your chin. Next, try this technique while speaking or singing.
3. Practice makes perfect. In order to control your pitch onstage or in the recording booth, you'll need to practice these techniques enough to be able to access them at a moment's notice. By humming and singing while paying close attention to the movements of your larynx and chest, you can find your ideal pitch and learn exactly what it feels like to make a desired sound. When you form a strong association between a certain pitch and a certain feeling in your chest and neck, you'll be able to

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## HOW TO CONTROL YOUR VOICE (continued)

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achieve it with hardly any thought at all.

### Preparing for your vocal session

Follow these tips to prepare for any strenuous session:

1. Drink plenty of water at least one hour beforehand, and do your best to stay well-hydrated at all times.
2. Don't eat large meals before using your voice. If you've eaten recently, make sure to clear out your mouth by brushing, flossing, and using mouthwash before you sing or record. Anything that impedes sound will limit your vocal control.
3. A good vocal warmup is a critical part of every performance. Through your own preferred exercises, you should warm up your larynx and vocal folds so they're ready to go. You should also stretch your body: Look far to the left and right, then up and down, and move your shoulders around. Yawn to stretch out your jaw, then roll your tongue and trill your lips, adding sound gradually as you breathe with your diaphragm.
4. Posture and vocal control are closely connected, so make sure that you get in the right position before you start singing or speaking. When performing, you'll want to maximize the amount of air that can enter your lungs by sitting up straight or standing tall. Keep your feet flat on the ground while your chin stays pointed down in order to control resonance.

### Vocal control starts with vocal care

It's possible to adjust the pitch or quality of your voice in the moment, but there's no substitute for taking good care of your instrument. Vocal care goes beyond just voice and breath technique training, too. Your whole body is your instrument.

- Staying physically fit and active improves your lungs' ability to take in air, making it much easier to sing without awkward pauses and to deliver more memorable songs or monologues.
- Stay hydrated. If you're not well-hydrated, everything you do with your voice will place a greater strain on your vocal folds; you could become hoarse or wear out your instrument prematurely—especially if you might need to scream during your performances.
- Avoid smoke. Similar to not staying hydrated, smoke will dry out your vocal cords and impair

your voice in the long run.

- Make sure that you get plenty of vitamins A, E, and C. These will help preserve the mucus membranes that protect your throat and larynx while you work.

Mastering vocal control takes time—but a little work can go a long way. Everyone has to start from somewhere; and actors, singers, and performers of all kinds can do amazing things when they know how to control their pitch and are practicing vocal control on a regular basis.



**“Musicians must practice a piece until muscle memory sets in. Where the brain is free to forget, but the body still clearly remembers. This gets rid of thoughts allowing the music to simply *FLOW*.”**

[www.musiciansunite.com](http://www.musiciansunite.com)

## LEARN HOW TO AVOID THROAT IRRITATION WHEN SINGING

by Audrey Hunt  
from spinditty.com

Start With This Easy Warm-up Exercise

<https://youtu.be/iWSsLJqX5TM>

### How to Avoid Throat Irritations

Singers and speakers alike will often acquire throat irritations such as a scratchy or dry throat. Sometimes we get hoarse or end up with phlegm which interferes with the voice and interrupts the singing/speaking process.

Any irritation in the larynx can rob the vocalist of a successful performance. The more you learn what to do to avoid throat problems, the better off you will be. Here are the best ways to prevent those pesky irritations:

- When we sing loud and long, we must use proper breath support to avoid abusing the voice. Always measure the amount of air needed for each phrase. When releasing air as you sing, hold back (suspend) and don't allow all the air to escape at once.
- A tickle is caused by dryness in the throat. The dryness can cause coughing. To avoid this, drink plenty of room temperature water to keep the vocal cords hydrated. You may also try drinking warm lemon tea, with a small amount of honey before singing. This is better than anything on the market, which really does nothing anyhow.
- Avoid yelling, screaming, and extreme temperature changes, such as going from air conditioning to a hot temperature, and vice versa. When we yell or scream, it's much like scratching your vocal cords with your fingernails.
- Sleeping with a humidifier is necessary for serious singers. The steam from the humidifier, enters the nose and throat, bringing much-needed moisture to the area. This is highly important for those who sleep with the mouth open, which dries out the throat. You can also inhale steam from a hot shower or boiled water (put a towel over your head when inhaling the steam). Be careful not to get a steam burn.
- Moisture to the throat is needed at all times, particularly when singing and giving speaking presentations. Sip, sip, and then sip some more all day long. Keep a bottle of room tem-

perature water with you at all times. The throat must be wet and moist to function well. Soft drinks and fruit juices are no substitute for water.

- *Never* drink ice-cold water, juice, or soda within three to four hours before singing. Cold temperatures restrict the vocal bands, hindering the vibrations needed to produce sound.
- Avoid coffee on the day you sing. The caffeine in coffee will dry the vocal cords.
- The same holds for alcohol, antihistamines, most medications, and of course, smoking (including second-hand smoke and vaping). If you can't control these substances, you're better off not singing. I have worked with famous singers, who smoke, drink, and do drugs, and I have witnessed what happens to these voices. Some artists have spent a small fortune for "quick fixes" to do a concert and sound great. You would be amazed at who these singers are. So do not fall into these harmful and destructive habits in the first place. It *will* take its toll.
- Warm up your voice before you sing. I can't stress this important step enough. Proper warm-ups prepare your voice for singing and help to prevent damage to the vocal cords. Ten to fifteen minutes is ideal.
- Avoid getting louder as you sing up the scale. Learn to keep your tone balanced with a consistent dynamic.
- Clearing your throat can cause damage over a period of time. Swallow a few times instead.
- Singing should never cause pain. If you feel pain during or following singing, you are doing something wrong. It's not natural to experience any discomfort when vocalizing.
- Over-singing or speaking can do some damage to your throat. Proper technique will help, but never overdue.

Persistent throat pain or hoarseness is an indication that calls for a doctor's diagnosis and treatment. He may refer you to an Otolaryngologist (ENT, Ear, Nose, and Throat Specialist).

### Vocal Abuse and Laryngitis

Laryngitis can last anywhere from a few days to weeks, and it can re-occur again. It can be brought on by a virus. But most singers who contract laryngitis do so by abusing the voice box. The three main reasons for vocal abuse are (1) Yelling or screaming at a sporting event (or at your kids) (2) Singing too loud (over singing) and/or (3) Singing too high.

- *Rest.* If you suspect signs of vocal abuse, you must rest your voice. Stop singing and even

*(Continued on page 12)*



## AVOID THROAT IRRITATION (continued)

(Continued from page 11)

speaking, if you can. Give the vocal bands time to recover and heal. Otherwise, you invite more throat irritation. Bathe your throat with water by drinking not only h2o, but warm lemon with honey tea. Using fresh lemons is best and may bring faster relief.

- **Easy humming.** As soon as your throat is better, introduce easy humming before singing vowels found in words. Correct humming gives you a feeling of vibrations in the lips and lip areas. Take care that you "place" the tone in the Nasopharyngeal (mask) area. Your singing range must be the middle range of your voice so that it is easy and very relaxed.
- **Don't force it.** Never, ever force your singing voice. Good and correct singing should always feel easy. There is never a strained or forced feeling. Like all of Mother Nature's offspring, the human voice should be natural and easy, even when singing loud or high. If you feel any discomfort in the throat area, your singing is incorrect.
- **Breath support.** The best friend to the singer and speaker is breath support. With every note you sing, with each word you form, you absolutely must have enough air for the tone to "ride" on. Diaphragmatic breathing acts as a "seat" or "cushion" for the tone. If you try to sing louder or higher without the support for the voice, you will suffer vocal abuse.
- **Avoid polyps/nodes.** At all costs, you want to avoid growing polyps/nodes on the vocal cords. This type of damage usually requires surgery followed by vocal therapy.
- **Avoid whispering.** There may be times when you are tempted to whisper, especially if you have laryngitis. Whispering puts more strain on the vocal cords. If you must talk do so lightly.
- **Sing within your vocal range.** All notes must feel comfortable and easy. If you feel your throat getting tight with a gripping feeling you are singing beyond your natural range. Stop doing this immediately!

Warning: Sing Within Your Vocal Range

The acceptable singing range for most singers is two to two-and-a-half octaves. although the range can produce notes of higher and lower pitch. Singers with a range of four to five octaves are exceptional.

Classification of voices (soprano, alto, tenor, bass, baritone) is made chiefly according to where the best quality of tone lies within the voice. The maximum range of pitch is determined by the length and size of the vocal folds and the ability to coordinate the vocal muscles with the rest of the body.

Every song you sing should be written in your key. What does this mean? Your singing voice has a range which is limited to how high and how low you can sing. When a singer needs the notes to be higher than written in the original key, it means the song needs to be transposed into a higher key. This works the same for low notes.

Singers do not sing in just one specific key. This is because composers use different keys (scales) to write music. Professional vocalists hire manuscript writers to transpose the music into their specific singing range.

Most people learn a song by imitation. They repeat what they hear regardless of whether the song is too high or too low for them. When they do this they can damage their voice because they strain the vocal cords. The result can be hoarseness, a sore throat, or eventually, vocal nodules will grow on the vocal bands.

This happens often in choirs. Never allow a choir director to make you a soprano if you are an alto...or a tenor if you sing bass.

How do we know if a song is too high or too low for us? It's really quite simple. Listen to your body. If singing a high note doesn't feel easy - the note is too high. The same is true for low notes. Avoid trying to sing any song that is out of your natural vocal range. Otherwise, you risk doing severe damage to your vocal cords.

Sometimes using proper diaphragmatic breathing will help to sing higher notes. This is because higher notes require more air. This doesn't always work. You must be the judge.

The general rule for all singers is: If the notes are difficult to sing - don't sing them. You always have the option of transposing songs that are out of your range into a key that is comfortable for you.

With proper use and care your voice will last you a lifetime.

### No Dairy While Singing

Dairy products are a no-no and must be avoided be-  
(Continued on page 13)

## AVOID THROAT IRRITATION (continued)

(Continued from page 12)

fore singing. Most dairy, especially ice cream and milk, will cause phlegm and mucus to build up. Mucus is thick and makes the singer want to clear their throat. Clearing the throat is not a good habit. Every time you clear your throat, it's like scratching your vocal cords with your finger nails. Instead of clearing your throat, just swallow a few times. If your mouth is dry and water is nowhere to be found, simply and *gently* bite the tip of your tongue. This action will provide you with enough moisture to swallow.

So, save the ice cream for after a concert, or rehearsal. Ditto for other dairy foods.

"Singing lessons are like bodybuilding for your larynx." -- *Bernadette Peters*

### Have a Tickle in Your Throat? Try Salt Water

As a singer, I have found that salt water is one of my best friends. I can't tell you how many thousands of students this easy combination has rescued from a tickle to a full-on sore throat.

- **Saline spray.** My favorite is a bottle of nasal saline spray (salt and water). Simply spray the salt water solution up into your nose to wash out the germs. As soon as you get a tickle, by flushing your nasal passages, you can prevent the mucus from getting too thick.
- **Gargling.** Another way to go is to try gargling with warm salt water. Add a few teaspoons to a half cup of warm water and then gargle. Repeat this several times each day until symptoms disappear.
- **Avoid coffee and chocolate.** The other foods to avoid before singing are coffee and chocolate. The caffeine in both products will dry out the throat. It's important to keep the vocal cords moist during singing.
- **Good health.** Nourish your body with good nutrition and get plenty of sleep. Remember, as singers, we use our entire body when we sing - our bodies are our vocal instrument. Protect it, care for it and remember to "tune it" often with correct warm-ups.

Your voice is meant to serve you with power and beauty all your life. Following these tips will assure you that it will.

Sing with joy.

## Quotes From The Great Tenor Luciano Pavarotti

"I'm not a politician, I'm a musician. I care about giving people a place where they can go to enjoy themselves and to begin to live again. To the man you have to give the spirit, and when you give him the spirit, you have done everything."

"I think a life in music is a life beautifully spent and this is what I have devoted my life to."

"Nothing that has happened has made me feel gloomy or remain depressed. I love my life."

(I love this quote from Pavarotti)

"If children are not introduced to music at an early age, I believe something fundamental is actually being taken from them."

"The whole world will be listening today to his voice on every radio and television station, and that will continue. And that is his legacy. He will never stop." -- *Zubin Mehta*

One of my favorite tenors ~ He sees through his heart

I can't stand to sing the same song the same way two nights in succession, let alone two years or ten years. If you can, then it ain't music, it's close-order drill or exercise or yodeling or something, not music." -- *Billie Holiday*

## Conclusion

The more you know about your voice and how it works, the better you'll be able to use it effectively. Because your singing tone "rides" on-air, I recommend that you study diaphragmatic breathing. Singing properly will save your voice from irritation and strain.

Our voice carries healing energy to both mind and body when we hum. What an amazing and wonderful thing this is. Humming helps to relax the facial muscles and is a good warm-up to do before singing.

Your voice is meant to last a lifetime and with proper treatment, it will. Remember, your natural voice is in the same range as your speaking voice. A healthy neutral voice is comfortable to sing in and does not "give out" or tire easily. Your entire body is your vocal instrument so treat it with care and respect

"We are all inherently musicians. We only have to honor this truth and move with it." *Joanne Crandall*, Author of *Self-Transformation Through Music*.

**DOES SINGING EVERYDAY  
IMPROVE YOUR SINGING?**

by Brock Bisking  
from singing-tips.net

Sing every day this week The best thing you can do to improve your singing is to sing regularly. Singing every day strengthens your vocal cords, improves your vocal range and will gradually lead you to better vocal tone. But didn't we just say that there is such a thing as practicing too much? True, and an amateur singer who belts in his car a tune that is out of reach for 2 hours is significantly different from that of a trained vocalist who practices for 2 hours. What about other benefits of singing every day outside of vocal growth? Some of these may surprise you.

To improve your singing voice, it's essential to be able to separate the components of a killer singing voice and unravel that singer's vocal technique. Aside from perhaps avoiding dairy literally right before singing (and conventional wisdom says that consuming anything except water right before singing is a bad idea, burrito pieces in the throat are no nicer than milk). Speaking of vocal warm-ups, this is one of the most important tips when it comes to taking care of your throat and mouth muscles before singing. The art of learning to sing and how to improve your individual singing voice is learning to work with the tools you already have in your toolbox.

Thanks to the Internet, you can learn to sing and improve your singing skills from home through online courses. Being able to sing is a beautiful gift, but many people misunderstand it and consider singing to be out of reach. I don't disagree with the other things, but I think learning to sing is more than practicing good vocal hygiene; obviously, none of this will hurt, but first and foremost learning to sing is a process of building muscle skills and memory so that you can stay in tune with your body and voice.

**When you learn how to  
play a song, don't just  
learn *your part*.  
Learn how your part  
fits and works with  
*everyone else's part*.**

www.musiciansunite.com



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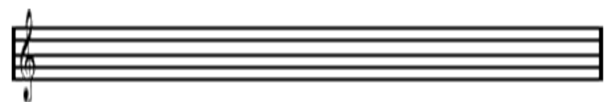


Here's a simple way to financially support the Big Orange Chorus, at no cost to you! If you shop at any of the more than 400 merchants or like to purchase eGift Cards, FlipGive will give us back from 1% to 20%, depending on the merchant.

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

The jaw, tongue and larynx are inextricably linked. The base of the tongue, which you cannot see, is attached to the top of the larynx. the hinge of the jaw is also close to the larynx and to the rear half of the tongue.

Tension in one either causes tension in the others or is caused by tension in the others. The result of that tension is an unpleasant tone with reduced resonance.

A relaxed jaw and tongue will produce a relaxed and free larynx.

Unnecessary tongue tension in one of the most common problems for singers. Many are not aware they are using their tongue muscles more than they need. Good coaching will identify the issue and provide strategies. The challenge then is to create new habits and erase old muscle memory.

Letting go of jaw tension, tongue tension and 'throat tension' can be very difficult. Many singers use these for shaping vowels, pitching notes, and for holding extended notes steady. But excessive muscle tension is detrimental to vocal health, vocal stamina, tone quality, musicality, and - ironically - detrimental to control.

Trace your finger from just above one jaw hinge (near your rear upper molars), under your chin to your Adam's Apple, then over to the jaw hinge on the other side. This is the most common 'band of tension' for singers and speakers.

I call it 'The Quaker Beard' because, like the beards in photos of old-style Quakers, it runs under the chin and across the throat from jaw hinge to jaw hinge but without a moustache. As you sing, feel this band with your hand of finger to identify where you are tensing. Release them and... let it out!

### Common Problems

- Forcing or pressing the voice.
- Opening the jaw unevenly.
- Opening the jaw too far.
- Not opening the jaw enough.
- Jutting the chin and/or neck forward.
- Stiffening or locking the jaw.
- Tongue being pushed down and flattened like with a tongue depressor.

(to be continued next month)...

## FREE SINGING TIPS

by Yvonne DeBandi  
from [a2z-singing-tips.com](http://a2z-singing-tips.com)

B = Breathing properly for singing requires the shoulders to remain down and relaxed, not rise with the breath intake. A singer will gain power to their voice by strengthening the muscles in their ribcage and back.

## FREE SINGING TIPS

by Nicole LeGault  
from [a2z-singing-tips.com](http://a2z-singing-tips.com)

B is for Breath Control. To skillfully control your breath while singing it is required that you relax most muscles, while strenuously exerting others. This is an exercise in coordination that requires concentration and practice – but like anything you've done a thousand times, it eventually becomes second nature.

## FREE SINGING TIPS

by Mick Walsh  
from [a2z-singing-tips.com](http://a2z-singing-tips.com)

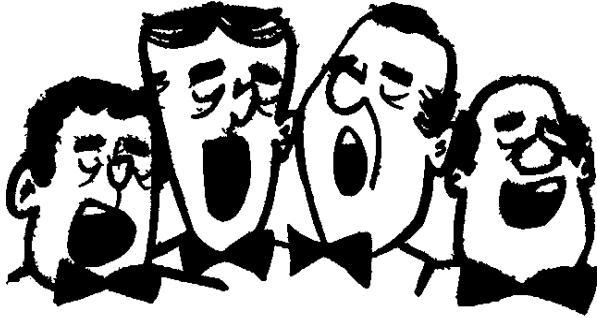
B. Breathe! If you don't you may expire and that can be a little worrying for us coaches. Build up breath control by doing breathing exercises such as; inhale for 4 beats, hold for 4 beats, exhale for 4 beats, then rest for 4 beats, Keep building this up until you can hold your breath for a count of 16 beats or more. Remember if you feel dizzy STOP!

## FREE SINGING TIPS

by Teri Danz  
from [a2z-singing-tips.com](http://a2z-singing-tips.com)

B= Breathing-- Knowing how to breathe in singing is a basic technique. A diaphragmatic approach is important here. Use your back muscles for support. Fill up air into your rib cage and back but not into your throat. This creates a baseline support level called holding up. Then take smaller breaths for phrases as you need them.

## CHAPTER QUARTETS



## 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.



No Name Yet

? tenor  
? lead  
? baritone  
? bass

No Name Yet

? tenor  
? lead  
? baritone  
? bass



# ***Big Orange Chorus***

**REHEARSAL SCHEDULE**

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
Thu	04 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	11 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	18 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	25 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods

**BIRTHDAYS**

Bob Stump 29 July

**PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

Thu	28 Jul	Summer 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

**⇒ BIG O BUCK\$ ⇐**

**BIG O BUCKS SCHEDULE**

...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

**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



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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 August is 24 July.  
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  
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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  
2429 Southern Links Dr  
Orange Park FL 32003



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