



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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WHAT SHAPE IS YOUR BRONTOSAURUS?

by Brody McDonald
from choirbites.com

As I was rehearsing my collegiate a cappella group (Wright State University's ETHOS) one evening, we took some time to map out the overall structure of each song in our repertoire. That is to say, we listed out the form of the song over time (Intro, Verse 1, Chorus 1, Verse 2, Chorus 2, Bridge, etc.) and were charting things like volume, articulation, and intensity for each section. The first song we plotted was a power ballad. It started softly and eerily, then grew stronger and louder over time, then eventually faded again in both volume and intensity. I was drawing contoured lines on the white board to create a visual map for them.

One of the students remarked, "That shape looks like a brontosaurus!" Aside from my instant recollection of a Monty Python sketch (<http://youtu.be/U6zWjUhfj-M>), it just hit me that this was a very sticky way of reminding singers that each song has a shape, a journey, a plan for volume and intensity.

And so it came to pass that in subsequent rehearsals, any time ETHOS performed a song without any dynamic contour, I had only to ask "What shape is your brontosaurus?" and the matter cleared right up. This became shorthand for a more complex set of concepts.

I have written before about developing a "choral shorthand" with one's choir:
<http://www.choraldirectormag.com/articles/the-practical-conductor/choral-shorthand/>

In fact, my use of choral shorthand is essentially what inspired Choir Bites. People like STICKY phrases, code phrases that feel like inside jokes. By embracing this and finding your own "What shape is your brontosaurus?" moments, you can make your observations quick, inspire a few chuckles, make the singers feel like they are "in the know," and get back to singing in a flash!

WANTED!!

MEN WHO LIKE TO SING!



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

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

EDITORIAL

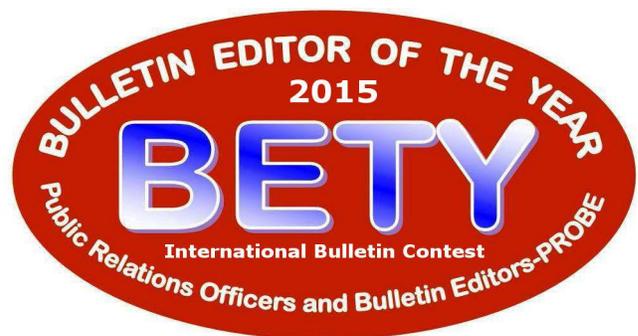
Last month we were again privileged to perform with other singers at Jacksonville University. We have our new director. We are preparing for spring shows at several venues. We will be preparing for Sunshine District Fall "Festival" as we learn what exactly that will entail.

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.

"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."



LEARN FASTER BY MAKING ERRORS THE RIGHT WAY

by Dr Noa Kageyama
from bulletproofmusician.com

You've undoubtedly heard the saying that "practice makes perfect." And you've probably heard the saying "practice doesn't make perfect; *perfect* practice makes perfect" as well.

Both statements sort of imply that effective practice means avoiding mistakes. But what if that's actually not true? What if making mistakes – on purpose – has the potential to accelerate the learning process and lead to much better performance than avoiding mistakes?

I know that sounds backwards, but let's take a look at a teaching strategy that may tempt you to encourage students to do things the "wrong way" more often!

The traditional approach

Traditionally, the way you'd teach someone a new skill would be to **tell** them what to do or what *not* to do (i.e. **verbal** instruction/feedback).

Or, you might **show** them what to do or what *not* do (i.e. **visual** demonstration/feedback).

Of course, this can be a painfully slow process at times. And repeatedly correcting a student's "mistakes" can be demotivating and frustrating to both student and teacher.

It can be tempting to conclude that the student is hopeless and doesn't have it in them to learn. But actually, the presence of the persistent error is a sign that learning *has* occurred somewhere along the line. They just inadvertently learned the "wrong" way really, really well!

Turning the tables

I had a teacher who would often turn the tables on me in situations like this.

Instead of telling me what I was doing wrong, they would demonstrate (and often slightly exaggerate) what I was doing, and ask me to be the teacher for a moment instead.

It always made me cringe to see what I was doing, but it was a helpful way of bringing this error into my awareness, and becoming clearer on what not to do. And it turns out my teacher was onto something!

Learning to do a standing long jump

Researchers at the University of Verona (Milanese et al., 2008) conducted a study of thirty 13-yr olds learning how to perform the standing long jump in three sessions spread out over a three week period.

Session 1

The main purpose of the first session was to simply gauge the participants' baseline performance.

So the kids didn't receive much guidance, other than that they should try to jump as far as possible, and that they could swing both arms at the same time and jump with both feet to maximize distance.

They performed three long jumps, and the average distance of these was their baseline score.

Session 2

Before their second session, the kids were split into three groups.

One group received instruction using an experimental teaching method called "Method of Amplification of Error" (**MAE group**). More details on this in a moment, but the tl;dr version is that this method involves doing things wrong on purpose, not just doing things correctly.

Another group received the traditional instructional method of verbal instruction (**direct instruction group**).

And the third group received no instructions at all, and just practiced on their own (**control group**).

Each training session consisted of 6 jumps, after which the students were told **not** to practice the jump until they returned for a final test the following week.

Session 3

A week later, the students returned and performed three jumps each (to see how well their training really "stuck"), with the average of the three jumps being their final score.

And was there any difference between the groups?

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How'd they do?

Yes!

The kids who received **no instructions** at all performed pretty much the same at both tests. They jumped 158.9cm on the first day of training and 160.6cm on the final day of training. A difference which isn't statistically significant, and is pretty much what you'd expect.

On the other hand, the students who received **instruction and feedback** during training *did* improve over the course of three weeks. They started out at 159.4cm, and improved to 162.3cm by the final test – a gain of 2.9cm. And though an improvement of just over an inch may not sound like much, this would have been the difference between medaling and not medaling in the men's long jump at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

And how did the amplification of error group do?

Well, the kids who were coached using the **Method of Amplification of Error** improved by an average of **20.4cm**, going from 159.5cm on the first day of training to 179.9cm three weeks later. This is almost *7 times* the improvement of the regular instruction group, and would have been the difference between Gold and Bronze at the same 2020 Olympics. In the same exact amount of training time!

So what was so different about the MAE group's approach to learning?

Direct instruction

Before we look at the MAE protocol, here's what direct instruction looked like:

Based on whatever mistakes, errors, or inefficiencies in jumping technique the student demonstrated in their first session, the instructor:

1. **Identified the main error** most responsible for causing their poor performance (e.g. participant's feet left the ground before their torso and legs reached full extension and alignment), and **told them how to tweak their technique** for better results (for instance, extend legs and torso completely before leaving the ground).
2. Then, the student would take a **practice jump**, where they were to incorporate this new infor-

mation into their jump.

3. Next, the student would get a **free practice jump**, to experiment as they wished, with no instructions given.
4. The feedback/instruction + practice jump + free jump sequence was repeated three times, for a total of six practice jumps.

Method of Amplification of Error

On the surface, the Method of Amplification of Error training was not hugely different. The only difference was that instead of being instructed to jump with the correct technique, they were told to *exaggerate as much as possible the main error* that the instructor identified.

In other words,

1. identification of main error
2. practice jump, aiming to exaggerate the error (e.g. jump/push off the ground using only your feet, keeping your knees and hips bent throughout, with no extension)
3. free practice jump (no instructions other than to do your best)
4. Here too, the process was repeated three times for a total of six practice jumps.

In this method, the coach was able to use the kids' free jump as a way to gauge how effectively the student understood the nature of their error. Because if the free jump looked pretty much the same as the exaggerated error jump, the instructor would instantly know that they either hadn't truly identified the main error, or the student wasn't quite getting it.

Unlearning vs. reteaching

It seems pretty counterintuitive to practice doing something the exact wrong way, but the researchers explain that this actually deepens our understanding of what *not* to do and initiates an internal search for a better way to perform the skill.

After all, consistent errors are not a sign that we haven't done any learning, but rather, that we *have* learned. Only we've learned how to do something the wrong way – consistently and automatically!

The authors state that this method is therefore more an *unlearning* strategy than it is a *reteaching* one.

Putting students in the driver's seat

It can be frustrating to keep saying the same thing over and over (and equally frustrating to hear the

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LEARN FASTER BY MAKING ERRORS
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same thing over and over), with no sign of change.

This strategy has the benefit of putting the student more in the driver's seat, and empowering them to search internally within themselves for a more optimal movement pattern, rather than trying to do what they've been told.

And sure, beginners learning a standing long jump is a far cry from an advanced musician trying to tweak a more intricate or complex sequence of movements, and the authors do acknowledge that there is more research in this area yet to do.

However, there are other researchers who have found similar results in sports ranging from golf to swimming to weightlifting to track & field, so it seems like a promising approach!

Take action

If you intend on experimenting with this, please do read the full article. There are some key guidelines outlined in the "Discussion" section, that are essential for getting the most out of this instructional technique: Amplification of Error": A Rapidly Effective Method for Motor Performance Improvement. (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236151089_Amplification_of_Error_A_Rapidly_Effective_Method_for_Motor_Performance_Improvement)

THOUGHTS ON BELONGING
PARTS 2 & 3

by Liz Garnett
from helpingyouharmonise.com

In my previous post I reflected on the problematics of creating a sense of belonging at events. Why do some people sometimes feel horribly left out at an occasion when most people are feeling happily connected? What can we do, when organising events, to make that less likely to happen?

Finding some common patterns in my own and friends' experiences of alienation (Scenario 2 experiences as classified in my last post) seems like the best place to start to increase our understanding of what's going on. I'm intending to anonymise both the sources of these tales, and the events at which they took place, which risks making it all rather abstract. Of course, I'll know the details of what I'm inducing from, so I'll be able to learn effectively from the experience. I just hope I can present it in a way that isn't too unhelpfully vague for everyone else!

Qualities of the event:

- Organised around a common interest that goes beyond the professional. People might be attending in some way related to their work, but they're also motivated by a sense of personal commitment to be there. This is in common with Scenario 1 experiences (where the sense of belonging is achieved), but is also fundamental to the experience of alienation. If nobody is feeling a strong bond through the common interest, you don't feel hurt by not feeling it either.
- Is in some way a repeated event, either organised regularly by a single institution, or one of a series of like events handed over from institution to institution. Either way, the key thing is that it offers people the opportunity to renew previously-made connections as well as make new ones
- Has strong norms around the central interest/subject of the event, with attendant implicit expectations of what 'one of us' is like. All the usual axes of identity can get conflated into this: age, race, gender, class, educational background, nationality, modes of speech or dress. None of the latter will typically be consciously articulated as qualifying someone as an insider (or not), but the

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THOUGHTS ON BELONGING
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result is a generally more homogenous demographic than in the population at large.

Qualities of the alienated person:

- Went there alone. Pretty much every example of alienation I've heard of has arisen when someone has attended an event by themselves rather than as part of a group with partner/family, colleagues, or ensemble-mates. Going with people you already know means you never have to be alone during all those in-between moments – coffee breaks, mealtimes, waiting for sessions to start. And you also have someone to share impressions with, to help you process the experience.
- Going alone doesn't automatically make an experience alienating (otherwise nobody would ever do it!), but I've not heard tell of somebody having the Scenario 2 experience when they haven't been. And of course if you do go alone, your need for a sense of belonging from the event itself is much greater than for those who come with people they already share one with.
- Is not a regular attender. This is possibly a tautological point, since if you feel alienated on your first experience, you are unlikely to repeat it any time soon. But I've not heard of someone going regularly to a particular event and then one year suddenly losing their sense of belonging.
- Oh, actually I just did think of one. But in that case there had been a change in leadership since the previous visits, with attendant changes in ethos of the event as a whole. I think the generalisation that regularity of attendance increases the chances of a sense of belonging remains reasonably robust
- Is in some way marked as 'non-standard' relative to the demographic at the event. This might be as little as simply being a newcomer to that world and thus as yet imperfectly integrated into its implicit norms (so basically a different way of couching the previous point), but in a number of cases, other dimensions of identity seem to have exacerbated the problem.

In addition to these general features, quite a few stories of alienation involve some specific incident that reduced or removed a sense of trust in the event. This is not a given, since not all accounts include this kind of trigger, but you can see how if you were already feeling a bit vulnerable and isolated in general, encountering a concrete obstacle to trust would tip you over into full alienation. I would hypothesise that

in some cases, had the sense of belonging been adequate, it would have been possible to weather these incidents as just the normal kinds of hitches and misunderstandings that happen in life.

Putting all these things together, it seems that the most dangerous situation is for someone who is going to an event for the first time, alone, when a lot of the other people there have ready-made friendship groups, brought with them and/or made from previous attendances.

This sets us up nicely to think about what we can do as event organisers to help out with this, which I'll do in a third post. I think it will also be useful, as part of that, to reflect on the scenario 3 experiences, where someone has been feeling left out and a specific intervention has rescued them from their loneliness and opened the door to belonging.

In my previous post on this subject, we arrived at a clearer understanding of when someone attending an event is most at risk of not experiencing the sense of belonging events usually aspire to offer, and of feeling isolated and left out instead. Before we move onto the practical strategies we can develop to minimise the chance of this happening, it may be worth reflecting on what's going on when someone is heading into that state but is rescued from it and ends up feeling like part of the community after all.

I use the word 'rescued' because that it a word I've heard people use to describe what this felt like. And it aptly describes how I have felt in such situations too. And that itself says something about how quietly desperate the feeling is when you feel alone in a situation where everyone else seems to feel connected.

The tales of these experiences I have heard have a few traits in common:

- They take place in the interstices of the event, rather than in the formal sessions: at hotel receptions, mealtimes, before a formal session starts. My guess is that this is when one is most likely to feel alone; during the formal sessions, there is a structured experience in which everyone participates together, but it is the informal in-between bits where people really get the benefit of processing the formal experiences together in their friendship groups, whether pre-existent or newly-formed.
- There is usually more than one person involved

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THOUGHTS ON BELONGING
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in effecting the rescue: it is not just one person offering a conversation, that is, but a group of people who already enjoy a sense of connection extending it to include the person who feels isolated.

- Once this initial connection has been made, both the rescuers and rescuee continue to seek each other out to maintain the connection throughout the event, and in many cases at any subsequent event they all attend.
- The connection, while strong, and often amplified by the context in which it was made, is entirely platonic. I have one experience of what initially felt like a rescue ('Oh that's nice, somebody wants to sit next to me,' were my exact thoughts) that didn't turn into a life-long friendship because my rescuer had romantic interests in me that I didn't reciprocate. And I felt bad about subsequently disentangling myself from that friendship, because he was nice and I felt grateful that he had kept me company when I was lonely, but that didn't mean I felt about him as he'd like me to. (I don't normally share these kinds of personal details I realise, but it was a long time ago, and I think the distinction is an important one to make.)

So, with all these things in mind, what strategies might head off a potential experience of alienation before it occurs?

- **Signalling who is attending for their first time so that other attendees can make sure they're looked after.** This one sounds like a good idea as it directly targets the people most at risk, but it isn't guaranteed to succeed. I have known it work well, and I have also known it lead to people feeling singled-out and thus marked as not-belonging. In particular, I think it works better when the means to identify first-timers is subtle enough that it is only readily apparent to someone already near enough to be in conversation, and it needs to preserve the dignity of the people so marked.+
- **Small-group activities that deliberately mix people who have not previously met.** 'Ice-breakers' can be a bit of a cliché, but they can also be very effective if the activities are chosen to suit the interests and preferences of the attendees. I have made some long-standing friends in scratch quartet contests, for instance,

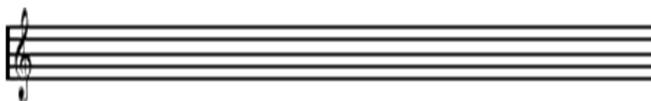
and many people who attended the abcd convention in around 2005 have fond memories of the way John Rutter got all the delegates mixed up and interacting as a means to form the multiple choirs required to workshop Spem In Alium at the opening plenary session.

Arbitrary 'team-building' exercises with no direct relevance to the subject at hand – as caricatured as the bane of work training sessions – seem less successful probably because they are arbitrary. If what people have in common is the purpose of the event, then staying on topic seems a more natural way to facilitate connection.

- **Tasks/activities designed for the break times that encourage people to interact with people they don't already know.** Delegate 'bingo' cards, treasure hunts, etc can make this into a game, or you could do it in a way that will feed into and enhance the experience of a formal session. ('Like what?' you ask. I'm just brewing some ideas that I might not have had if I had not written that sentence. So, I'm not entirely sure yet but this is exactly why I write a blog, you get ideas you might not otherwise have discovered.)

I note that with both of these the point is not only to make sure that somebody talks to the people who don't have a ready-made friendship group at the event, but that the people who do have one also have step outside theirs. It's not just about effecting introductions, but also about equalising the feeling of vulnerability, so that the old-timers experience the need to make an effort to connect as much as the new arrivals.

Key to any and all strategies, though, has to be that they kick in early. You can't leave someone feeling left out for a day and a half and expect them to recover instantly or even ever fully once you do get them feeling connected. People who have not been rescued from this feeling until halfway through an event remember their sense of trauma even if they ended up enjoying the second half. They may retain a strong affection for the people who did eventually offer them a sense of connection, but they are likely to continue to feel equivocal about the event itself and by extension the organisation that held it.



HOW TO KEEP YOUR VOICE FROM CRACKING WHILE PERFORMING

by Suzy Woltmann
from backstage.com



So much more than the pubescent boy's worst fear, voice cracks can threaten any vocal performance. Thankfully, learning to avoid these vocal breaks—and break a leg instead—isn't too tough a nut to crack.

What is a voice crack?

A voice crack is an unwanted and unexpected change in vocal pitch while speaking or singing. Although it's most often aligned with teenage boys, voice cracks can—and do—happen to people of all ages and genders.

Why does my voice crack?

Your voice cracks when the laryngeal muscles experience a sudden movement. This might be due to:

Hormonal changes: The influx of testosterone experienced by cis and transgender males causes physical changes to the vocal cords. The larynx migrates deeper into the throat as the muscles around it grow. Simultaneously, the vocal folds grow larger. This expedient hormonal change in the size and shape of the laryngeal muscles can make the voice crack.

Vocal strain: If you push your voice too high or too low in pitch and volume, the laryngeal muscles change shape quickly, which can lead to your voice cracking.

Vocal growths: Vocal growths can form along the sides of your vocal cords in response to overuse of the voice or acid reflux. These growths, some-

times called singer's nodules, impact the way sound moves through the laryngeal muscles.

Heartburn: Even if gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) isn't drastic enough that it causes growths, stomach acid entering the food pipe still irritates the vocal folds, which can lead to cracking.

Anxiety: Of course, the primary trope about voice cracks in film and TV is that it happens when a character is nervous or otherwise emotional. The body tenses up when anxious, including the throat. When the laryngeal muscles stiffen, the vocal folds struggle to get sound out, which can lead to cracks.

How to stop voice cracks

Assuming you're not portraying a teenage boy or a perpetually nervous Nellie, you likely want to know what you can do when your voice is cracking. Keeping your voice from cracking is mostly preventative. It's a matter of staying hydrated and healthy, always warming up your voice, and reducing anxiety.

Hydrate: Hydration is key to keeping your vocal cords lubricated. The epiglottis blocks ingested water from directly contacting the vocal folds, but drinking water still hydrates the entire body. Try drinking two liters of water a day to hydrate from within. Other options include using a humidifier at 30%–50% or using a personal steamer to keep your vocal cords moist and laryngeal muscles soothed.

Avoid vocal strain: Try not to change your voice pitch or volume too quickly. Instead, modulate by changing the pitch and volume gradually. If your voice is already strained from overuse, limit how much you speak or sing, and vocalize softly to prevent further strain.

Minimize harmful behaviors: Since smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, and eating too many spicy foods can harm your throat, reducing these behaviors can help keep your voice from cracking.

Do vocal warmups: Spend 15–20 minutes doing breathing and voice exercises so your muscles are properly warmed up for action. These should include:

- **Stretching:** Stretch your upper torso by reaching each arm up and over the other side and holding for several beats.
- **Slides:** Try out a mix of pitches and volume levels by doing vocal slides with increasing intervals and loudness.

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HOW TO STOP VOICE CRACKS (continued)

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- **Breathwork:** Breathe in deep and then do 25 –50 sharp exhales, really focusing on feeling your throat muscle movements while doing so.

Reduce anxiety: While this tip is easier said than done, help yourself feel calm and carefree before a performance by engaging in stress reduction exercises.

- **Move around:** Physical exercise releases endorphins, which can help you feel calmer and less anxious.
- **Remember your value:** You're the one performing—the audience is there to see *you*. Remembering that can help when performance jitters loom on the horizon.
- **Focus on performance over people:** While it's important to connect to your audience, focus primarily on the performance instead of the audience to keep stage fright and a cracking voice at bay.
- **Practice, practice, practice:** Put your mind and body in the situation you'll be in during a performance (onstage, on set, in a studio? in front of a large crowd or a single casting director? speaking loudly or quietly?) and practice until the very last nerve has left you.
- **Accept your anxiety:** "Fighting the anxiety doesn't usually work," says voice teacher Michael Jacobs. In fact, trying to fight anxiety can put you in fight-or-flight mode, which paradoxically will only increase the adrenaline flowing through your body. Rather than fighting your anxiety, "make some space for it," Jacobs advises.

If your voice is regularly cracking, check in with your doctor to check that you're not experiencing a medical issue. Depending on the severity of the issue, you may require medication or even surgery to achieve smoother, uncracked vocalizations.

How to keep your voice from cracking
while performing



To keep your voice from cracking, breathe deep, speak and sing slowly and within your range, and relax. If you've done everything you can to prevent vocal breaks, but a cracking voice still plagues your performance in real time, take a crack at these helpful techniques.

Breathe deep: Breathing deep from your belly reduces the pressure on your laryngeal muscles. Place your hands on your stomach and feel it expand and contract with every breath to optimize your vocalizations.

Speak and sing carefully: Think of the last time you strained a muscle. It probably happened when you made a sudden, unexpected movement—not during your regular, metered gym routine. Similarly, fast, loud speaking can throw your laryngeal muscles out of whack and make your voice crack. Slow, deliberate speech within your normal range means slow muscle movements and reduced vocal breaks.

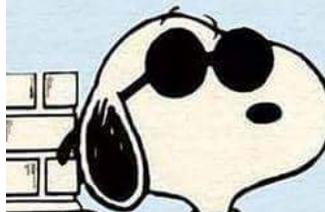
Relax: Put all that working out and working on yourself to work. Take a few deep breaths and recall how you feel when you're exercising, in a yoga class, or meditating, and remind yourself of all the hours of preparation you put in for your performance.

Medical advice disclaimer: Content in this article is provided for informational purposes only, and does not intend to substitute professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

**When you are stressed
you eat ice cream, cake,
chocolate and sweets.**

Why?

**Because 'stressed' spelt
backwards is 'desserts.'**



7 WAYS TO EXPRESSIVE AND BEAUTIFUL SINGING

by Audrey Hunt
from hubpages.com

The Most Important Role of the Singer

What is the singer's prime responsibility? To communicate. A singer may have perfect vocal technique, but if the singing is void of emotion, the listener feels nothing and believes even less, robbing him of the entire singing experience.

But when the basic skills of singing and the ability to communicate are combined, you can count on a good performance.

I've listed seven steps to help singers discover their expressive side.

7 Steps to Expressive Singing

If you don't believe the words you sing, neither will anyone else. Be convincing. Relate to the words as you sing each phrase. Use past experiences to help you stir up forgotten emotions. Once you capture these feelings, you can apply them as you sing.

Take a look at the following suggestions for discovering your expressive side:

1. Eradicate fear. Be vulnerable and show the real you. When you conceal who you are, you also bury your feelings. When these feelings are locked inside of you, there is no possibility of expressing them.
2. Extend an ending note. Holding a note longer than indicated can help the listener to experience their feelings.
3. Sing with impeccable diction, which helps concentrate on the emotion found in the word itself. If needed, hire a vocal coach to help with this critical step.
4. Enjoy the song as you sing. Through joy, your feelings are free to be used for self-expression.
5. Select suitable material for your voice. Why have you selected this song to sing? Do you even like it? With so much material available, stick with pieces you love to sing.
6. Make sure the song is in your key. The music is not in your key if you struggle with hitting the high notes. It is said to be out of your range. The same rule applies to any song that contains low notes. If you can barely reach the lowest note, forget it.
7. "Scatting." Learning to scat on a note is a creative way to begin styling your voice. Listen to vocalists like Ella Fitzgerald, Celine Dion, or

Louis Armstrong for the best lesson in scatting. Check out the video below.

Make the song yours. If you're singing cover songs, avoid duplicating the original artist. Find your unique style because you have one. It's inside of you, longing to be set free. Don't be afraid to take liberties here and there but don't overdo it.

Why We Sing Without Expression

Even though some may find it impossible to sing expressively, singing with feeling can be learned. Let's begin by first looking at the reasons it's a challenge in the first place:

- We learn to repress our emotions early in childhood.
- We have a fear of being laughed at.
- General nervousness.
- The fear of forgetting the words.
- We are easily distracted.
- Not knowing how to use the microphone.
- Feeling uncomfortable on stage or in a new environment.
- Fear of being evaluated or judged negatively.
- Lack of confidence.
- We fear tapping into our emotions - being vulnerable.
- High expectations for ourselves. I was a perfectionist.

When we constantly worry about how we sound to others, we lose our spiritual connection with music.

Emphasis Must Be On Expression First

Not everyone has the natural ability to sing with feelings and express themselves freely. A vocalist may have a beautiful tone, wild and controlled, but still, be unable to execute a song with emotion. The reason is that the singer fails to feel his own emotion.

Emphasis should be upon expression first and technique second. Do not be afraid to emphasize the emotional aspects of singing, for it is the key to enthusiasm and success.

But it's also true that learning vocal techniques will set you free. With proper singing principles under your belt, you no longer use all your concentration on technique. Because you've worked long and hard, they become automatic.

You are free to live the song, free to express your

(Continued on page 11)

7 WAYS TO EXPRESSIVE
(continued)

(Continued from page 10)

true feelings, and free to reach out and touch another person's heart and soul.

To Convince Others You Must
First Convince Yourself

Gloria Rusch, singer and author of "The Professional Singer's Handbook," has this to say:

"When you sing, you need to know how to create the place (environment) suggested in the song. You need to communicate exactly where you were at that moment when you felt the emotions you were singing.

And you need to be able to do this whether you're singing to a live audience or into a microphone at the studio."

I want to add the importance of expressing yourself even when singing alone - or in the shower. No one will believe you if you don't think so yourself. You must live the lyrics and feel the emotion with every fiber. Convince yourself first if you want to convince others.

Be a Good Performer

While earning my living as a singer in Hawaii, I performed "The Hawaiian Wedding Song" well over 500 times. It's the most popular song in Hawaii and part of virtually all weddings.

Can you imagine how a wedding couple would feel if it were performed with complete boredom and void of all emotion?

Always sing the song as if it were the first time. You are missing something when you find yourself bored with a piece.

Sing with all the passion and emotion you've given before - whether it be the first or the 500th time. Your audience deserves not to feel bored just because you do.

Know your material well. Be prepared. There is no excuse for not remembering the words of a song. If you have difficulty memorizing lyrics, you may have to work a bit harder.

The song's lyrics must be ingrained within you.

Regardless of the conditions or distractions that may arise during a performance, know every word. Only then will you have complete freedom to bring life to the lyrics.

Conclusion

People like to feel a song, not just hear the lyrics. They long to relate to the message delivered by the singer. Singing expressively is the vocalist's most significant responsibility. Be vulnerable and completely open to interpretation.

Until you 'sing it as you mean it,' you are only going through the motions. To sing is a gift you give yourself as well as others.

Music-

**The other
non-addictive,
mood-altering
non-substance.**

**Ask your Doctor
if music is right for you.**

Common side effects include but are not limited to uncontrolled head bobbing, toe tapping, finger snapping, selective hearing impairment and persistent melody flashbacks.



HOW TO PREPARE FOR A VOCAL RECORDING SESSION

by Matthew Ramsey
from blog.discmakers.com

The rest of the band has recorded their parts and the songs are done — except for vocals. It's time for you to record. How do you prepare for your big vocal recording session?

Here are some techniques you can employ and routines you can follow to make sure you're sounding your absolute best, no matter when you're recording.

Master the material

The first step to success is being prepared. There's no substitute for mastering the material you're going to sing before you sing it.

That may mean having additional practices with your group where the other instruments take a break and you're just working on the vocal parts. Or it could mean getting the help of an expert vocal coach to make sure you're sounding your absolute best before your recording date.

Get good rest

The night before your vocal recording session, you want to make sure you get great sleep. There's a huge difference between a singer who's gotten good rest and a singer who hasn't.

Simply put, with limited sleep, your body is going to reprioritize all the other systems that are keeping you alive and keeping your metabolism moving over singing. From an evolutionary perspective, singing is not that important, so your brain is always going to favor all those other things that are keeping you alive.

Unfortunately, that means you're just not going to sound as good if you haven't had good sleep.

Hydrate

According to the Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, men should be drinking about 3.5-4 liters of water a day and women should drink 3 liters of water per day. You want to make absolutely sure you're doing that on the day of the recording.

Make sure to drink water as soon as you wake up — that way you can maintain good hydration

throughout the day.

In fact, according to an old singing adage, you should sing wet and pee pale. Enough said.

Eat healthy

On the day of — and even on the days leading up to your vocal recording session — it's important to mind your diet. Having a good diet is one of the easiest ways to keep your voice functioning at its absolute best. Unfortunately, many people underestimate the importance of a good diet as it relates to singing.

To keep your voice sounding its best, you're going to want to stay away from foods or drinks that are going to cause any reflux or allergies.

That means avoiding things like alcohol, caffeine, gluten, dairy, nuts, or even fried or spicy foods. Also, avoid anything that's going to make you feel heavy or weighted down. You know your body, you know what it needs.

I've had a lot of success with singers who go for a very lean-protein and high-vegetable diet. Things like the Paleo or the Keto diet tend to keep your voice functioning at its very best because you're not battling through the things that make you feel weighted down or sluggish or might cause reflux or allergies.

Smoking before your recording session is also not a good idea, but you already knew that.

Warm up

Finally, you want to make sure to warm up for your vocal recording session. I recommend a very specific vocal warm-up regimen where you warm up for a longer period earlier in the day and then do another, shorter warm-up right before you record.

The longer warm-up should take place a few hours before the recording session and last 30-45 minutes.

The second vocal warm-up should last about 15 minutes and you should do it right before you record.

You want to be warmed up for your recording, but you don't want to be too fatigued, so having a few hours between your really intense vocal warm-up earlier in the day and your actual recording will give your voice a chance to rest but still stay warm.

Final notes

It's worth mentioning that you shouldn't have anything
(Continued on page 13)

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A RECORDING
(continued)*(Continued from page 12)*

to eat or drink, besides water, and you shouldn't take any naps or have any long rest after you do your intense vocal warm-up. That's why you don't want to wait more than 3-4 hours beforehand.

So, to recap, here's how your day should look if you're going to record vocals in the afternoon.

1. Get 7-8 hours of sleep.
2. Eat a healthy breakfast, avoiding excess dairy or caffeine.
3. Do an intensive vocal warm-up. 3-4 hours before the actual recording, you're going to do a pretty intensive vocal warm up that lasts about 30-45 minutes. Really dust the cobwebs off.
4. Eat a light, healthy, easy-to-digest lunch with nothing that's going to make you feel bloated or give you reflux. Think a spinach salad with some grilled chicken.
5. Do a brief vocal warm-up. Right before you go into the booth, do another 15 minutes of vocal warm-ups — you're not dusting off the cobwebs here, you're just adding some polish, so really don't overdo it.
6. Sing like a boss. You're going to feel strong, and you're going to notice you're not feeling nearly as fatigued as you normally would if you hadn't followed this regimen.

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



- ...includes:
- ▶ learning your music
 - ▶ invite new members
 - ▶ singing together!

**SINGING LESSONS FOR
ADULTS: HOW TO GET STARTED**

by Joanna Hamawi
from becomesingers.com

Singing is a beautiful skill that can be learned at any age, so if you feel like it's too late to start taking lessons, think again! Just enrolling in singing classes is the first step in developing your voice, improving your technique, boosting your confidence, and eventually belting out your favorite tunes.

Whether you want to pursue a career in music or take singing lessons for fun, we're here to guide you through the process. We will cover everything you need to know to get you started on your path to becoming a great singer!

How long does it take to learn to sing?

Each person has a different learning curve when it comes to singing. While some people could experience improvement after a month or two, others could need years to perfect their talents. To improve as a vocalist, one must practice frequently, have good coaching, and be 100% committed to the craft.

When considering how long it will take to master singing, natural talent is one of the most significant factors. While some people have a natural knack for singing, others need to put in more practice time and work harder to achieve their vocal goals. But, with regular practice and great guidance, nearly anyone can become a superb vocalist.

The second most important factor to consider is hard work and dedication. If you're a beginner, it might take several months of practice and vocal coaching to master singing fundamentals like breath control, pitch accuracy, and tone quality. Clearly, the more you practice, the quicker you'll achieve your goals.

If you want to become a better singer and you only have an hour a day to devote to practice, it may take you around a year to become a great singer. But if you devote 2 hours a day to practice, it might take you around six months to reach professional singing proficiency. What matters most is how much time and effort you are willing to put in to reach your singing goals.

Keep in mind that patience is key when it comes to learning any new skill. Try not to feel frustrated or disappointed if you don't see results right away. Everything takes time, and you'll be hearing significant improvements to your voice before you know it.

(Continued on page 14)

SINGING LESSONS FOR ADULTS
(continued)

(Continued from page 13)

How do I begin my singing journey as a beginner?

Taking on this new adventure is an exciting journey. However, it can be a bit overwhelming if you don't know where to start. Here are some tips to help you get started:

Singing Goals

It's important to think about why you want to take singing lessons before enrolling in any. What is it that you want to achieve? Are you looking to simply improve your voice and develop your vocal skills even further? Are you taking these lessons for fun? Or are you looking to pursue a career in music?

Each of these goals has a deadline that must be followed; aspiring to become a professional singer might take years of hard work, while simply improving your vocal skills could take a few months. That's why it's crucial to have a clear goal in mind and establish a proper plan before starting your vocal training.

It's also crucial to keep your eyes on the prize at the end of the journey, as it will serve as a constant source of inspiration and motivation and remind you of the reason you embarked on this path in the first place.

Get a Teacher

Since there's plenty of free content available online, you can always choose to train yourself and follow a few YouTube videos that guide you through the singing process. However, this is not a very good idea since you need live feedback from a professional who can hear your voice, identify your flaws, and correct you as they listen to you sing over and over again.

A professional vocal coach will build you a proper plan, help improve your technique, offer constructive criticism, teach you how to prepare for performances, and boost your confidence on stage, among many other things, which is why it is usually best to develop your vocal skills in the company of a trained expert.

Practice Regularly and Monitor Your Progress

You have to practice regularly if you want to see results. Do not spend your money on a professional if you are not ready to commit to daily singing exercis-

es, focus on developing your vocals and strengthening your diaphragm, all of which contribute significantly to the quality of your singing voice.

If you want to perfect your singing, you must monitor your progress. You can do so by either keeping a singing journal or, better yet, recording yourself singing and listening to it to identify your weak areas. It will show you what you should work on and what techniques and exercises you should focus on to see improvement.

Not to mention that keeping tabs on your progress will show you how far you've come since you started this journey, which is a great motivator to keep you going.

Breathing and Posture

Using proper breathing techniques is the key to developing a strong singing voice and performing for long periods of time. It's important that you can play a whole set of songs—say, between 15 and 20—without getting too tired. It would be terrible to get on stage just to crumble from exhaustion after performing a handful of songs. This is why in order to sing well and with endurance, you need to master your breathing, as performing breathing exercises is essential for mastering diaphragmatic breathing and building core strength.

How you stand or sit can also impact the quality of your breath. Better posture will make it easier for air to travel freely across your vocal cords when you sing, allowing you to use your entire vocal range more freely, as well as preventing fatigue or injury. And since you will be relaxed with no strain on your neck, jaw, or shoulders, your singing voice will improve, and you'll be able to sing for longer periods of time.

Vocal Warm-Ups

Vocal warm-ups are essential to becoming a great singer and should be a standard component of every singer's practice routine. Just like you would warm up your muscles before a workout, you have to warm up and boost blood flow to the laryngeal muscles that govern the opening and shutting of the vocal cords before using them to their best ability.

Doing so can increase vocal flexibility and range while reducing the risk of vocal strain or damage. Keep in mind that a properly warmed-up voice is a more confident, healthier, and better-sounding voice.

(Continued on page 15)

SINGING LESSONS FOR ADULTS (continued)

(Continued from page 14)

Second, vocal warm-ups are important because they help you learn how to breathe and support your voice correctly, both of which are fundamental to your vocal health and performance.

Lastly, warming up the voice can enhance the singer's ability to produce a high-quality performance by improving tonality, resonance, and overall vocal health and quality. Singing classes should include warm-up exercises as they are an excellent way to help students feel more at ease and confident before a performance.

Be Self-Aware

It's perfectly okay not to have a voice as strong as Whitney Houston's or Mariah Carey's. This doesn't mean you're a bad singer or not good enough. You might have your own style and signature sound that others enjoy. You should know that every vocalist has their own special set of skills and limitations. Some can hit notes that others simply can't!

So once you've established your own unique vocal style, start experimenting with different musical genres to see what complements it the most. Finding a musical style where you can excel is possible even if your voice lacks the power to belt out notes. Your singing coach can help you figure out your range and style so you can pick songs that highlight your best qualities and strengths.

FAQs

Can I learn to sing if I have no talent?

Everyone, regardless of natural talent, can learn to sing if they dedicate enough time and effort to practice and master the proper vocal techniques. Some people indeed have a natural ability or predisposition for singing, but that's not a necessity for learning how to sing or getting better at it.

Is singing natural or learned?

Talent and training go hand in hand in the art of singing. Some people may be born with a better singing voice than others, but anybody can develop their vocal skills with the right guidance and practice. Just work on your breath control, practice regularly, and you'll develop your skills in no time.

How do I find my singing voice?

To find your singing voice, always start with vocal warm-ups before experimenting with different vocal styles and genres to find one that suits you best. Practice singing using your chest, head, and mixed voice until you find your most comfortable vocal range (which will naturally be close to your speaking voice.)

Conclusion

In conclusion, learning to sing as an adult may be a rewarding and life-changing experience. No matter what your level of expertise is, taking classes is a terrific way to get started and develop your vocal skills. Everyone can learn to sing better with the help of a good teacher, practice, and the right techniques.

By committing to a regular practice routine and working to improve your vocal range, tone, and technique, you can start making progress toward your singing goals and explore your vocal abilities.

Keep in mind that mastering the art of singing is an ongoing process that calls for your whole attention and focus. However, it can also be an enjoyable and fun escape that reaps many benefits for both your physical and mental health.

So go ahead and don't be afraid to take that first step and sign up for singing lessons, and always remember to have fun!

Music Practice Routine

www.musiciansunite.com

1. Practice the hard stuff until it becomes the easy stuff.
2. Continue that process for the rest of your life.

WHAT IS HEAD VOICE? AND HOW DO I FIND IT?

by Andreas Grussl
from thebalancedsinger.com

If you sing at all, you've likely heard the term "head voice" and wondered what it actually refers to.

Is it breathy and light? Is it powerful and operatic?

Can only women sing in head voice?

Defining head voice

Also known as your upper register, "head voice" refers to a singer's top range of notes that often feel lighter and perhaps even breathier than your regular speaking voice.

Where does this term come from?

Hundreds of years ago, before science allowed us to look into the larynx, people categorized the voice based on what it felt like to the singer. They found that for most people, when singing above a certain pitch, the voice was perceived as being placed somewhere in the head. This is how we got the term "head voice."

While there may be other more anatomically accurate terms for this upper register of high notes, the term "head voice" is still useful for us as singers because it speaks to our experience of what it feels like to sing in that part of our voice.

Head voice also has a little brother called "falsetto" that may feel similar to it.

What does it sound like?

Head voice is a true chameleon. Whereas in most beginning singers it has a weak and often breathy sound, it can be built into a soaring classical soprano sound, or within the thrilling high notes of a tenor, or up to the piercing top notes of a rock or R&B singer.

Check out these examples of three vastly different singers, all using their head voice to great effect:

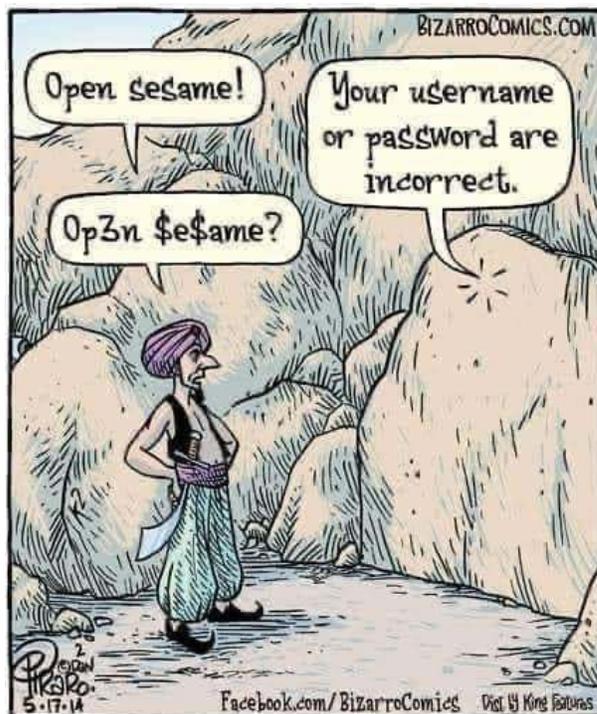
- "Sugar" by Maroon 5, lead singer Adam Levine (https://youtu.be/09R8_2nJtig?t=74)
- "Nobody Love" by Tori Kelly (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQQpy9JtDG8&feature=youtu.be&t=135>)
- "Almost Real" by Kelli O'Hara (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apnHOWWuTkQ&feature=youtu.be&t=275+>)

How do I find it?

Try to find head voice for yourself now. Inflect up in your voice as high as you can on a "WHOO" sound, as if you were cheering at a concert or a football game.

Do you feel the vibrations in your head? If you don't, that's totally fine!

But it's likely you'll feel a sensation quite different from your speaking voice.



FREE YOUR VOICE

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

Tongue Strategies and Exercises (continued)

- Sing an 'ah' vowel with your tongue sticking out as far as possible. Keep it directed straight forward and shaped to a point, always stretching. Keep a pleasant look on the rest of your face, even smiling. You will get strong front/nasal resonance and the weight on the digastric muscle will be lifted. Of course, you won't be able to articulate or enunciate properly, but you will have plenty of forward placement and be unable to depress the base of your tongue in a tense and muscular manner. Then sing other vowel sounds. You should be able to find a forward placement for each and also be able to make every vowel sound distinct. Try to reproduce the same resonant sensations (and the looseness in the digastric muscle) when singing normally. It can be difficult to establish this new habit, but it is well worth it.
- For every vowel you sing, think of your tongue as loose and almost spilling forward out of your mouth.
- Experiment with how much or how little space you have between your relaxed tongue and the roof of your mouth. Do this by varying your jaw position subtly and trying different vowel sounds. Personally, for example, when I sing an 'ee' vowel, my tongue may even lightly touch the insides of my first molars, and the space between my tongue and the roof of my mouth is much narrower than I had once thought allowable.
- Warm up, and even rehearse, with your tongue and jaw so loose and relaxed on vowel sounds that you feel like you may almost drool.
- When singing higher notes, beware of tensing the rear of your tongue and flattening it strongly. You do not need to do this in order to pitch or shape notes and vowel. Practise those notes so they resonate further forward in your face and even in front of your teeth. This is a sensation in your face rather than any forced action. Some people feel like their facial bones are 'buzzing' or like glass is shattering in their heads. I feel some of those sensations, along with the feeling like I have air swirling through my sinuses. (I may or may not have air swirling there, but it sure feels like there is.) If necessary, try those notes with your tongue sticking out as far as possible, as described earlier, and then reproduce the sensation with your tongue in normal position.

(to be continued next month)

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Yvonne DeBandi
from a2z-singing-tips.com

J = Jumping Jacks. If you are having trouble getting your body completely involved with singing, try doing some cardiovascular activities, like jumping jacks, for a few minutes before getting started again. Sometimes your instrument simply needs an airflow wake-up call.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Nicole LeGault
from a2z-singing-tips.com

J is for Jabberwocky. When you are composing lyrics, don't forget that nonsensical words, sounds, and scat are legitimate prose. La la la, do do do, bottle op' botten doh, bottle op bop 'n bayden day dow dow

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Mick Walsh
from a2z-singing-tips.com

J. Join a group or a band. There's no point in spending your hard earned cash, on singing lessons if you are not going to disclose to the world just how great you are. Choral groups and choirs are also great places to meet kindred spirits and to have fun.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Teri Danz
from a2z-singing-tips.com

J= Jaw -- Relax your jaw. Called a Dumb Duh, it will feel unnatural to keep your jaw loose and dropped but it is the best way to get a smooth sound and not effort in singing. It also allows you to get exact placement of pitch and replicate it.

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
- Mark Roblez lead
- Jason Dearing bari
- John Alexander bass



You shop. Amazon gives.

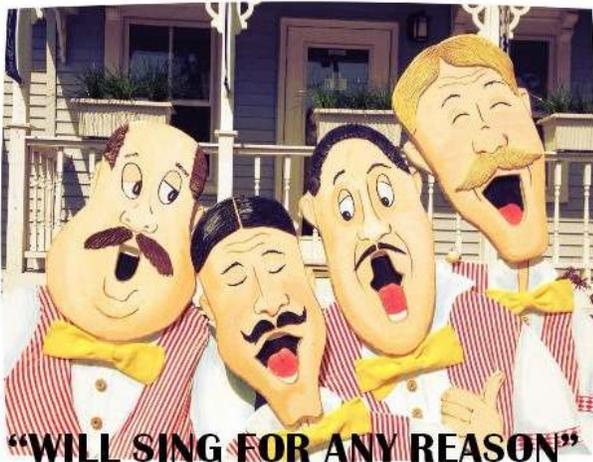
Amazon has dropped the Smile program, where they would take a percentage of our purchase prices and donate that to our selection from worthy non-profits (like us, the Big O). Their new plan is to only donate to those entities that THEY deem worthy.



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!!



Big Orange Chorus

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Thu	04 May	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	11 May	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	18 May	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	25 May	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	01 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	08 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	15 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	22 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	29 Jun	Shepherd of the Woods

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Sat	20 May	Brookdale Rehab show
Sat	27 May	Cypress Village show

...more to come

“Many people think in music that slow = easy and fast = hard. But to play slow and make it groove, to make it feel really good, is one of the toughest things to do as a musician.”

www.musiciansunite.com

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

Bob Thau	05 May
Mike Sobolewski	13 May
Frank Nosalek	28 May
Emily Dearing	30 May

RECENT GUESTS

Roger Erestaine	Ron Blewett
Jon Greene	Jim Harper
G Lane	Brandon Edwards
Joe McLean	Adom Panshukian
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

WELCOME

NEWEST MEMBERS

Les Mower	April
Ray Parzik	August
Ed Fitzgerald	September
Dale Martin	March

2023 DIRECTING TEAM



Jay Giallombardo
Guest
Director



Daniel Pesante
Interim
Director

2023 OTHER CHAPTER LEADERS



David Walker
Uniform
Manager



Les Mower
Chorus
Manager



John Alexander
Bulletin
Editor



Frank Nosalek
Webmaster &
Technology



PHOTO
NOT
AVAILABLE

vacant
Show
Chairman

EDITOR'S NOTE

Article and column submissions are solicited.
Help make this a better bulletin. Send me stuff!
The deadline for June is 24 May.
Items without a byline are from the Editor.

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

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

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

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



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