



The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



Volume 43 Issue 7

July 2023

We meet at 7:00 most Thursdays at Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran, 7860 Southside Blvd, Jacksonville, FL
Guests always welcome Call 355-SING No Experience Necessary

WHAT'S INSIDE

Title	Page
AHSOW In Louisville	1
Editorial	2
Sing In Different Fonts	3
Powerful Vocal Warmup Exercises	4-6
How To Learn Better From Failures	7-9
Finding The Moments	9-10
Breath Management	11-14
Free Your Voice	15
Free Singing Tips	15
Quartet Corner	16
Chapter Quartets	16
Upcoming Schedules	17
Birthdays / Guests / New Members	17
Directing Team / Other Leaders	18
Chapter Officers / Music Team	19

AHSOW IN LOUISVILLE

by Mike Ebbers
from an email

Hello, Members of the Woodsheddors organization, This is just a reminder that we will have a woodshedding room at the headquarters hotel in Louisville during the 2023 convention. We hope you will take a few minutes to stop by, say hello, and woodshed a song or two.

As you know, woodshedding is a unique bonding experience. It has elements of enjoyment that are not present in singing paper arrangements. Our mission is to encourage and spread this experience.

We can always use volunteers to help us facilitate the room activities. If you would like to volunteer, send a note to ahsow.woodsheddors@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,
Mike Ebbers
President, the Woodsheddors (AHSOW)

WANTED!!

MEN WHO LIKE TO SING!



The Woodsheddors News

Volume 1, Issue 1

March 17, 2023

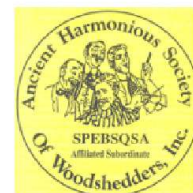
OUR NEW LOGO

Out with the old ———>

<———— In with the new.

Our new logo (on the left) is simple and clean.

Read below to find out about the name change.



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vacant

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

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timely information
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Orange Zest

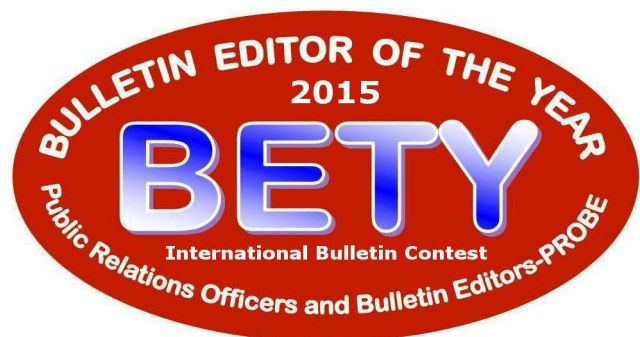
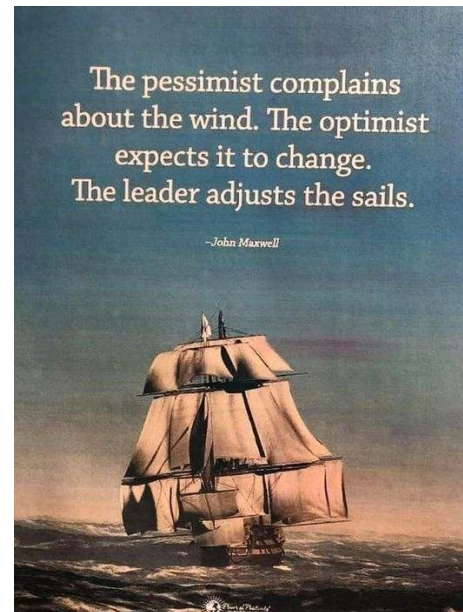
EDITORIAL

We got some new members, put together a spring show, and performed at two venues last month. We expect to do it at least one more time in the near future. We have selected a new competition package and expect to present it at the fall convention. We are moving ahead, sounding good, and ready to move up to bigger and better things. Come join us!

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.



SING IN DIFFERENT FONTS

by Brody McDonald
from choirbites.com

SING IN *DIFFERENT* **FONTS**

“...FOR *LOVE*
IS **STRONG**
AS DEATH.”



I once heard someone say, “tone is carried on vowels; emotion is expressed through consonants.” I like that as a broad generalization. I often ask my choirs to enhance their emotional impact through tone painting, and this is one concept I impart to help them.

In order to get more specific about particularly important words, I point out the onomatopoeic nature of language. An onomatopoeia is a word that mimics a sound it references. Some examples are: boom, murmur, buzz, hiss, bang.

I believe that even more words sound like what they are. Take a moment to say the following words out loud to see if you agree with me.

WARM

HOT

FRIGID

FREEZING

BLOCK

SOGGY

SPIKY

CRUNCHY

CUMBERSOME

BUBBLY

SOOTHING

SQUARE

ROUND

MELLOW

HARSH

And so it happened recently that I was working with my chamber choir on the Rene Clausen “Set Me As a Seal.” As I was asking the singers to consider what were the most important words to stress, we were working the phrase, “...for love is strong as death.” I asked them to linger on the liquid/singable consonants in “love” to make the word more loving, to exploit the sharp consonants and open vowel of “strong” to make the word stronger, and to make the tone more airy/hollow on the word “death” to help complete the phrase with a taper.

As we were practicing, one of my sopranos (Ali Machado gets full credit for this thought) said, “You know, as I sing I think of those words like they are in different fonts. You know, like those inspirational quote signs?” My head exploded. I could NOT stop thinking about this idea. It’s SO TRUE. Singing in different fonts! My first mental response was to internally scroll through the roughly 47,243 “Live. Laugh. Love.” posters I’ve seen in my life. But as the day went on, I found myself noticing the use of different fonts for emphasis on various posters around the school and all over the internet. As with all these Choir Bites... this is just a chance to express a timeless idea (tone painting) from a new angle (singing in different fonts) that might resonate with our singers.

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

POWERFUL VOCAL WARM UP EXERCISES FOR SINGERS [EFFECTIVE]

by James Mann
from becomesingers.com

In performing your vocal warm up exercise as part of your routine singing essentials, you can follow the vocal tips given in this article. Warm-up exercises provide enormous benefits to beginners that are why music instructors and pro singers vouch for their favorable effect in singing. They reduce muscle tension and enhance your voice quality and strength. One session would ideally take at least 20 minutes.

Why Vocal Warm up Before Singing is So Crucial?

Singing demands expending a lot of physical energy and hence a routine singing warm-up exercises are critical for singers when compared to musicians. For a singer, the energy is expended in two ways. The vocal activity takes up energy and stamina while singing and physical activity which uses up energy when a performer goes on stage to stand and sing, let alone the dancing and the interacting part. Just like sportsmen and athletes do a warm-up session before the workout session, singers need to do a warm up singing session before an actual practice/performance. This will help in stretching and flexing the vocal cords and prevents damage and strain while singing beside helping in the overall improvement in singing quality.

A study conducted by Gramming, Elliot, and Sundberg showed that altering the pitch stretches the muscles. Moreover, many singing stars have vouched for the fact that warming up exercises has contributed to better performance. All the muscles in the entire body are used while singing without our knowledge. For the vocal singing alone, the muscles of the diaphragm are the essential ones that contribute strength, power, and stamina for singing. The muscles of the vocal cords or the larynx provide tonal quality, vibrato, and tempo. Muscles in the shoulders, neck, chest, and abdomen are the secondary support to singing, and any stress or strain or tension at these muscles affects the quality of singing. The muscles of the limbs of your body give the physical support for standing or moving around and singing.

Therefore, the deep breathing, yoga, and meditation go a long way in releasing tension and calming you down. "Vocalises" are additional singing warm up exercises that train your voice through breath control, voice modulation, voice blending, voice balance, intonation, and diction.

The Golden Rules Of Vocal Warm-Ups

- You can start doing this exercise after taking a lot of fluids to help in lubricating and moisturizing your vocal cords. These warm-up exercises are essential in increasing the flow of blood to your voice-producing muscles. But before you start, you should perform first some relaxation exercises to condition your physical and mental attributes in doing this exercise.
- Then, you can follow it up with a form of breathing exercise, pitch exercise, and improvement of vocal strength exercise. Later, you can set your routine of warming up that fits your requirements. But in following these vocal warm up tips for beginners, you should discuss first the kind of exercise that you wish to do with your mentor to obtain his advice in charting out a plan for you.
- You must be aware that there is no standard form of warm-up exercise that is ideal for singers. Some may work better for others and some may not. As a general concept, you should progress in a gradual manner with your warm exercise from mid ranges to the level of extremes. You can refer to several books and singing programs online to get some vocal warm up tips that will provide you with a wide range of info concerning this subject.
- You can also seek the advice of a vocal coach to set your list of personalized warm-up exercises. In yawning and sighing exercise, you are required to inhale slowly in a yawning style with your jaw, shoulders, and tongue in a relaxed manner, and then, do your exhaling vocally. Sing the **hmmm** sound in a comfortable pitch, changing the sound in the middle with an exhale.
- If you want to become a professional singer but don't know how to manage your voice properly, you may end up tiring your vocal cords easily. Thus, you need to learn the different vocal exercises recommended for singers to ensure that you properly manage your voice.

Powerful Vocal Warm-Up Exercises

Beginners in singing who would like to progress in their career should consider performing vocal warm up exercises that are crucial for their daily routine. These kinds of exercises are also important for people who sing on rare occasions. However, due to lack of time or for some other reasons, singers neglect to do these exercises that are very essential as the 1st step in singing. Just like in any form of sports activity, warming up is necessary before you move up to high gear.

(Continued on page 5)

POWERFUL VOCAL WARMUP EXERCISES
(continued)

(Continued from page 4)

In singing, the vocal cords have to be warmed up first before you sing or speak especially on long engagement to prepare them for rigid work that they are about to perform. If you neglect to warm up your voice, this could lead to a devastating effect on your performance like vocal hoarseness or early vocal fatigue. So, what should be done to avoid these vocal problems? Since every person might have a different singing voice, the type of vocal exercise that he should perform depends on his level of voice.

Below is the list of top 6 vocal warm-up exercises I love the most. They are extremely powerful, and applicable to all levels of singers whether you are a beginner or a pro singer. Choose 2 to 3 exercises below and start waking up your real voice. Please do let me know what you think and found after practicing it.

1) Vocal Fry Exercise

The first exercise is called vocal fry technique that involves allowing the vocal cords to vibrate at the lowest level of frequency. The groggy sound that you experience when you wake up in the morning can be used to loosen gradually by massaging your vocal cords. As your 1st exercise, this will work effectively to make your vocal cords intact and protected.

But what is this vocal fry exercise? Well, vocal fry refers to your vocal cords' initial vibration. However, vocal fry, in the technical sense of the words, refers to your singing range's lowest part.

You can engage in vocal fry exercise by initially singing in a low note. Afterward, try to lower further the note that you are singing. Soon after, you will reach the lowest point wherein you can no longer sustain or sing a full tone. At this point, your voice will go into what we call a **"vocal fry."**

(https://youtu.be/0raVR9T_Llw)

The duration of time that you perform this kind of exercise depends on the kind of voice that you have, but under normal circumstances, you can perform it for a few minutes before you take the next warm up technique.

2) Lip Roll Exercises

The second vocal warm exercise is called the lip roll that is one of the best-recommended vocals warm-up exercises to induce flowing of the blood to the vocal cords. This technique sets your voice by getting rid of

excess tension brought about by night's sleep while activating the inner larynx muscles.

If you can maintain the dopey sound below the lip rolls in ascending and descending in your vocal range, it can bring a more wonderful result.

If you are going to enroll in an online singing program, you would be taught the lip rolling exercise. This exercise, according to experts, helps you sing high notes, smoothen out tone quality, enable you to move through your vocal registers, and help you avoid vocal strain.

Well, lip roll is surely a vocal tool with many applications and purposes. It can relax your vocal cords. It can also help you build vocal skills and techniques, and it can also warm up your vocal cords. Singers generally use this exercise to warm up before singing and to cool down after singing. Singers also use it to enable them to tackle the challenging and challenging parts of a song.

Now, the question remains as to whether lip rolling is effective. To many, lip roll is simply a child's play. But for some serious singers, lip roll does play its role in enhancing the singing voice. When you lip roll, you produce semi-occluded vocal sounds that help balance the pressure below and above your vocal cords.

When the pressures below and above, your vocal cords are equalized, your vocal mechanism functions at an optimum level. In other words, this exercise lets you efficiently create sounds by letting the ideal amount of air through your vocal cords. It also helps you attain smooth transitions between different registers. The idea behind this exercise is to let you achieve a relaxed and balanced vocal mechanism.

3) "Mum" Exercises

The third powerful exercise is called mum exercise that involves making the larynx neutral. This technique keeps the pace of your workout in singing when your larynx is in a neutral position while performing a warm up of your voice. Concentrate on maintaining your larynx neutral up to your desired music scale such as octave, double octave, arpeggio, etc.

(<https://youtu.be/F0nXWKp74-A>)

After performing these vocal warm up exercises,
(Continued on page 6)

POWERFUL VOCAL WARMUP EXERCISES (continued)

(Continued from page 5)

it's up to you now to determine if you need further stretching for your voice. As mentioned earlier, each person has a different voice in singing, so, you have to undergo experimenting to know what vocal exercise is best for you. The most important thing is you don't neglect to do these vocal warm up exercises as your routine before engaging in a hectic singing session.

4) Sharp Exhalation Exercises

Other vocal warm-up tips include the use of a straw in inhaling and exhaling. In the sharp exhalation process, you have to breathe deeply and gradually, but if you exhale, try contracting your abdominal muscles in a sharp manner to take out the air through sounding the word huh. You can also make use of vowel sounds or combine them with consonant sounds in singing on the scale beginning from a low pitch and finishing at a high pitch.

5) Tongue Twister Exercise

Another means is by practicing some usual tongue twisters such as ***"she likes shells that sellers sell on the seashore."*** As a recap, the advantages that you get from doing these exercises include increasing your stamina, enhancing your vocal strength, better voice control, extending your vocal range, etc.

Tongue twister exercise allows you to exercise your tongue and vocal cords. This exercise will enable you to warm up your vocal cords and tongue. Thus, it will enhance your ability to enunciate the lyrics of the song properly. It also helps your jaw, lips, and throat to keep them in proper condition for singing. Plus, it improves your breathing for singing.

When you engage in tongue-twisting exercise, you should not work primarily on controlling your pitch. You should not also let yourself get locked into a very narrow pitch range. The correct way to do this exercise is to vary your pitch while warming up your voice. Then, you should focus on your tongue, jaw, or lips while you do the tongue-twisting exercise.

(<https://youtu.be/YGYk5qGVWt0>)

Once you follow these vocal warm-up tips, there is no reason your singing career would remain stagnant; it should blow up to a great extent. These vocal warm-up exercises may help you to get into a fully-prepared state for any upcoming singing performance.

Please do remember to refer to these vocal practices before every singing performance.

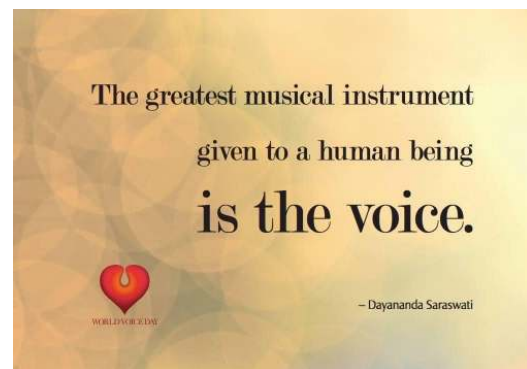
6) Practice Deep Breathing

You can engage in a deep breathing exercise to warm up your vocal cords. This is done by standing up with straight back and relaxed shoulders. Then, put your hands on your belly or stomach. Through your nose, begin to breathe. Hold your breath as you count up to ten. Then, expand your lungs and abdomen as you inhale. Afterward, slowly exhale.

When you exhale, you should let your abdomen contract as if you are forcing the air out of your abdomen. Make sure that you maintain your shoulder in a relaxed position and your back straight up. Then, repeat this exercise up to three times.



"And here's what one of the world's greatest songs sounds like when I sing it."



HOW TO LEARN BETTER FROM FAILURES (AND SUCCESSES TOO)

by Noa Kageyama, Ph.D
from bulletproofmusician.com

You probably spend a lot of time thinking about how to **practice** and learn more effectively.

You probably also spend a lot of time thinking about how to **perform** more optimally, and what you have to do in that moment to play your best.

But as performance science researcher Aaron Wilimmon noted in his podcast episode a few months ago, there's a third element that's helpful to include in the practice-performance equation.

And that's what we ought to do *after* a performance – i.e. the post-performance review.

And why does this matter?

Well, whether it's a big audition or small studio class performance, how we engage in the reflection process can affect our confidence and motivation moving forward. Which in turn could change how you approach practicing and feel going into your next performance.

So...what should this process look like?

Well, before we get to that, let's take quick look at the upside of failure, the downside of success, and how this could affect what our review process ought to look like.

The upside of failure

Falling short of our goals and expectations can obviously feel pretty crappy. Like someone has shoved their fist inside our chest, Mortal Kombat-style, and twisted everything up inside.

So when we have the opportunity to spare our kids, students, or colleagues this pain, it's kind of a no-brainer, right? Whether it's correcting their homework to make sure they get A's, or telling them exactly what fingering to use to solve a tricky shift, it's tempting to leverage our hard-earned knowledge and spare them the struggle.

But from a learning standpoint, this might not always be in their best interests in the long term.

Feeling rotten can be a powerful motivator for

change. It can push us to take another look at how we've been doing things and search for a better way. And we might ultimately learn much more, and gain more confidence in ourselves as a result of having overcome the challenge.

Of course, this is all moot if we are so discouraged by the failure that we spend the weekend downing pints of Cherry Garcia while binge-watching all nine seasons of *The Office*.

So...how exactly are we supposed to learn from failures?

We'll look at that in a minute, but first, we should talk for a moment about the downside of success.

Wait, what? Success has a downside?

The downside of success

Success certainly feels much better than failure, and can increase confidence in our abilities – but there are actually some significant downsides to success when it comes to learning.

As Bill Gates once said, "Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can't lose." In other words, when we've experienced success, it's easy to become complacent.

After all, success doesn't give us that inner anguish that motivates a change. And since success increases confidence in what we are already doing, we are less likely to engage in exploratory behaviors. Which means, we end up sticking with a much narrower range of possibilities, and often learn less from successes.

For instance, maybe your upbow staccato is good enough in something like Saint-Saëns's *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, so you never think to explore other right hand finger positions, wrist pronations, or arm angles. But then you encounter Elgar's *La Capricieuse*, and suddenly realize that just stiffening your arm and thinking "GO FOR IT! AAHHHH!!!" isn't going to do the trick.

So the very real challenge with successes is figuring out how to keep our motivation high, and continue to explore new possibilities that may not work at first, but might be better in the long run.

So what does all of this say about what an effective post-performance review process might look like? How to do an effective post-performance review

(Continued on page 8)

HOW TO LEARN BETTER FROM FAILURES (continued)

(Continued from page 7)

Well, here's a basic 3-step reflection process, based on a [2014 research paper by Ellis et al.](#), that you could start with:

Step 1: Self-explanation

The first step is to take a closer look at what specific actions contributed to your success or failure. For instance, what did you do while waiting to go on stage? Who did you talk to? What did you talk about? How did this affect your focus and impact your performance?

The key is to connect the success or failure of your performance to specific actions that you can control.

Step 2: Data verification

The next step is to do a little “counterfactual” thinking to take a closer look at what you did and imagine alternate actions you could have taken – and how this might have changed things.

For instance, how else could you have spent your time off-stage waiting for your turn? What might have happened if you kept to yourself, closed your eyes, ran through the opening a few times in your head and visualized how you wanted things to go instead?

Step 3: Feedback

Feedback takes two different forms. The first, is “**outcome**” feedback. As in, did you succeed? Or did you fail?

Why does this matter? Well, if you don't know if you succeeded or failed in meeting your goals, you're probably not going to be especially motivated to do very much...

The second type of feedback is “**process**” or performance feedback. What worked? What didn't work? What should you try changing next time? What did you learn from the experience?

This is where you get to gameplan for the next performance. To figure out how to tweak your preparation, your approach, and ensure that you've learned everything you possibly could from the last performance, so that your next performance will be better than the last.

Pretty straightforward, right?

Maybe – but this process is missing one very important variable.

What to focus on after a failure

So here's where things get interesting.

To maximize our improvement from one performance to the next, it appears we may have to focus on *different things* after successes and failures.

Drawing from previous research in this area, the authors explain that after disappointing performances, we're most likely to perform better in the future if our post-performance review focuses on both the specific errors we made AND the specific things we did well.

Presumably, if we focus only on our mistakes after failures, we might get discouraged and spiral into that unproductive bad place (filled with Ben & Jerry's).



What to focus on after a success

Conversely, after a successful performance, it seems that we will learn and improve the most if we focus *only on our errors*.

Because if we focus too much on the things we did well when reviewing successes, we start feeling all warm and fuzzy inside. Which could potentially reduce our motivation to explore new ways to improve. So we end up learning and improving less.

Take action

I don't think that your post-performance reflection has to be quite as black and white as I'm making it

(Continued on page 9)

HOW TO LEARN BETTER FROM FAILURES (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

out to be, but I do like the idea of a process that isn't once-size-fits-all, and changes depending on how you feel about your performance. So as to ensure that you're always in the most optimal headspace for learning and growing, whether you're pleased with how you played, or not.

So if you're listening back to a recording of a less than awesome performance, be sure to listen for things that you did well, and not just the things that make you cringe.

And what to do if you just had one of those good days where everything just worked and you're feeling great? Well, as tempting as it might be to move on without any reflection at all, this may be the perfect time to identify the little things that you didn't have the awareness or bandwidth to pick up on before, but represent the next step forward in your playing.



FINDING THE MOMENTS

by Liz Garnett
from helpingyouharmonise.com

I wrote a while back about the experience of listening out for our favourite bits in familiar music, and the obligations thus placed upon performers to make those eagerly-anticipated moments special. This opened up the question as to how we identify which moments these are if we're new to the repertoire – either because we're relatively junior in the genre or because the music itself is not yet widely performed.

That's a good question, I thought, and then: hmm, that's a really good question, how *do* we do this? What looked on first sight like a nice rhetorical question to which I thought I knew the answer actually had me more baffled than I anticipated.

As a musician, I'm coming from this from a number of angles: as a director preparing arrangements with my chorus I've not necessarily heard sung by others, as a coach supporting other groups in the same situation, as an arranger responsible for putting in the bits that will in time become people's favourite moments. And I'm also experiencing it in my newly reactivated identity as a pianist: one of the pieces I'm learning, though written in 1932, was only published in 2020, and so has yet to accumulate much of a performance tradition.

It's not that I have any doubt that I do find the special bits, you understand, it's just that I'm not sure how I do it. I think other people might be in the same boat: one of my favourite music-coaching exercises is to put people in small groups including people from different parts and have them jointly identify the 'moments' in the piece of music we're working on, and I've never had anyone ask me how to go about it. (They may not have previously noticed the moments in other people's parts, mind you, which is why we do the exercise so they know what to listen out for, but they know where theirs are.) And I guess audiences are like this too: if it took analytical knowledge to identify the good bits, listening to music would be a less popular pastime than it is.

But, still, it feels like the people delivering the moments could usefully have some sense of method in addition to our intuitions to help us on our way. Because it is, as in the coaching-under-glass example that got me thinking about this, possible to miss moments – intuition alone doesn't always come up trumps.

(Continued on page 10)

FINDING THE MOMENTS (continued)

(Continued from page 9)

Interrogating my intuitions has so far pulled the following thoughts from my practical consciousness into conversant awareness. The moments that I find myself looking forward to while playing, singing, or conducting will have one or more of the following features:

- **Surprisingness.** Like the use of a particularly vivid or unusual word in a piece of writing, moments often have some element of the extraordinary compared with their general context. Of course, strictly speaking, this is surprising only the first time you encounter it, but the factors that mark that initial experience continue to stand out on repeated listening. These moments are set apart from the general flow by some combination of [easeylink = harmonic_charge | text = harmonic charge], change of texture, register or dynamic, or virtuosic flourish. This is why it is important not to mess up the tricky bits, because the bits that trip up the performer while they are learning the music may well be destined to be the bits that the audience come to love the most.
- **Convergence of parameters pointing towards it.** There can be a sense of inevitability of really key moments, because their arrival is signalled in advance. There can be a sense of the culmination of processes in multiple dimensions: harmonic and/or melodic sequences, build-up (or wind-down) of pitch, dynamic and/or orchestration, coordination of hypermetric units can all shout 'here it comes!' so that we're all ready for it when it arrives.
- **Placement in narrative structure.** Moments may mark a key point in the story (in the case of songs with lyrics), or in instrumental music, a turning point in the form, e.g. major point of arrival. They may also be marked as surprising, but it is their position in the overall arc of the music as much as their content that makes them special.

I've put this in ascending order of importance for defining the really focal points of a piece of music. You may have any number of passing moments on the way through, little frissons of musical surprise that keep the attention and interest engaged, but the bits that people get ready for and really lean into mentally and emotionally, are often involved in long-term structural processes. The material with

which they are articulated doesn't even necessarily have to be that surprising – though it often is, you also can have great moments made from the simplest of materials because they've been placed and signalled so well.

Conversely, I was reminded recently of a particular barbershop chart in which there's one embellishment quite early on that I really love and nothing quite as remarkable for the rest of the song. I always feel a bit conflicted about it, because on the one hand I really look forward to that moment, but once it's happened the rest of the performance can never quite live up to it. So, whilst this whole discussion came out of what the performer needs to do to bring out the bits that the audience will love the most, they're also at the mercy of composers and arrangers to make that possible.



BREATH MANAGEMENT

by Karyn OConnor
from singwise.org

The purposes of '**supporting the voice**' are to exercise control over the amount of air being expelled from the lungs during singing tasks and to maintain a steady flow of air (and thus create a steady singing tone).

The difference between how we breathe for singing and how we breathe for other daily activities lies not in the mechanisms but in how the airflow is regulated, as the demands that our bodies have for air changes with different activities. Although it is still in accordance with the natural functioning of the body, 'natural breathing' as employed for speech is not adequate for intense singing demands. During normal demands, such as speaking or resting, we tend to inhale and exhale more shallowly and evenly because our bodies don't require as much oxygen. Air is exchanged in cycles of approximately four to six seconds; this differs slightly from person to person. During singing, however, we need to inhale quickly and often deeply, then exhale slowly and steadily, in a long breath, as we sing our phrases or notes.

Singing requires a higher rate of breath energy than speaking does, as well as the elongation of the breath cycle. The rate of expiration has to be retarded beyond that appropriate to speech, especially during passages or notes of durations greater than the normal 'at rest' breath cycle. This higher need for energy and stamina requires more muscle control and coordination in supporting the work of the diaphragm and the function of the larynx, and this is the part of breathing that needs to be developed through training. Learned controls must be mastered in order to enhance and extend breath management capabilities.

When it comes to supporting the tone of the voice, there are two schools of teaching: 1) a contracting of the abdominal muscles; and 2) an 'inspiratory hold' (appoggio).

Many contemporary methods of teaching encourage a **contracting of the abdominal muscles**. This technique involves utilizing the muscles of the abdominal wall to create an upward and inward force or pressure. The initial power of the voice is often loud (in part because the glottis tends to respond to the forceful air pressure by increasing its resistance, and pressing together more firmly and for long-

er during the closed phase of the breath cycle), but this power is not usually sustainable for very long. Attempting to support or 'breathe from the belly (or diaphragm)' like this creates a number of potential problems with how the breathing 'engine' and the larynx interact with each other. For example, rapidly pushing the abdominal wall inwards and upwards places pressure on the diaphragm, which then rises quickly and compresses the lungs, increasing the air pressure in the lungs. Air is forced out of the lungs rapidly, and through the glottis at a very forceful rate. The glottis then responds by either pressing the vocal folds together more firmly and for longer before sound is created (pressed phonation) or it blows apart and creates an airy or breathy tone.

In most classical singing schools, a technique called **appoggio** is taught. Appoggio requires support from the muscles involved in inhalation, rather than those responsible for forced expiration. Essentially, we delay, slow down and steadily pace the rise of the diaphragm by continuing to use the inspiratory muscles as we sing, which happens on the exhale. (This centuries old concept expressed by great teachers of the past such as Giovanni Battista Lamperti, is sometimes paraphrased '**singing on the gesture of inhalation**'.) During appoggio, we rely on the muscles of inspiration to help keep the diaphragm lower, in its position assumed during inhalation). These muscles are primarily those that wrap around the ribs (the external intercostals and the interchondral part of the internal intercostal muscles). While the back muscles are contracting to maintain this 'inspiratory hold', the abdominal muscles must remain relaxed (thus the abdominal wall and lower ribs at the sides and back will remain expanded throughout most of the breath cycle). By 'supporting' with the inspiratory muscles, we keep the diaphragm lower and the lower ribcage expanded, which in turn creates lower subglottic pressure by maintaining the enlarged dimensions of the thoracic cavity. (It should be noted that some lower abdominal muscles are involved in initiating the airflow through the glottis, but the most important habit to avoid is the tendency to push the air out of the lungs by engaging and contracting or tightening the muscles of the abdominal wall. This will create too much subglottic pressure, an unsteady volume and tone and a rapid loss of air, and will lead to pressed phonation and potential vocal injury.)

Students of voice need to learn how to extend the normal breath cycle by remaining in the inspiratory position for as long as is both possible and comfortable, maintaining a raised sternum (but not raised shoulders or clavicle), avoiding displacement of the chest (or collapse of the ribcage), and allowing the muscles of the lateral abdominal wall to stay close to the position of inhalation. This vocal posture is often referred to as

(Continued on page 12)

BREATH MANAGEMENT
(continued)

(Continued from page 11)
the 'inspiratory hold'.

With the diaphragm kept in a lower position for longer, and with less air in the lungs to start out with, there will be less air pressure pushing on the vocal folds. Singers will notice that their endurance increases because they are no longer pushing the air out as rapidly. This will help them sing for longer on a single breath. It will also preserve their longterm vocal health. Also, with more appropriate air pressure on the closed vocal folds during phonation, the tone will sound better - more rich and easy, and steady.

COMMON BREATHING TECHNIQUE MISTAKES

Tanking up: Most singers inhale as deeply and as fully as they possibly can as they prepare to sing each line of their songs or their vocal exercises, often in an attempt to avoid running out of air before the end of their vocal tasks. They may have also been taught that more air necessarily means a better supported tone. However, 'tanking up' or 'overcrowding the lungs' like this unnecessarily increases the **subglottic pressure** (the air pressure below the larynx). For shorter exercises and phrases, less air is needed to fuel the voice. If *appoggio* technique (the 'inspiratory hold') is maintained, the outgoing air will be slowly and steadily paced, and there will be no need to fill up on air for shorter vocal tasks. It is critical that the singer learn to gauge precisely how much air is appropriate for the upcoming vocal task, and then inhale only the necessary amount of air. There should not be a tremendous amount of air 'left over' at the end of the phrase.

Singers who tank up also often have a tendency to close off the glottis in order to stop the tone, employing the **adductor muscles** (those which close the glottis) instead of the **abductor muscles** (those which open the glottis) to stop phonation. Sometimes, the singer does so in an attempt to ensure precision of the release of the note. Oftentimes, however, this habit leads to a lowering of pitch at the end of the note, as well as a noisy release of the remaining and excess air after the note has ended because the closure of the glottis at the end of the phrase in combination with excessive amounts of air remaining in the lungs causes an increase in subglottic pressure, pressing of the vocal folds together and a 'pressurized' release. Learning to draw in less air to begin with, to pace the outgoing breath slowly and

steadily and to release the note precisely but with a relaxed and open throat will solve this problem.

Pushing out the air: Ideally, we want to think of the air as being 'allowed' out, rather than being 'pushed' out, to create voice. I use a **balloon analogy** - and have actually used this as an exercise with real balloons in group voice classes - that helps to illustrate this concept. When we inflate a latex balloon (lungs) and pinch the mouth of the balloon (closing the glottis, or approximating the vocal folds), air pressure immediately begins to build up. When we stretch the mouth of the balloon, allowing air to slowly seep out, the latex begins to rapidly chop the exiting air into tiny puffs, thus creating sound (voice). If the mouth of the balloon is stretched tighter and pulled longer (as what happens when the larynx pivots to elongate and tighten the vocal folds), higher pitch is created. Now, suppose for a minute that we decide to 'help' the air make its exit by squeezing the body of the balloon (as when we compress the air with a diaphragm that has been forced upward by abdominal muscles). What we will hear is a louder initial sound, yes, but also a less pleasant and more unsteady tone. Additionally, the air will be lost more rapidly.

In the case of the human voice, pushing in with and contracting the abdominal wall will tend to lead to either **pressed phonation** (a 'shouty' or forced voice quality) or a breathy quality after the initial onset due to the vocal folds being blown apart by the forceful air. Singers must be assured that the air will flow out of their lungs virtually on its own, thanks to the elastic recoil of the lungs, and there is, therefore, no need to either 'help' it along or to force it out. (This is why we should learn to relax the abdominal muscles.) Of course, different styles and techniques may require a more forceful expulsion of air in order to create the desired sound, but as a general rule, too much air being forced out of the lungs is both unnecessary and unhealthy.

Holding back the air: Many singers hold back the air, or choke it off, either at the laryngeal level, in which the singer closes the glottis immediately after inhalation and briefly pauses before producing voice (known as **compression of the breath**), or at the supraglottic level, in which the muscles of the throat constrict or squeeze and inhibit the airflow. Holding back the air in these manners are the result of poor coordination between the breathing mechanism and the larynx. In both cases, subglottic pressure will rise, forcing the glottis to have to work harder, and opening up the door to potential injury. The voice will also sound less steady and free. The singer who briefly holds in the air before singing needs to develop the coordination of inhaling then immediately turning that

(Continued on page 13)

BREATH MANAGEMENT
(continued)

(Continued from page 12)

breath into tone. For the singer who tends to cut off or hold back the breath with the muscles of the vocal tract, training in the Farinelli exercise, which I describe below, will help him learn to maintain more openness and relaxation of the vocal tract. Singing with a more open and relaxed throat is critical.

Singers who choke off the breath, especially at the release of the note, can practice briefly sustaining a vowel on a comfortable pitch, then gradually allowing that tone to become just a stream of air (with no vocal sound). Gradually increasing the space in the glottis (moving from closed glottis to partially open glottis to open glottis) may require some practice, as it will be a new and challenging coordination to learn. For most singers who first try this exercise, they find that they have difficulties maintaining the same pitch (and some can't sustain voice) once the glottis starts to open. The key is making this change from a 'clean' tone to a breathy tone to no voice (only exiting air) gradual and controlled. Higher pitches can be tried once the singer can successfully execute this exercise within speech-inflection range.

GOOD POSTURE FOR BETTER BREATHING

The singer should achieve a '**lateral**' **expansion** around your **epigastric region** - the area between the navel and the sternum. This also includes the lower ribs at the sides and, to some extent, the back. The sternum should be raised during inhalation, and there should be no chest displacement (collapse) thereafter. The expansion should not be forced forward in the abdomen only, as this will create tensions and limit the work of the intercostal muscles, which are mostly responsible for raising and expanding the lower ribs at inhalation in order to create more width within the thoracic cavity, (which in turn decreases the subglottic pressure).

This expansion of the lower ribs, and the use of the intercostal muscles during all breathing tasks will help the singer learn appoggio technique, which seeks to maintain that initial inspiratory position, with the diaphragm lowered for as long as is possible and comfortable, the sternum raised and the lower ribs raised and expanded for most of the sustained note or sung phrase in order to reduce the subglottic pressure. (With the chest cavity expanded and the diaphragm in its lower

position, there is more 'space' for the air molecules because the dimensions of the thoracic cavity have been increased both horizontally and vertically, and there is therefore less subglottic pressure.) This is applicable not only to singing, but to speaking, as well.

To **raise the sternum** (until it becomes easy and automatic), the singer can inhale as he raises his arms over his head, then slowly lower the arms as he exhales, being sure to keep the sternum in the same position. The **Garcia position** - laying flattened palms (facing outwards) on top of each other and resting them on the sacrum, or lower back - is also useful for opening up the posture. This will raise the sternum, open up the ribs and keep the shoulders from rolling too far forward. The Garcia position is particularly helpful for students of voice who have poor general posture due to imbalance in the muscular strength between the back and abdomen, and who experience difficulty maintaining a raised sternum while vocalizing.

It often helps to place the fingers on the upper abdomen pointing toward the navel and the thumbs on the lower side ribs pointing toward the back, and also to breathe while standing in front of a mirror to ensure that the chest is remaining stable throughout the entire breath cycle. The lateral expansion doesn't have to be huge or exaggerated, especially when only a small amount of air is required for the upcoming vocal task. Lying on the floor on one's back, with the knees bent and allowing the lower back to gently push into the floor while inhaling may also cue the singer to the feeling of proper 'support' from the lower back muscles. Some teachers refer to this technique or sensation as '**breathing into the back**'.

THE FARINELLI EXERCISE

Although there is evidence to suggest that this exercise had been used for a couple centuries before his time, the **Farinelli exercise** was named after the famous castrato whose stage name was Farinelli (1705-1782). He achieved fame and favour amongst the royals of his day because of his exceptional vocal abilities and the unmatched beauty of his soprano voice, and also became known as the 'silent breather' because he had mastered the art of the inspiratory hold (appoggio) and imperceptible partial breath renewals. With his body maintaining the posture that it had assumed at inhalation, rather than allowing the ribcage to collapse as he sang, all movement created by these tiny breaths went unnoticed to the untrained eye. (When appoggio is mastered, the singer or speaker is able to execute inconspicuous **partial breath renewals**, which are like 'topping off' or replenishing the air as one goes along when there is not enough time for a complete breath renewal, yet one still needs a bit more

(Continued on page 14)

BREATH MANAGEMENT (continued)

(Continued from page 13)

air to get through the phrase, or until one can get to the next complete breath renewal. Partial breaths are particularly useful for when there isn't a convenient spot in the song or speech, etc. to take in a breath, but one is still needed.)

The Farinelli exercise is still practiced today by many students of voice. (I, personally, have come to develop a great appreciation for this exercise over my years of teaching, as I have seen so many benefits from the daily practice of it in my own students.) It is used to help develop more strength of the 'support' musculature, and prepares the singer for applying appoggio technique to his singing through developing the correct coordination. Through this exercise, the singer learns to pace his breath flow better, using it more efficiently, and keeping the diaphragm in a lower position for longer during the breath cycle. This exercise helps the singer learn to gauge how much air he'll need for a given task so that you won't 'overfill' or 'overcrowd' your lungs. It also teaches how to relax and to avoid the urge to 'panic' when it feels as though there is not enough air. It's almost like yoga, in a sense, because the singer spends several minutes focusing on nothing else but paced, relaxed, silent easy breathing. It often changes how a singer thinks about the breath, and therefore how he treats or approaches it.

The Farinelli exercise divides the breath cycle into three phases, all equal in duration: 1) inspiration (inhalation) ; 2) suspension or retention of the air; and 3) expiration (exhalation).

In the first phase, inhalation (to full capacity without 'overfilling' or 'overcrowding' the lungs) is steadily and evenly paced over a count of three seconds. (It is best to time these seconds using a clock or watch so that the pace is consistent from day to day and so that progress can accurately be tracked.) There should be minimal displacement of the chest, and the movement of the body should be down in the 'lateral expansion' area.

In the second phase, the breath cycle is suspended for an equal count (three seconds initially), and the air is retained in the respiratory tract without being actively held in by either the glottis or the mouth (nose). The air should not be held in by the mouth and nose and the glottis should not be closed off because this will instantly increase the pressure that the glottis feels acting upon it. With this 'breathing tube' completely open, air could come in or leave if there were muscles

acting upon the diaphragm and drawing it further downwards or pushing it upwards. However, these muscles are 'on pause' during this phase. There should never be the feeling that the air is filling up the spaces in the throat and causing tension or tightness there, either. If this sensation is present, the singer has taken in too much air.

In the third phase, exhalation is steadily and evenly paced over three seconds. The singer should not feel an urge to gasp for air at the end of the breath cycle.

After the first breath cycle, the singer would then immediately start pacing the next breath cycle, adding one second to each of the three phases. He would continue to lengthen the breath cycle like this each time until he has reached his maximum length (without feeling abdominal pressure, pressure in the neck or lightheadedness). Many people find that six or seven seconds per phase - for a total of eighteen or twenty-one seconds for the entire breath cycle - is about all that they can do at first.

Then in the subsequent breath cycles, the singer would slowly make his way back down to the initial count of three seconds per phase. Repeating this exercise a few times a day will develop the 'support' muscles - those inspiratory muscles that will help to maintain a lowered diaphragm - and retrain the singer to think differently about breathing (e.g., more relaxed and less 'panicked' or forceful).

OTHER BREATHING EXERCISES

To get the correct feeling of the air being held back in a healthy manner (i.e., not being compressed, squeezed or choked off by constricted throat muscles or held back by a tightly closed glottis) through appoggio technique, the singer can try combining unvoiced sounds and voiced consonants and vowels. For example, a sustained hiss (/s/) followed by a /z/-/o/-/z/-/s/ on a single breath and note. Each of these sounds should be executed for four steady beats. This particular exercise is helpful at demonstrating to the singer how small a stream of air is truly needed in order to create and sustain voice. The singer should also remember to maintain the inspiratory hold while performing this exercise.

A rapid 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-7-6-5-8-7-6-5-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 on a /z/ or /v/ sound is also helpful.

FREE YOUR VOICE

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

Articulation

Common Problems

- Tongue exertion and tension, particularly at its base.
- Over-articulating.
- Articulating too far back in the mouth.
- Consonants under pressure, thus impeding breath flow.
- Stiff jaw.
- Lip tension.
- Under-articulating/slurring.
- Choppy singing.
- Tempo increasing.
- resonance changing dramatically from one word to the next.

Strategies and exercises

- ◇ Always start with the legato line, so your singing flows from one vowel sound to another in what seems like a constant stream of sound. It is simply more musical and more engaging for an audience. Believe it or not, it is possible to articulate clearly when doing this. The articulation has less to do with forcing or clipping, and more to do with being nimble and agile. Vocal sound that is clipped and chopped is rarely more exciting than one that is continuous.
- ◇ Do not sing onto the consonants. Do not bounce onto them. This can take deliberate mental effort. Since we were infants, songs were sung to us in a very choppy style. Think of the opening line to *The Wheels on the Bus Go Round and Round* and how they are usually sung to small children. You can bet that most times the vowel sounds are very short, the 'u' in 'bus' would be very short, the 's' in 'bus' would be pressurized and too long. Now think of singing *Mary Had A Little Lamb*. It would almost always have been sung to you, or by you, with the 'i' vowel very short every time in the word 'little' and the vocal sound stopping momentarily at the 'tt' sound. In essence, the consonants have become the targets instead of the vowels. Delivering a legato line without attempting to bounce onto consonants can take practice because it goes against many of our earliest formative memories of singing.

(to be continued next month)

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Yvonne DeBandi
from a2z-singing-tips.com

L = Low notes are often sung with too much air-flow. Try decreasing your airflow to achieve a more natural, more relaxed tone

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Nicole LeGault
from a2z-singing-tips.com

L is for Larynx. The vocal cords are not really cords at all - they're more like flaps which stick out horizontally from the sides of your windpipe. The vocal folds vibrate in accordance to their length, mass and tension using "tensor muscles".

FREE SINGING TIPS

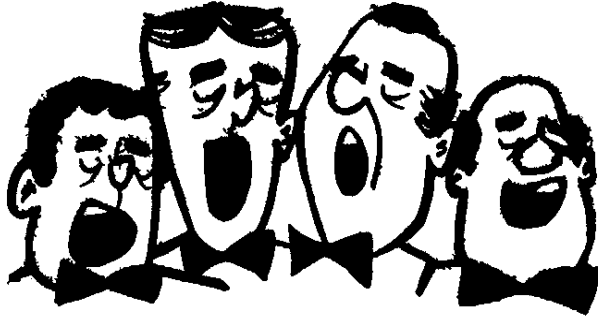
by Mick Walsh
from a2z-singing-tips.com

L. Larynx. Learn to get control over your larynx. When we sing we need to avoid lifting the larynx. Find out where it is (ok, it's behind your Adam's Apple). Very gently hold your Adam's Apple between your index finger and thumb. Sing a high note, then sing a low one. Notice what happens. When we sing high notes the natural thing to do is to raise the larynx but by doing that the larynx gets in the way of all that lovely air flow you've been working on. It sounds complicated but if you order, or download *Singing Is Easy! Basic Foundation Series* from <http://singsmart.com/> you'll find all you need to get this and other techniques under your control.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Teri Danz
from a2z-singing-tips.com

L= Less is More -- Strive to do justice to the song and your interpretation of it. Just deliver the message. Vocal gymnastics is not a prerequisite for doing a great vocal performance.

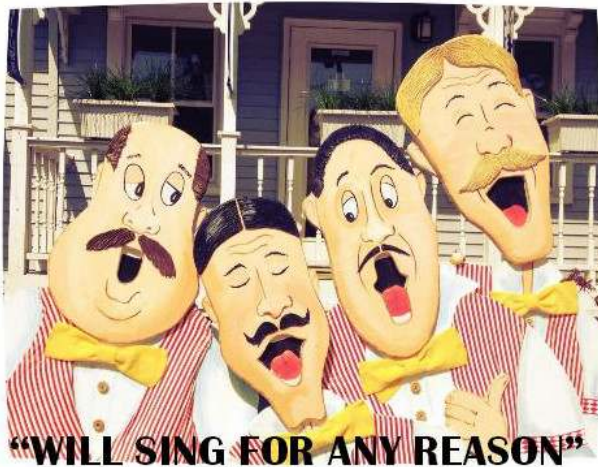


QUARTET CORNER

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

amazonsmile

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.

FlipGive

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	06 Jul	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	13 Jul	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	20 Jul	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	27 Jul	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	03 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	10 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	17 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	24 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	31 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods

BIRTHDAYS

Bob Stump 29 July

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

F/S/S	13-15 Oct	SUN District Convention
Sat	17 Feb	Icemen game

...more to come



RECENT GUESTS

Michael Reynolds	Kyle Batchelder
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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
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Stephen Gramza	Curt Shepherd
Conner Barber	Craig Dopp
Julian Bryson	Bob Lemons
Jim Hughes	Chris Loken
Elias Dandar	Dean Lang
J Brown	Bill Mumford
Marge Phillips	Shamus McIner
Sirlister Smiley	

WELCOME

NEWEST MEMBERS

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

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.

2023 DIRECTING TEAM



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Guest
Director



Daniel Pesante
Front Line
Director

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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 August is 24 July.
Items without a byline are from the Editor.

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

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

**Print off two copies
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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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