



The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



Volume 42 Issue 12

December 2022

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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SUNSHINE DISTRICT FALL CONVENTION

The Fall Convention this year was almost like starting from scratch. Being shut down for the past couple of years and first time out with a brand new venue and property, had its challenges, just like the old days. However, we were extremely fortunate to have some of our "old" event people step up and get us going again. Along with that, we had a great group of volunteers help all over the place during the weekend. That being said, we contacted all of the Production Heads and asked them to submit the names of the volunteers that they worked with over the weekend, and here we are. We've tried not to forget anyone:

Mike Sobolewski - Big O - Host Chapter

Drivers for Judges:

Les Mower	Rick Morin
Ed Fitzgerald	Ken Moyer
Curt Shepherd	Beth Lieberman

Workers for the contest:

Jason Dearing	Tom Frutchey
Curt Shepherd	Rick Morin
Cyrus Dillinger	John Alexander
Ken Moyer	Ed Fitzgerald
Emily Dearing	Jan Sobolewski,
Paula Bartie	Margaret Alexander
Karen Schubert	Sandy Humble
Beth Lieberman	

Breakdown:

Jason Dearing	Ken Moyer
Daniel Pesante	Tim Keatley
Tom Frutchey	Rick Morin
Ed Fitzgerald	

So, on behalf of the Sunshine District, we thank you so much for your time and willingness to help the District "First Time Out"

WANTED!!

MEN WHO LIKE TO SING!



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Jason Dearing

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John Alexander

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VP Marketing & PR:
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Mike Sobolewski

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Music Director:
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Jay Giallombardo

Assistant Director:
vacant

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Vacant

Webmaster:
Frank Nosalek

Chorus Manager:
Les Mower

Uniform Manager:
Dave Walker

2022 Committees

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vacant

Community Outreach:
vacant

Show Chairman:
vacant

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

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

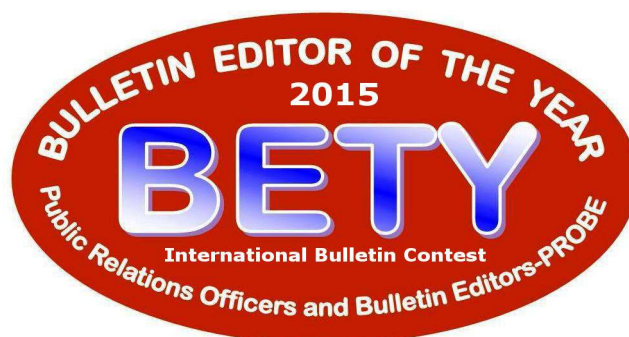
EDITORIAL

'Tis the season. We've got a bunch of Christmas gigs, and a bunch of new members to join in the singing of them. Good times. Let's see how many people will be enticed to come see/hear what we do, and how many will want to try it themselves!

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.



THE VOCAL "WOBBLE"

by Victoria Rapanan
from healthyvocaltechnique.com

Healthy Vibrato

Vibrato, an even tonal oscillation of the pitch center, is a natural phenomena of free and beautiful singing. It is the most accurate barometer of correct vocal production, and is the result of the healthy function of the vocal cords. Vibrato adds shimmer and movement to the voice, and is heard as an integral part of the tone, rather than a pitch deviation.

Excessive, slow vibrato

Excessive vibrato (slow and wide) is commonly called a wobble. It usually results from slackness of the vocal folds due to insufficient resistance to airflow. Thus, the entire voice suffers from overweighted or overblown production. This undesirable characteristic often appears in aging singers when muscle tone lessens, but it frequently happens to younger singers as well. However, we know that if one sings correctly, the voice can remain healthy and vibrant for life!

A wobble is usually a support problem (not enough lower body resistance of the upper and lower abdominals and the lower lumbar muscles to hold back the breath pressure), followed by carrying too much weight too high in the voice (singing with too much "thick vocal cord mass"), lack of focus in the tone, and lack of proper closure of the vocal cords.

Solutions

The good news is that a wobble is generally easier to remedy than a tremolo (overly fast vibrato, like a bleat) or straight tone (no vibrato).

- 1) The first question should be that of support to allow the lower body resistance, leaning gently outward (*appoggio*), to hold back the breath pressure. This allows for a healthy stream of air through the larynx, and frees up the throat muscles. Often you will see singers' entire vocal musculature (jaw, tongue and larynx) shaking with the vibrato. This is a sure sign of imbalance, whereby the throat and neighboring muscles are pressured in creating the tone. Exercise (simple and easy): Inhale, taking a low breath, and exhale on an "s" or hiss. You will immediately feel the "support muscles" engage to fuel the fine stream of air. Keep this same resistance when you sing. Remember, we do not *hold* our breath when we sing, nor do we *blow* it out! The air disperses in a fine stream through our nose and mouth only when we use proper lower body resistance or compression.

- 2) The second question would be to check that you are not overweighting the voice (trying to sing too "big"), or carrying the heavier, lower mechanism too high in the voice. This also causes intonation problems, with the pitch going flat, and lack of upper overtones. Make sure that your vowel slenderizes through the second passaggio because it is often after this second bridge that the overweighting and wobble get worse. Be sure that you are slenderizing and making the vowel taller, still remaining connected to the lower body, and not squeezing or slenderizing the throat! Exercises: (a) Descending scales on an "u" vowel, blending the higher, lighter mechanism into the lower mechanism. The Old Italian School teaches that the "u" vowel must be in the center of every tone. (b) Ascending five and nine tone scales, and arpeggio exercises on the closed vowels "i" and "u", making sure that the lighter mechanism is activated in the upper voice, while keeping a balance of depth.
- 3) The third question should address focus in the tone. When the tone is unfocused, it is related to overweighted production, which was just discussed. Once again, are you trying to sing too "big", forgetting that the voice is an acoustical instrument? When support, air flow and resonance are in balance, the voice will carry and get "big" on its own. It is carrying power that is most important! *Note: Make sure that you are not depressing the tongue, but rather be certain that you keep the gentle arch as in "ng". A depressed tongue is a major cause of singing flat because it causes the soft palate to fall. Also, the pressure at the root of the tongue can be a major cause of the wobble due to the direct pressure it puts on the larynx. Exercise: Any descending or ascending scale beginning with "ng" and opening up to a single vowel, starting with closed vowels first. When these are focused and ringing, then you are ready to practice on open vowels. Your goal is to keep the "ng" ring through your cheekbones throughout your singing, with the fine stream of air through the nose and mouth.
- 4) Question number four is whether or not you are beginning the tone with the lower support muscles (sometimes called grunt muscles) and keeping them engaged. Once again, this comes back to support, which controls the air pressure and encourages the vocal cords to come together efficiently. If your onset is

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THE VOCAL "WOBBLE" (continued)

(Continued from page 3)

poor, the rest of the phrase will undoubtedly follow. Make sure you begin the tone with an impulse from the upper and lower abdominals and lower lumbar muscles.

Conclusion

As was stated, healthy vibrato is result of healthy, coordinated singing. When the support, airflow and resonance are in balance, the vibrato will take care of itself.

4 TIPS TO MAKE YOUR VOICE LESS BORING

by Roger Love
from rogerlove.com

When you think back on the greatest teachers you ever had growing up, chances are the reason you loved them so much was not just because of what they taught you, but the way they were able to engage you and keep your interest at all times.

Whether your intention is to teach kids, close sales, excite podcast listeners, or inspire your coaching clients, every one of us has goals we want to achieve in work and in life. And, whether we realize it or not, the most powerful instrument we possess to help us accomplish those goals is our speaking voice.

Let's look at some of the reasons people don't tap into the power in their voice, and then we can talk about specific actions you can take today to make your voice sound less boring!

To start with, a lot of people think the voice they were born with is the voice they are stuck with for life. A man may have a really nasal voice and be convinced that it's due to genetics and it is what it is. Or a woman may have an airy voice that sometimes frustrates her because there is no range there, and oftentimes she is not getting the desired effect from her speaking voice.

People can feel trapped in the personas expressed by the voices they were born with. But the truth is, we're more influenced by the voices that we imitate growing up than we are by genetics. We are born with an instrument, so we imitate mom's airy voice or dad's commanding, confident voice, and we begin to sound like the people that are in our environment.

Another reason people don't necessarily know how to tap into the power in their voice is that they think melody is just for singing. So they do the opposite of singing, which is speaking in monotone. Without realizing it, they become like a piano stuck on one note. Then every so often they get excited and go up in inflection, and then they're right back to the same note. What could be more dull?

Not only is monotony boring, but a 2017 University of Glasgow study analyzed hundreds of voices and found that those who showed personality and inflection were far more trusted than those who were monotonous and flat.

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Barbershoppers Pitch Adeline Into Ash Can

The SPEBSQSA is giving up its favorite girl because she's a lady with a past.

Forty of the nation's best barbershop quartets (including the Buffalo Bills) will hold their 12th annual singfest in Omaha, Neb., Friday and Saturday, but not one will raise their voices to "Sweet Adeline."

The SPEBSQSA — Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America—ruled out Adeline because of the song's "Alcoholic background." Richard Grapes of North Tonawanda is a member of the Buffalo Bills.

4 TIPS TO MAKE YOUR VOICE
(continued)

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If you're feeling frustrated, wondering how to sound interesting, these are 5 tips to help you develop a voice that showcases the best of who you are.

Bring in emotion

A piano has 88 keys. And while you don't need quite that much range, you need to bring enough melody into your voice so that it sounds more emotional. Why? Well, this is the scientific reason:

When you speak to someone, invisible sound waves leave your mouth and enter the brain of the listener. They go into the part of the brain called the amygdala. The amygdala then deciphers whether it is going to let information into the prefrontal cortex—that part of the brain that processes the information and feels things and then stores it into memory.

But the language of this first brain filter, the amygdala, is emotion. And the amygdala doesn't think words are emotional. So the reason speaking with emotion is so important is that if you speak in a monotone, you're never actually going to connect with people.

Going back to the example of your favorite teacher, you remember what he or she said because he or she made you feel something. You made a human connection to the information, so you retained it.

Use inflection

We're so used to speaking the way that we speak because most of us have never had any professional training. Typically, we were taught when we were kids to go down in melody when we got to commas and periods.

So we said:

"Watch Spot run."

"That's Spot's ball."

When we get to a comma or a period, we go down. The only time the teacher told us it was okay to go up was when we had a question.

"You like chocolate?"

"You want to take a nap?"

When you go down in inflection at every comma and period, that's called a descending scale. And unfortunately, a descending scale makes people sound sad. In turn, if the person listens to you thinks you're sad, you are probably going to make them feel sad.

If we want to avoid sounding sad or uninterested, we should add more inflection to our voice. Inflection isn't just for questions anymore!

Adjust your volume

Another way to bring feeling into your speaking is by adding volume. Oftentimes people equate loud speaking with anger, so they steer clear of speaking loudly.

The reality is, we live in a world of whisperers. We're so used to talking on the phone, and while we're emailing and texting we are not talking at all. Because of this, we're losing sight of the fact that in communication, volume is the key to the kingdom! It is an amazing tool to regain your influence and power over people that are listening to you.

As a visual to keep in mind, when you speak you should imagine that you have to fill up the space 20 feet out, 20 feet to the left, and 20 feet to the right. If you're not filling up that space, you're speaking too softly.

And if you're still worried about sounding angry and loud, remember that volume is not angry when you mix it with melody. If you stay on the same note and you get loud, of course you sound angry. But if you have a melody and you raise your volume, you are then perceived as being emotional and passionate. And sounding passionate and enthusiastic is an excellent way to reach people and get your point across.

Breathe to engage

Sometimes when we're speaking we let nervous energy get the better of us, and we forget to breathe. How you breathe definitely affects the way your voice comes across. But unless you are a yogi, you may not be aware of your breathing.

Great speaking, like great singing, happens when the right amount of air meets the right amount of vocal chord. And when that doesn't happen your breathing suffers.

Imagine you're driving a racecar. Of course steering matters, but if you fill your gas tank with orange juice, your steering is only going to get you so far.

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4 TIPS TO MAKE YOUR VOICE (continued)

(Continued from page 5)

Some people spend years learning public speaking tips but they never actually engage listeners because their breathing technique is as misdirected as putting orange juice in the car's engine.



Palm trees wave, are you listenin'?
In the pool, water's glistenin',
A beautiful sight, we're happy tonight
Livin' in a FLORIDA Wonderland.

Gone away is the blizzard,
Here to stay is the lizard,
A warm sunny day, we like it that way,
Livin' in a FLORIDA Wonderland.

On the beach we will have a picnic,
Turtles, sand and seagulls and sun.
Christmas dinner is an old tradition,
It's Grouper and Stone Crabs by the ton.

Later on, we'll perspire,
As temperatures rise, even higher,
A warm sunny day, we like it that way,
Livin' in a FLORIDA Wonderland!



TIPS FOR SINGING HIGHER

by Brock Bisking
from singing-tips.net.com

Most people don't realize that if you just open your mouth wider when you sing instead of grasping your jaw or throat muscles so tightly, you'll have more sound and it will flow more easily. It's a quick trick that works well. Most singers tend to close their jaws a little when trying to reach the high notes. However, you should be careful to close them too much, as this can cut off the volume, energy and tone.

Keeping your jaw open until the end of a word will give you more power and volume. This can be best done by practicing voice building exercises. The lip trill is one of the best exercises to expand your vocal range. And almost anyone can do it.

Mastering this technique will allow you to sing with your throat open and prevent your voice from being forced while you sing those high notes. Now sing a note and with a relaxed stomach, use both fingers to gently press against the diaphragm as you sing. The following tips will guide you on how to sing high notes without straining or damaging your vocal cords. Related Posts: Falsetto, vibrato and other natural vocal effects you should master. How to sing 26B and deliver great vocals in the studio and on stage. Choosing the perfect song for your voice. How to prepare for a vocal recording session. Singing tips for vocalists of any genre.

Singing with the right posture is one of the quickest and easiest ways to improve your singing voice. You should notice that when you sing the spoiled sound, your notes are much easier than when you sing the phrase "normally". As you continue to train your ear and voice by singing, you'll want to start learning to sing the most common musical intervals. Instead of keeping them a secret, I wanted to share 40 proven singing techniques that will teach you how to sing properly today.

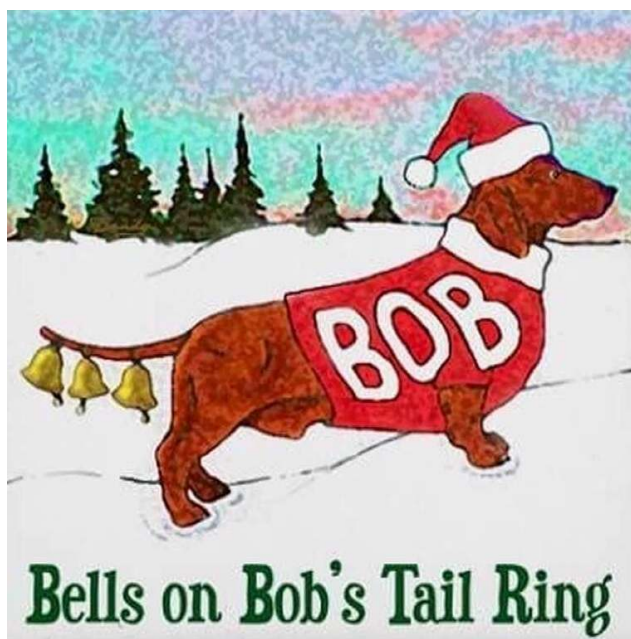
To have a strong voice and vocal consistency, there are certain things you need to know and do, and there are some **singing tips** you can use, right now, to get a great sound out of your instrument. Working with a professional vocal coach is the best way to ensure a safe environment to explore and expand your reach, but the following nine tips will also help you prepare to sing high notes. So, to make sure you hear and sing the right tone, you just need to be able to hear the note you're singing better. While in the past, it was important to sing your "Nays", Gees

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TIPS FOR SINGING HIGHER (continued)

(Continued from page 6)
and “Mums” with a little attack, let's try to sing more legato phrases.

Whether you're just training your ear or trying to sing in the fourth octave, a singing teacher can help you identify your weaknesses.



DICTION FOR SINGERS from successfulsinging.com

Diction is the art of speaking so that each word is clearly heard. In music, this is very important as without it songs may lose their meaning to the listener. So what is diction for singers?

Although both music and lyrics are important, if the words cannot be understood, the song can become meaningless.

Listen closely to the majority of singers and bands who attain acclaim within their field of music, the one connecting factor is the ability to distinguish the lyrics. When the listener hears a song, the words and music create an image, feeling or emotion to which they can relate. When the song is heard repeatedly this creates familiarity and the listener starts to understand the sentiments further, picking up words, even non-sensical.

For some singers, words can become slurred, mumbled and lazy sounding. The most common causes of poor singing diction can be any or all of the following;

- Mouth shape while singing
- Tongue placement
- Poor control of breathing
- Strong accents and dialects
- Poor mic technique
- Poor sound mixing

There are examples of singers whose vocals are barely understood or mixed low in the track, and in some cases the effect is intentional to fit the type of song that is being performed, but in most cases, the singer needs to pronounce and project their words clearly.

Diction is made up of a combination of consonants and vowels, and how they are formed will affect the tone and the brightness of the sound they produce.

Vowels

Singers spend more time singing vowel sounds in comparison to the consonants which is why so much importance is placed on them when practicing. Vowels are formed by the shape of a combination of parts that form the vocal tract including the tongue, lips and nose. Each tongue placement and mouth shape gives the vowel its own characteristic (known as formants) which identify the vowel to the

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DICTION FOR SINGERS (continued)

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listener eg. sort, sought.

The main vowel sounds within singing are:

Ah as in Apple

Eh as in Air

Ay as in Sky

Oh as in Orange

Ee as in Bee

Oo as in Room

Consonants

Good diction requires the crisp, clear pronunciation of consonants, whether they start or end the word, without which the audience would be incapable of understanding a word you were singing. A common fault with singers is that they don't end the word properly, eg Don't go breaking my hah, instead of heart.

So don't forget to end your words with crisp consonants also.

Here are some very simple diction exercises for singers that you can try yourself to help improve your technique.

Practise your consonants

Work on improving the clarity consonants. Tongue-twisters are an excellent tool to help you become a master of consonants and avoid slip-ups when singing.

Practise your vowels

Poor pronunciation of vowels, while singing, can cause your listeners to miss your lyrics. To improve your pronunciation of vowel sounds, practice each vowel: ah, eh, ee, ay, oh, oo.

Combine consonants and vowels

Once you have mastered both consonants and vowels, combine the two:

Eg. **mah, meh, me, mo, moo.** Or **vah, veh, ve, vo, voo,**

Practise better breath control

Once you have mastered the singing diction techniques above, practise breath control. Pick your

favourite tongue-twister and aim to say it all in one breath. This will help you to control how much air you expel when you speak and sing.

If you have a tendency to rush and mumble your speech you will find by working on your diction for singing that your speech will also improve.

Vocal exercises can help you to develop better singing diction by incorporating exercises into your voice training that will undo bad habits and start building new ones.



MAINTAINING VOCAL HEALTH FOR SINGERS

by Keith Hatschek
from discmakers.com

On November 3, 2016, 45 minutes into his Saint Pablo tour stop in Inglewood, CA, Kanye West declared the show was over due to losing his voice.

Consequence of Sound and other outlets reported that before leaving the suspended stage, West croaked out, "I can't let you have a show where I can't perform for you. I'll give everyone a refund. I'll do better next time."

The superstar performer was yet another high-profile vocalist who tried to push his voice beyond what it was capable of, likely due to the fact that he was performing the seventh consecutive arena concert in just a nine-day window.

How can you (and Kanye) learn to take the necessary care of your vocal instrument? After checking in on other stars who pushed their voices beyond their limitations, we'll learn some important vocal health tips from Dr. Derek Isetti, who specializes in treating voice disorders. Dr. Isetti lays out some strategies that can help you avoid vocal exhaustion or – even worse – require surgery on your throat. You'll see that a little common sense and care can go a long way to maintaining vocal health for singers.

It seems that vocal maladies have been continuously in the spotlight, resulting in 2015 being a banner year for the doctors and surgeons who specialize in vocal treatment or surgery for high-profile singers who literally burned out their instruments. With Sam Smith, Meghan Trainor, and Chad Kroeger (Nickelback) all having to cancel significant tour dates due to poor vocal health, it's clear that taking adequate care of one's vocal instrument continues to be a challenge.

"I've been vocally exhausted"

With those words in April 2015, Sam Smith, then 23 years old, let the world know he had pushed his voice beyond the limit of what it could handle. Smith, who rocketed to global acclaim on the strength of his multi-platinum album, *In the Lonely Hours*, posted to Instagram:

"I am deeply, deeply saddened to tell my Australian fans, I have to cancel my Australian tour. I have been vocally exhausted for a while now, however last night in Sydney I had a small hemor-

rhage on my vocal cords. The doctors have told me I need to fully rest until my vocal cords have healed, otherwise this could become a long term issue."

As it turned out, Smith needed more than rest, and soon after canceling his Australian tour dates, he flew to the US to have vocal laser surgery by Dr. Steven Zeitels at Massachusetts General Hospital. The procedure, which is seemingly becoming more and more common for A-list singers, was successful but required Smith to endure three weeks of post-op total silence, while eight weeks later, he was only able to do media interviews by email in order to reduce stress on his voice and promote full recovery.

Smith recounted "If I ever have to do it again ... knock on wood I don't ... I will go to a silent monk retreat, if there is such a thing." To accept his accolades at the 2015 Billboard Music Awards, Smith cannily sent in a video "speech" with him holding up handmade cue cards which shared his appreciation while giving some shout outs to other artists at the Las Vegas bash that night.

All About the Voice

Months after Smith was sidelined, 21-year old sensation Meghan Trainor joined him on the unable-to-perform list. At first, it seemed that Trainor only needed to cancel a few dates on her 28-stop M-Train tour to give her vocal instrument a chance to bounce back. In early July 2015, she had to cancel the first two shows. The singer posted the diagnosis online, stating, "I don't want anyone worrying, but I have had a hemorrhage on my vocal cords. Right now the doctors want me on complete vocal rest until they are healed so I have to postpone my first two shows."

A few days later, *Billboard* reported that although she was recovering, her next three dates were also cancelled on doctor's advice due to poor vocal health. After getting the green light to resume performing, the singer made the next 13 tour stops before throwing in the towel after her August 8th show. It appears she never fully regained her health and unwisely tried to stay on tour while battling bronchitis.

Life on the road is difficult for artists in top physical shape, but she reported a second vocal hemorrhage and that doctors prescribed cancelling the tour and having surgery, which she underwent in August 2105. Afterwards, she started vocal therapy to help her regain her voice and learn ways to better manage her instrument to prevent future vocal health issues.

Trainor's first move as her recovery proceeded was to get back into the studio to record the follow up to her
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MAINTAINING VOCAL HEALTH (continued)

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debut release, *Title*, which had enjoyed four *Billboard* top 20 hits. This allowed her to establish a far less rigorous studio schedule as compared to life on the road. Post surgery, she had also commented that she had great difficulty sleeping while on tour and never really got used to living in the 24-hour a day bubble that is “road life” – constantly bouncing back and forth between the stage, interviews, and the tour bus. Her sophomore effort, *Thank You*, dropped on May 6, 2016, and happily for her legions of Megatronz, showed her voice in fine form after her surgery and her follow up vocal therapy program.

Get your voice back

Canada’s Nickleback have been one of the most reliable touring acts for years, as *Bloomberg News* reported their 2012 world tour grossed \$53 million dollars. Back out on a similarly ambitious 2015 global jaunt, lead singer Chad Kroeger’s vocal health failed him mid-way through the tour.

Diagnosed with a cyst that had formed on his vocal cords, Kroeger underwent surgery in the hope that by September 2015, he would make the nine-week, 32-date run that comprised the planned European leg of the tour. Alas, it was not meant to be, as *Loudwire* reported that the band had to cancel.

“Nickleback is forced to cancel all remaining dates for the 2015 No Fixed Address Tour due to an extended period of vocal rest ordered for lead singer Chad Kroeger. Kroeger, who was diagnosed with an intracordal cyst on his voice box in June, recently underwent surgery and must remain on vocal rest as ordered by doctors for the next six to nine months in order to fully recuperate. Ticket refunds will be available at the point of purchase.”

Unfortunately, the medical problems Kroeger faced would basically require a predicted year of post-surgical vocal rest and recovery, intermixed with vocal therapy to help the multi-platinum singer regain his vocal mojo. Fifteen months after the problem surfaced, Kroeger and the band returned to the stage with a reduced itinerary of an 11-show trek through the UK.

An ounce of prevention to help
overall vocal health

Benjamin Franklin’s oft-quoted saying that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” ap-

plies perfectly to maintaining vocal health for singers, especially when confronted with the demands of performing nightly over an extended time period. To learn how singers can reduce the risk of suffering a career-threatening problem, I visited with a vocal health pro: Dr. Derek Isetti. He is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Speech Language Pathology at University of the Pacific in Stockton, CA. To the lay person, speech language pathology is the study of communication disorders, whether they involve problems related to voice, speech, or language. Dr. Isetti specializes in the area of voice disorders.

In addition to his training in health sciences, Dr. Isetti studied musical theater in college and soon after embarked on a career in musicals, appearing on Broadway as well as many sold-out tours. He performed in shows such as *Cabaret*, *Some Like It Hot*, *42nd Street*, and *Kiss Me Kate*, which gives him a first-person perspective on the demands placed on a singer who must perform eight shows a week for weeks at a time while living out of a suitcase.

What does the term “vocal exhaustion”
actually refer to?

Vocal exhaustion tends to be the result of either overuse or misuse of the vocal mechanism. The fancier term is known as phonotrauma. Voice overuse can be especially problematic for performers, who are what we like to call “vocal athletes,” since they are typically expected to use their voices in ways that the average person is not. It becomes a problem for people who push their voice beyond what is considered safe.

Based on your own clinical experience, what advice would you offer to singers to help them avoid suffering the same vocal health fates as Meghan Trainor and Sam Smith?

There are five things that come to mind that I would share with singers to help them maintain their vocal health and keep their voice in the best possible condition while avoiding harm.

1. Consult a doctor when needed.

First and foremost, always seek an evaluation from an otolaryngologist (Ear, Nose, and Throat doctor or ENT) if you experience vocal trouble that persists for approximately two weeks. It’s essential that you have a thorough exam, since many voice disorders can require medical attention.

2. Hydrate.

(Continued on page 11)

MAINTAINING VOCAL HEALTH (continued)

(Continued from page 10)

Next, protect your instrument the way any other musician would protect theirs. Guitar players often place humidifiers inside their cases to keep the wood from drying out. Your vocal folds also need to be kept moist. There are two types of hydration, internal and superficial. Drinking plenty of non-caffeinated beverages and avoiding alcohol in excess is a great way to maintain internal hydration, but many theater performers also rely on personal steamers as well. Singers have a common misperception that certain beverages “soothe” the vocal folds by coating them with liquid as you swallow. Actually that couldn’t be further from the truth! What you drink never touches the vocal cords themselves, or else you would start choking and coughing violently. Nonetheless, staying hydrated keeps your vocal folds moist from the inside out.

3. Vocal Cash.

I suggest thinking about your vocal output for each day as a form of money – I call it “vocal cash.” I encourage singers to spend their daily allotment of vocal cash wisely. In one’s financial life, there are consequences to having an overdrawn checking account, yet we often make excessive demands on our voices that cost us down the road. So let’s assign a monetary value to every highly demanding vocal activity, with the goal of trying to keep such activities spaced out from one another. For example, make all vocally demanding activities in your life worth \$50 (karaoke, choir rehearsal, speaking on the phone for an hour with a friend, doing a concert, etc.) Decide that you are only allowed to spend \$100 per day in your vocal cash. If you try it, you’ll quickly become aware of how much you might be overtaxing your voice and taking its health for granted.

4. Proper technique.

I can’t overemphasize the need for vocal training with a skilled teacher. Having natural talent is wonderful, but you’ll want to learn proper singing technique to sustain a career long term.

5. Monitor your environment and behavior.

Use amplification when possible. If you have issues hearing your voice over other instruments, an in-the-ear monitor can help you avoid trying to sing more loudly than necessary. Be aware of irritants (smoky bars or rooms, fog machines), and be sure you get plenty of rest. Consider limiting daytime vocal use to the bare minimum to preserve your voice for concerts. Many performers also stay up late and eat meals after their shows because they

are too nervous to eat beforehand. Unfortunately, eating late at night and then sleeping on a full stomach is a risk factor for reflux. The acids from your stomach can travel up and harm the delicate tissue of the vocal folds while you sleep.

As a final vocal health tip, Dr. Isetti urges singers to be aware and listen to their body, especially when your voice seems to feel or respond differently. “If you feel hoarse or have trouble speaking after a performance, it’s essential you listen to the message that your body is sending you before you do any harm to your vocal instrument. Being proactive may help you avoid more serious complications down the road.”



WHY TELLING YOURSELF TO "CALM DOWN" BACKSTAGE MAY BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE

by Dr Noa Kageyama
from bulletproofmusician.com

I can probably count on one hand the number of times I've been on a roller coaster in my lifetime. But these rides always struck me as being one of those things in life that most people have a definitive feeling towards.

As in, you either enjoy roller coasters or you don't.

At least, doesn't it seem that way from those photos that the amusement park has ready for you to buy on your way off the ride?

Roller coaster people are the ones with their hands in the air, smiles on their faces, and are screaming, woo-hoo-ing, and look excited.

Non-roller coaster people (that would be me) are the ones whose hands are firmly attached to the seat belt/bar/anything with a death grip, have tension etched on their faces with their eyes screaming fear, and are trying valiantly to calm themselves down and keep from freaking out the whole time.

Of course, if you've ever tried to calm down in situations like this, you know it's pretty much an exercise in futility...

And what does this have to do with music?

Well, we tend to assume that learning how to calm down is the best way to deal with performance anxiety. But in fact, trying to calm down before a stressful performance may not only be similarly futile – but counterproductive to boot!

Wait – how's that now?

Anxiety isn't necessarily
what we think it is

Think back to a time when you felt nervous about a high-pressure situation of some kind.

Maybe it was an upcoming performance, or a time you were going to have to give a speech, or take an important test. Do you remember how it felt?

Often, the anxiety starts with something small. Maybe your heart starts beating a little faster. Or you feel those butterflies in your tummy. You know this is all normal, but that doesn't make you feel any

better, and you might start to worry that this is going to derail your performance.

Which makes your heart beat even faster, which leads your thoughts to start spinning off to the bad place, which makes you feel even more nervous, and accelerates this negative spiral of doom.

We usually refer to this experience as "anxiety," but technically, that's not entirely accurate, because anxiety consists of separate **physical** and **mental** elements. And each affects performance differently.

How so?

Physical activation is not
the same as anxiety

By itself, the heightened **physiological** fight-or-flight state we experience in performance settings is known as "arousal" or "activation."

Our instinct is to try to calm ourselves down and take this high-energy state out of the equation. But the state of being physically activated is actually neither positive or negative.

It's the **mental and emotional** experience – the worries, the fears, the doubts – on top of our arousal state that makes the overall experience either positive or negative, helpful or hurtful.

The subtle difference between
anxiety and excitement

For instance, when you combine a heightened state of physical activation with **negative** emotion, you get **anxiety**. Which feels unpleasant and distressing.

But when you combine the same heightened state of physical activation with **positive** emotion, you get **excitement**. Which might include the same increase in heart rate, physical jitteriness, sweats and more, but feels much more positive.

And the reason why it's important to make this distinction between the **physical** and the **mental**, and between **anxiety** and **excitement**, is that this matters a great deal when it comes to performing optimally under pressure.

Three studies, in different
areas of performance

In a series of studies (2014), Harvard researcher Alison Wood Brooks set out to see if we might actually perform better under pressure if we didn't try so hard

(Continued on page 13)

WHY TELLING YOURSELF "CALM DOWN" (continued)

(Continued from page 12)
to calm down.

And how would this work exactly?

Singing performance anxiety

In one study, participants were asked to sing the Journey song *Don't Stop Believin'* on a karaoke program, in front of an observer, where they could win some money, depending on their singing accuracy score (volume, pitch, and note duration).

Participants were split into three groups, and before singing, two groups were asked "How are you feeling?"

One group was told in advance to respond to this question by saying "I am anxious."

Another group was instructed to respond by saying "I am excited."

And the third group wasn't asked how they were feeling at all.

And was there any difference in singing performance between the three groups?

Singing performance when "excited"

Indeed there was!

Singing accuracy was highest in the **excited** group (80.52%) and lowest in the **anxious** group (52.98%).

Which was actually significantly worse than the group which wasn't asked about their feelings at all (69.27%).

Public speaking anxiety

Brooks also tried this "I'm excited" strategy with public speaking, but with a slight twist.

In this study, participants were asked to prepare a 2-3 min speech on a specific topic, which was to be delivered on camera, and later judged by a panel of their peers.

As in the singing study, some of the participants were asked to say "I am excited" before giving their speech. But others were asked to say "I am

calm" before delivering their speech.

A 3-person panel then viewed the speeches, and scored the participants on a variety of factors.

And was there any difference between the **excited** and **calm** groups?

Public speaking performance when "excited"

Once again, there was!

The **excited** group was rated as being more persuasive, more competent, more confident, and more persistent than the **calm** group. Interestingly, they also gave longer speeches – 35 seconds longer on average.

Math performance anxiety

In a third study, Brooks tested this out with a group of participants who were asked to solve a series of difficult math problems under time pressure.

One group was urged to "try to get excited." Another group was encouraged to "try to remain calm." And a third group was told nothing at all.

And was there any difference in performance here?

Math performance when "excited"

Yep, you guessed it.

Once again, the **excited** group scored the highest – with an average score of 45%. The **calm** group and the **no-instructions** group both scored significantly lower, at 36.75%.

Why does this help?

So why is it that saying "I'm excited" seems to lead to better performance than saying "I'm anxious" or trying to calm down?

Well, this seems to be related to the idea that the physical and mental aspects of nerves affect our performance differently (check out this article for a more detailed explanation of how and why that is).

My take is that interpreting the physical activation as "excitement" might help to reduce the cognitive or mental aspect of anxiety, and free us up to focus more of our attention on the music and the task at hand. Instead of engaging in all of the worries and doubts that would otherwise tend to occupy our thoughts.

(Continued on page 14)

WHY TELLING YOURSELF TO "CALM DOWN" (continued)

(Continued from page 13)

Takeaways

So the next time you have a performance, and the fight-or-flight response starts to kick in, try to avoid saying things like "I'm so nervous!" And not because you're trying to hide how you're feeling or that there's anything wrong with nerves, of course!

But more because there have undoubtedly been times when a performance started out with nerves, but ended with genuine excitement. And because even if you aren't feeling as calm as you'd like right at that moment, it's totally possible to embrace the energy and heightened focus that comes with the adrenaline.

Sure, there might be a little bit of anxiety involved, but there's probably also a part of you that's feeling some excitement too. So embrace this part, even if you're not sure if it's there, and see what happens when you say "I'm excited" to yourself. Think of it as your new pre-focused during the performance itself.



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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: Strategies and Exercises (continued)

- When you are doing jaw exercises and singing with a loose jaw, watch in the mirror to see if you have a habit of twitching your upper lip or nose muscles. The upper lip twitch is a sign of slight lip tension which can shift easily to your jaw and tongue.
- Learn to isolate your jaw movements from the rest of your facial movements and expressions. Refer later in this chapter to the 'ventriloquist dummy' idea in the section about the face.
- Be very careful when, shifting your jaw from side to side. Some people have no problem with such movements, while others risk a jaw becoming locked out of place. Focus more on it dropping or 'swinging' down and up freely.

**FREE SINGING TIPS**

by Yvonne DeBaudi
from a2z-singing-tips.com

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

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Nicole LeGault
from a2z-singing-tips.com

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

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Mick Walsh
from a2z-singing-tips.com

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

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Teri Danz
from a2z-singing-tips.com

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

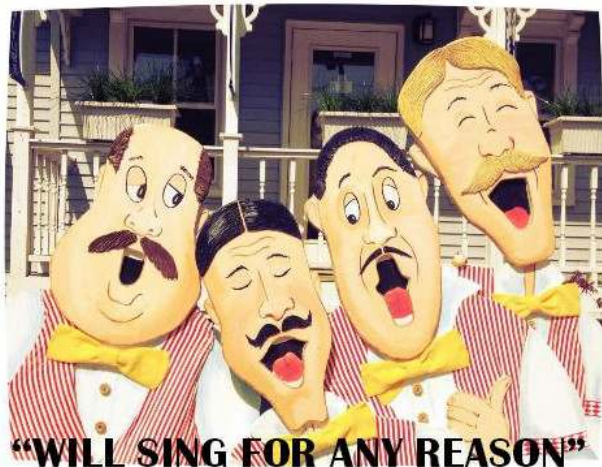


QUARTET CORNER

Our quartets are 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

Mark Roblez lead

Jason Dearing bari

John Alexander bass

No Name Yet

? tenor

? lead

? baritone

? bass



Big Orange Chorus

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Thu	01 Dec	St Augustine Gazebo
Tue	06 Dec	Stratton & Company
Thu	08 Dec	Starling Assisted Living
Tue	13 Dec	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	15 Dec	Starling Independent Living
Thu	22 Dec	Christmas Break
Thu	29 Dec	New Year's Break
Thu	05 Jan	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	12 Jan	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	19 Jan	Palms At Ponte Vedra
Thu	26 Jan	Shepherd of the Woods

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Thu	01 Dec	St Augustine Gazebo
Tue	06 Dec	Stratton & Company
Thu	08 Dec	Starling Assisted Living
Thu	15 Dec	Starling Independent Living
Thu	19 Jan	Palms At Ponte Vedra
Sat	25 Feb	Icemen Game
Fri	17 Mar	Sunshine District Spring Conv
Sat	18 Mar	Sunshine District Spring Conv
Sun	19 Mar	Sunshine District Spring Conv
...more to come		

⇒ **BIG O BUCK\$** ⇐

BIG O BUCKS SCHEDULE

...more to come

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.

BIRTHDAYS

Tommy Artega	12 Dec
John Alexander	31 Dec

RECENT GUESTS

Roger Erestaine	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
Dale Patricu	Gary Weddel
Stephen Gramza	Curt Shepherd
Conner Barber	Craig Dopp
Julian Bryson	Bob Lemons
Jim Hughes	Chris Loken
Dale Martin	

WELCOME

NEWEST MEMBERS

Les Mower	April
Ray Parzik	August
Ed Fitzgerald	September

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Jay Giallombardo
Front Line
Director

2021 OTHER CHAPTER LEADERS



Dave Walker
Uniform
Manager



Les Mower
Chorus
Manager



John Alexander
Bulletin
Editor



Frank Nosalek
Webmaster &
Technology



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 January is 24 December.
Items without a byline are from the Editor.

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

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

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

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



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