



The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



Volume 42 Issue 4

April 2022

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

WHAT'S INSIDE

Title	Page
April Fools Day	1
Editorial	2
Harmony How-To	3-4
The Voice Part 1	4-6
How To Sing High Notes	7-8
Forget White Noise	9-10
Understanding Support In Singing	11-12
Your Vocal Warmup Probably Isn't	13
Phrase Like Smarties	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

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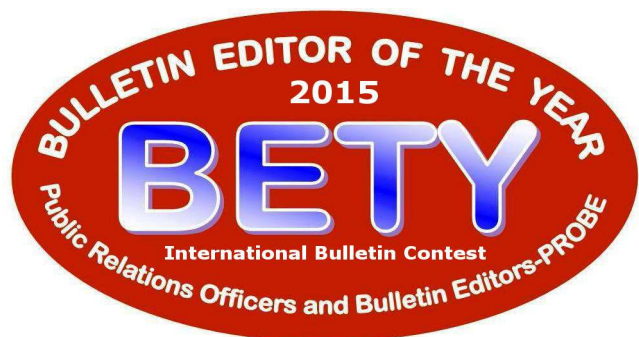
EDITORIAL

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

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

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

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



HARMONY HOW-TO

by Steve Scott
from Harmonizer via Concho Capers

As a college voice teacher and as director of the Southwest Georgia Harmonizers, one of my most frequent challenges is to help the individual singer recognize the counterfeit resonance of nasality and replace it with true, healthy resonance. “Ping” is good ... with the right resonators. Some singers (especially Barbershoppers) try for a “ping” or “ring” in their singing voice. This brightness in sound actually is amplified mid and upper overtones. This is an excellent quality for which to strive, for it makes the air needed to sing louder, higher, and for longer periods more efficient; in short, a healthy production for the vocal folds. It is also the quality of singing, particularly among the professionally trained, that is used to carry the voice unamplified over instruments. (Opera singers rarely use microphones.)



The nasal cavity looks and behaves more like a muffler than a resonator. Image: Grey's Anatomy, fig. 855

Some singers, however, in their efforts to capture this quality in their timbre, substitute nasal singing for true ring. Nasal singing can be deceptive. It often can be perceived, chiefly by the singer and the uninitiated listener, to be bright and resonant. To further complicate the matter, nasal singing often feels like true, bright resonance due to its sympathetic buzzing of the sinus cavities.

So why is nasal singing so bad? We all have to sing with some nasality. The phonemes m, n, and ng are all nasal consonants. We all sing them and it is fine. When that voice placement is carried into a vowel, however, it becomes strident, nasal singing.

To sing with resonance is to maximize the naturally occurring resonating chambers along the vocal tract: the pharynx (the space from your vocal folds to your soft palate) and the oral cavity (your mouth, essentially). Doing so will help singers boost the overtones they produce.

Create more overtones—all by yourself

For this article at least, set aside the way we Barbershoppers use the term overtone to describe the fourpart “expanded sound” effect. In most of the singing world, overtones are defined as sounds that are naturally produced by a single voice. The amplification of overtones in various combinations is called timbre, and it is what allows us to distinguish between a trom-

bone, a cello and a tenor.

Try it. Singers can amplify or dampen their individual overtones through the manipulation of their vocal tracts. Sing a Bb on any vowel, then lower your larynx (try yawning to get that feel), then raise your larynx—all while trying to maintain the same pitch—and notice the change in sound. The perceived change of quality is actually a change in the loudness of overtones, particularly to the lower set of overtones. (Believe me, all of that was necessary to explain so we can get to nasality.)

Do not sing into your “muffler”

The nasal cavity is the space on your face that starts at the nostrils and ends at the soft palate. Its composition is cartilage, including the turbinates, hair, and mucus membranes (cilia). Physiologically, its function is to clean and warm or cool the air so it is safer for respiration. It is a dense passageway and not as conducive to vibrations as the mouth. Among all the available resonators in the head, neck and torso, it is the least resonant. Think of it as a muffler on a car.

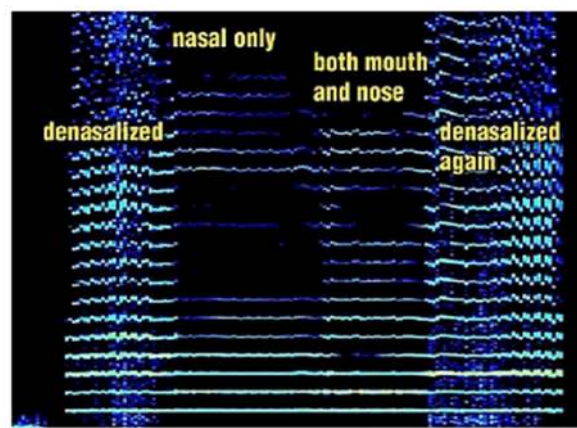


Image of voice overtones produced while author sings on an “A” vowel with and without nasality.

The acoustical effect of nasal singing is the muffling or dampening of overtones, particularly of the upper range. Look at the image above.

The first grouping of overtones is denasalized singing, or no nasality. Air is passing only through the mouth. The second is nasal only, meaning air escaping only through the nose. The third is nasalized, meaning air escaping through both the mouth and the nose. The last was denasalized again. The brightness of the color corresponds to

(Continued on page 4)

HARMONY HOW-TO (continued)

(Continued from page 3)

the loudness of the overtones. (The squiggles indicate variations in pitch, or a little vibrato. Oops!) Notice how bright (loud) the denasalized overtones are and how they compare to the non-bright or even non-existent overtones in the nasal and nasalized examples.

Notice the first three or four overtones (toward the bottom) are not really affected by nasality, but many of the mid and upper overtones are strongly affected. Nasality means fewer overtones, less brightness and a thinner, less robust individual sound. Conversely, the more overtones you produce through bright, denasalized singing, the bigger the boost to the expanded barbershop sound when you lock your notes with the guys around you.

The pinch test. You can check yourself to see if you are singing nasally. While singing any vowel (note: not nasal consonants like m, n, or ng), pinch your nostrils closed. If your sound changes or you stop singing, you know air is escaping out of your nose. With the help of a vocal coach, change the placement of your resonance until the pinch test produces no change in your sound.

One final word of advice: In your efforts to sing without nasality, don't go too far the other way and sing so dark and swallowed that you sound like your head is wrapped in a blanket. Pleasing, well-balanced and healthy singing is bright and natural. Above all, avoid singing with undue tension.

Stop singing into your "muffler" and begin to enjoy more resonant, powerful overtones!

The image shows a musical score for a barbershop quartet. The top staff is for Tenor Lead, and the bottom staff is for Bari Bass. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The melody consists of a series of eighth notes. Below the score, there is a cartoon illustration of four anthropomorphic dogs standing in a row, looking up and singing. The signature 'Boynston' is at the bottom right of the illustration.

TECHNIQUE TIPS SERIES: THE VOICE PART #1

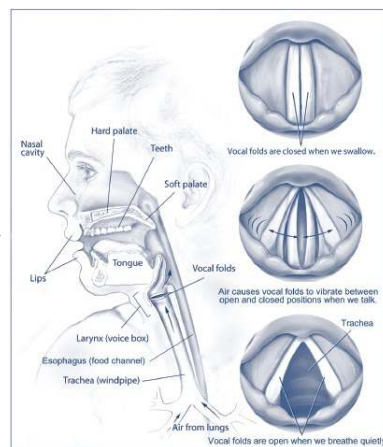
by Andrew Sanders
from casa.org

Who Am I?

My name is Andrew Sanders. I am a voice teacher and have been giving voices lessons for around fifteen years now. My current place of work lets me teach all types of singers. I have taught a range of ages from five years old all the way to someone in their 70s. I instruct singers in whatever genre they wish to sing in by helping them master their instrument and truly understand how the vocal folds act and how our body plays a big part in that.

Why do I care about this topic?

I am about to dive deep into how the voice acts from a scientific point of view - without all the anatomical lingo - and give some tips and tricks that might help you and your singers better understand your instruments. Understand that because everyone is built differently, what might work for you might be ineffective for someone else. One of the main reasons I started learning and teaching the way I do now is because I had many professors tell me I did not have a head voice because I told them I could not feel the vibrations in my head when I sang high notes. This was unhelpful since they were training me to be a tenor. I spent hours, years, at a university - so also thousands of



dollars - trying to find my head voice, only to eventually learn that, 1) the term head voice means too many things to too many different people and does not accurately describe the timber that is desired, and 2) you just might not be built to feel those vibrations. That does not mean the notes don't sound good or that you are singing them incorrectly. After learning this, I felt my range open up and now laugh when I think of the notes that used to scare me. While this method might not be for everyone, I feel it is for a lot of us. You would never expect a trumpet player to play at a professional level and not understand how the trumpet makes noise and how they

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THE VOICE PART 1 (continued)

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can play high and beautifully. Why should singers be any different? With that said, let's hop into it.

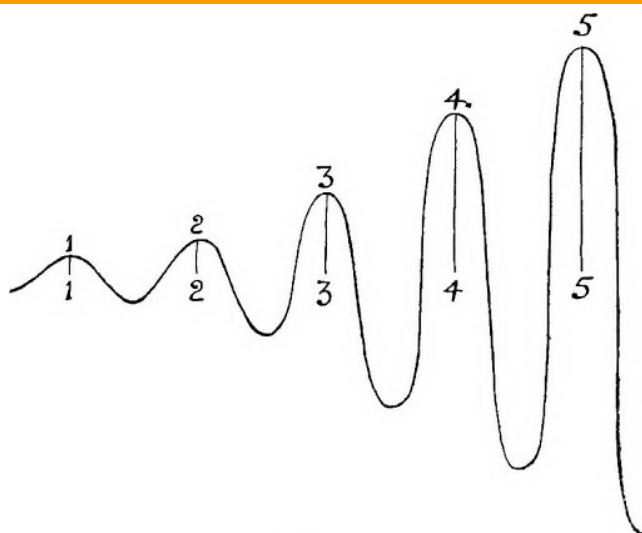
How The Voice Works- let's get technical:

The voice works like most acoustical instruments. You have a point of vibration - that produces sound - that is fed to a resonator that then hits our ears. Let's take a guitar for example. You pluck the string and it vibrates at the frequency you want it to, then it resonates in the body that is then sent to our ears. The voice is no different. The vocal folds - previously known more commonly as the vocal cords before being renamed in the scientific and vocal pedagogy community - vibrate at the frequency you want them to, and then our throat and mouth act as a resonator that then sends the sound to our audience's ears.

We should dive deeper into how the folds vibrate. I'm sure we have all seen a picture of the folds open, shaped like a V. When open, they let air into our lungs. When they come together, it is to stop air from getting into our lungs and not let air out of them. Another purpose of the folds is to cut the air in order for us to make noises, i.e speech. They cut the air from the bottom to the top. How fast they vibrate/cut will then determine how high or low we sing or speak. Take A-440, the tuning note that equal temperament is based on. A-440 is the middle of the treble clef, or if you base middle C as C4, then it is A4, the closest A above middle C. In order for you to sing that note, your folds must cut air from the bottom of the folds to the top of them at 440 times per second. At a speed that fast, you can see why we say vibrate rather than just cutting air. If you go an octave down from that to A-220, the folds must cut air 220 times per second, and so on. Every note has a frequency that then correlates to how fast or slow the folds cut air.

What's up with Vocal Terminology?

After discovering this, it was hard for me to keep using the terms "head voice," "chest voice" or any term associated with them. We use these terms because that is how we thought the folds worked. We did not have the technology we have now, so it was more of a guessing game. People used to believe things like, "You sing low notes and feel them in your chest, and high notes you feel in your head. Also the cords look and kind of work like a guitar so low notes they compress and high notes they stretch." Hopefully you are able to see how out-of-



date these guesses are. It's Hard to place blame when all they had to go off of was physical sensations and cadivors and not the fancy small cameras we have now. Instead of using "head voice" and "chest voice," I use the terms Mode 1 and Mode 2. What is the difference between Mode 1 and Mode 2? Mode 1 is the full length of your vocal folds cutting air. Mode 2 is when the back half clamp off and the front half cut air. Let's think of a tenor and bass while we compare the sounds. When a tenor sings an F above middle C, they hopefully have a full rich sound. Now if a low bass was to sing the same note, they would most likely go into their Falsetto, or Mode 2, to sing it. Where it becomes really fun is when comparing altos and sopranos. These singers are typically those who were assigned female at birth, so their folds are usually thinner than people assigned male at birth. The switch from Mode 1 to Mode 2 is different for every voice, but sopranos and altos might switch to Mode 2 around the same note, (usually around Bb, but that is a generalization). I have singers who switch to Mode 2 much lower and singers who do it much higher. It becomes more apparent the lower the notes go. Sopranos will have more trouble getting the folds to vibrate at lower/slower frequencies than an alto would, while an alto might not want to spend all day in their Mode 2 at higher/faster frequencies like their soprano counterparts. Also sopranos, having the thinnest folds out of everyone, will be able to go much higher than most of us without going into our whistle tones.

So the folds vibrate/cut air at super high rates which make us sing higher or lower. If we take a moment to sit and think about how our body is all constructed we can come to the conclusion that any muscle in the body is only a few degrees of separation from the folds. Meaning any sort of tension would result in us and our folds not performing at our peak efficien-

(Continued on page 6)

THE VOICE PART 1 (continued)

(Continued from page 5)

cy. It would be like adding weight to a sprinter. They could probably sprint with extra weight on their back, but they would be more efficient with no weight on them. What does this mean to us as singers? This could mean your neck, your tongue or even your hands. Yes, I have singers show a night-and-day difference once they just simply relaxed their hands! Now obviously we need some tension in our body to help us stand up or move our jaw and tongue to sing, etc. What we don't want is extra tension that is not needed to do the bare minimum, i.e. standing in a relaxed fashion, or talking and only moving the muscles necessary for that action.. Just as a sprinter will lift weights to build their muscle mass so they can move their body more efficiently, we must look for ways to help us strengthen the muscles we need and relax the ones we don't. This is where a voice teacher who understands these concepts comes in handy. They can hear what is tense and what needs to relax.

Quick Tips

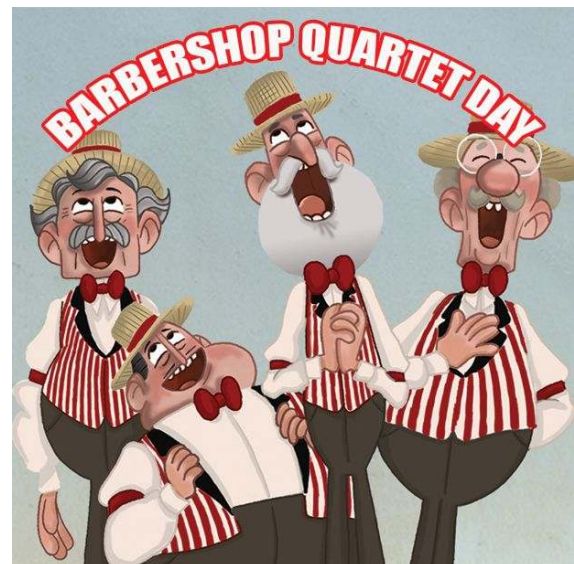
Let's talk about your tongue. Have you ever thought about how big it is? You can look up MRIs or photos on Google, or go to your local authentic Mexican Restaurant where they serve cow tongue and see a size for comparison, (while I support going to those restaurants, because the food is bomb, don't actually ask to see the tongue unless you are truly ready for it...it's traumatizing). All of that is to say your tongue is huge! take a finger and poke right under your chin where the bottom of your tongue would be. When you poke upwards, it should feel nice and soft and squishy. This is your tongue relaxed. If it is not, then these exercises will help you greatly. Now take your tongue and shove it to the roof of your mouth and poke your finger in the same place again. It should be hard. This is your tongue flexing. This flexing happens to a lot of people when singing. In fact, I have yet to meet a singer who hasn't had some sort of tongue tension. Why is this a problem? The tongue is only one degree of separation away from the folds, and what holds it back is called the hyoid bone. The hyoid bone's function is to hold up your tongue and suspend the larynx - that's the house for the vocal folds. The hyoid bone



is very thin and the tongue is very large, so when the tongue is tense it affects the vocal folds greatly. How can we combat this? This is where I tell my students we are about to get weird, but lean into it and you will be much happier - trust me! I want you to stick your tongue out as far as it will go without hurting yourself while keeping the jaw semi closed. No need to over open. Now sing like this. Don't worry about words - you can just think of an "ah" sound. The uglier the sound while still being in key, the better. "Uglier" usually means a high larynx which gives us a not-so-resonant sound. I recommend doing this exercise frequently. I do it during every warm up, and it's usually the first one I do. If you feel the tongue going back into your mouth, you can hold the tip of it with your hand, or you can get a pencil and put it underneath your tongue parallel to the ground so it lines up behind your bottom canine teeth. Then put your tongue over top of it and stick it out again. This way you can monitor exactly when your tongue wants to creep back into your mouth. After a few minutes of this exercise, try singing "normally" immediately afterwards. You should feel a night-and-day difference in ease of singing, and you should hear a more clear, free tone. With this exercise alone, I have seen singers who are often vocally fatigued after a one-hour rehearsal be able to sing for four or five hours without even breaking a sweat. Not to mention the added range, clearer words, and the overall tone being more pleasant.

That's all for now!

I hope this was helpful in understanding how the folds act and you took something away to help you be a more successful singer! Stay tuned for parts II and III where I will discuss alignment and my technique pet peeves.



HOW TO SING HIGH NOTES

by Ken Taylor
from askavocalcoach.com

If you're like many singers out there, you may be presently struggling with how to sing high notes. You may have spent hours, days, months, or even years trying to reach those notes that are just outside of your range. Bad part is, most people, even the ones that practice regularly, are at best getting slow and small results doing this.

Well, I have good news for you. The truth is, singing high notes is not nearly as difficult as you may imagine. The reason it's difficult for most people to grow their range is simply because they're going about singing the wrong way.

Reaching for higher and higher notes may over time increase your range by a note or two, but odds are that new found range will be clunky and inconsistent. So, let's talk about a new and improved approach to expanding your range. I'll call it *Ken's How to Sing High Notes 2.0*.

The first thing we want to burn into our brains is this...

Singing Should Be as Easy As Speaking

That's right, singing should be as easy as speaking. Reaching for notes is a big no, no! If you're putting extra strain on your voice to hit a note, then you're trying waaay too hard!

So, how do we make singing as easy as speaking? Well, the ideal speaking voice is smooth and connected, has a steady flow of air, and is full and free. You don't have to press your speaking voice, so you shouldn't have to press your singing voice either. Finally, a typical speaking voice comes from a balanced vocal mechanism. So let's break this all down a bit.

Steady Flow of Air: Having a voice that is powered by a steady flow of air is crucial for singing higher. You see, the air is the gas that powers our voice, and you've *got* to have the right amount of air flow exiting your body while singing.

If you force too much air when you sing, you're going to create too much resistance underneath the vocal cords, leading to unnecessary pressure building up in the throat. This causes discomfort in singing, your larynx to rise, and eventually will force your voice to crack. Use too little air and your sound will become weak and putter out.

The flow of air is controlled by the diaphragm. Want to learn more? Read (<https://askavocalcoach.com/articles/breathing-and-singing/>).

Smooth and Connected Sound: A smooth and connected sound is another important aspect of keeping a "speak singing" balance.

This goes hand and hand with operating off of a steady flow of air. Actually, I'd argue keeping a smooth and connected sound is usually the product of a steady flow of air, with one exception – when we're singing staccato (separated or unconnected notes).

But even our staccato notes need to function off of that same steady flow of air. The air does not stop.

Think of the flow of air as a hose. If you have a put a kink in the hose, the water doesn't stop... it's still there waiting to come out. Likewise, the water doesn't build up in strength, forcing the kink out of the hose. The flow of water remains steady behind that kink, ready to come out when needed, but not forcing it's way through it.

Your voice should function the same way. When singing staccato, you'll want to keep the air pressure moving forward, ready to sing the next words. Don't stop the air pressure, but don't let it build up in the throat either. I suggest feeling that pressure in the front of the mouth (usually behind the lips). Do this, and you'll continue that steady flow of air, as well as maintain a smooth and connected sound, even when you're singing staccato. It's a beautiful sound.

Don't Press Your Voice: Another important aspect of "singing like you'd speak" is you shouldn't have to press your voice. Too many singers push their voice on notes that are more difficult.

I think this usually comes from misinformed people telling people to push the notes out. Whatever the reason, pressing to get the sound out is a 100% sure recipe for unbalanced, range limiting singing, and should be avoided at all costs.

Singing with a Balanced Vocal Mechanism: Finally, the reason why we want to sing like we speak is because we'll have a balanced vocal mechanism. To me, this means a couple of things: we'll have a cord closure, and we'll have a level to lowered larynx. Let's start off talking about cord closure.

Cord closure is the act of the vocal cords coming together to create the sound. When the cords aren't

(Continued on page 8)

HOW TO SING HIGH NOTES (continued)

(Continued from page 7)

fully zipped up, more air is able to eek out. This is bad for a couple of reasons. One, it creates an undesired breathy sound, and two, cord closure is what helps regulate that steady flow of air we were talking about earlier. Lacking good cord closure causes trouble because it'll force us to use unnecessary muscles to create the sound, causing unneeded tension that gets in the way of a free voice.

Next, we'll chat about the larynx. The larynx is also known as the voice box and is where the vocal folds are located. When the larynx is level, as it often is when speaking, our voice is in optimal position for singing. However, it is very common for the larynx to hike as we sing, especially if our tongue is tense, or when we're singing higher. For this reason, keeping a lowered to level larynx is imperative for free singing. As the larynx rises, be it because of tongue tension, too much air pressure from below, or inefficient airflow, it throws the whole vocal mechanism out of place and moves the singer closer and closer to cracking their voice.

Releasing the "swallowing muscles" is a good step toward reversing a rising larynx. If you need a bit more though, you can start singing in a hooty tone, which will also help release the larynx down. Finally, spreading your vowels (ie smiling while singing high) also can cause the larynx to rise, so instead think of making the vowels taller and more narrow.

Summing It All Up. . .

Singing high notes isn't about reaching higher and higher, forcing your voice to find a way to push the notes out. Doing this will not only put unnecessary fatigue on your voice, but will also cost you more time in the long run when you have to reverse old habits.

When working on how to sing high notes, focus on singing like you'd speak. Instead of pressing, maintain a steady flow of air while keeping the tone smooth and connected. Then, make sure that you have cord closure (non-breathy sound) and a level to lowered larynx.

Once you learn to balance all these different aspects of singing, you'll slowly begin to discover your voice effortlessly soaring higher and higher.

Do this right and you won't see your range increase by a mere note or two, but potentially by an octave or more!

I hope this helps. If you enjoyed this article, you should Join Our Facebook Community Page (<http://facebook.com/singingtips>) and receive weekly tips on how to improve your voice.

**It's not enough to just play
the notes or sing the words.
For it to mean something,
you have to *feel* the music.
Because as a performer, if
you don't feel it, how can
you expect anyone else to??**

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Some people think voice lessons are like taking your car to a mechanic. You come w/ problems, they're fixed, & you're on your way.

I think voice lessons are more like going to the gym w/ a trainer. They show you the best way to use the equipment, but it's on you to do the work!

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FORGET WHITE NOISE. THERE MAY BE A BETTER TYPE OF NOISE THAT COULD POTENTIALLY ENHANCE MEMORY WHILE YOU SLEEP.

by Dr Noah Kagyama
from bulletproofmusician.com

We all know sleep is important. And that whether it's getting through a long day of rehearsals, studying for a music history final, or making the most of our practice time, a good night's sleep is essential for maximizing our ability to *encode* the information or skills we are trying to learn.

But effective learning requires that new concepts not only be encoded into our brains, but *consolidated* as well. Which is essentially the process of transferring the new stuff from short-term memory to more reliable, stable, long-term memory.

This is a process that occurs during sleep, and there's a very specific component of our sleep – slow wave sleep – that seems to be linked to successful consolidation of certain types of memories. In particular, declarative memory, or memory of facts – like, when was Schubert born, or what the heck was the chord progression in the opening of the new piece I just started learning...?

The problem of course, is that there are a lot of things that can interfere with our ability to get slow wave sleep. Folks who suffer from insomnia, for instance, tend to experience less slow wave sleep at night. And even if you're not an insomniac, chances are you're still not getting the same amount of slow wave sleep as you once did, because slow wave activity tends to decrease as we get older. Older being defined – believe it or not – as age 30+.

Urgh...so is there anything we can do about this?

Inducing slow wave sleep

Researchers have found some ways to increase slow wave sleep, but they tend to be more invasive and not the sort of thing you and I can do easily at home. So a team of researchers at Northwestern University (Papalambros et al., 2017) ran a study to see if it might be possible to induce more slow wave activity and enhance memory consolidation through "acoustic stimulation." Which is a fancy way of saying that they played pink noise while participants were sleeping, to see if that might boost the amount of slow wave sleep

they experienced.

Eh? *Pink* noise?

I'm guessing that you're familiar with white noise, as there are a bunch of white noise apps and generators that many folks use to obscure background noise while trying to get to sleep, or while studying. But apparently, pink, brown, and blue noise are a thing too.

Umm...and what's the difference?

Well, white noise presents all the frequencies of sound we can hear at the same decibel level. But because we're more sensitive to high frequencies than low frequencies, it can sound a bit "hissy" and be more annoying than soothing to some.

Pink noise, on the other hand, is more bass-heavy, and the treble is reduced. Which for many, is more calming and soothing.

Here are some quick samples:

- white noise (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ql4C0j3epa8&rel=false&width=640&height=360>)
- pink noise (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJ9Go1PnAVA&rel=false&width=640&height=360>)

So does pink noise really have the capacity to enhance memory consolidation?

A memory test

The researchers recruited 13 older adults (60-84) to spend two nights in a sleep lab, spaced about two weeks apart.

Each time, they arrived around 6pm, and 90 minutes before their normal bedtime, they went through a word pair learning task. Essentially, they were asked to sit in front of a computer screen, where a list of word pairs (like tropics-heat) would be presented to them, one at a time, for a few seconds each.

After seeing all of the word pairs, they were tested on how many they could remember. Where they'd be prompted with the first word in each pair, and they'd have to write in the second word of that pair.

Then, they were hooked up to an EEG, to measure brain wave activity during sleep, and given 8 hours to sleep as they normally would.

The next morning, an hour after waking up, they repeated the recall test, just with the prompts scrambled

(Continued on page 10)

FORGET WHITE NOISE
(continued)

(Continued from page 9)
up in a different order.

Two different conditions

The key difference between their two visits, is what happened *during* their night of sleep.

On one of their visits (the **stimulation condition**) the researchers played short pulses of pink noise when they detected indicators of slow wave sleep, in order to boost or enhance the participants' slow wave activity. The researchers were careful to make sure the sounds didn't awaken them of course, keeping the volume low, and pausing if it seemed like they were beginning to shift to a different sleep stage.

And on their other visit (the **placebo condition**), the participants were still hooked up to an EEG to measure brain wave activity, but *no* sounds were played during their night of sleep.

So did the pink noise have any impact on slow wave activity and memory performance?

Results

In terms of slow wave activity, the short answer is yes. The pink noise did seem to enhance the participants' slow wave activity on their stimulation condition visit to the lab as compared with their placebo condition visit.

And, in terms of memory performance, there was a statistically significant boost here as well!

On average, participants were able to correctly recall **43.8%** of the word pairs on their nighttime test, right after the study session. And their scores improved with sleep in both conditions, with an average recall rate of about 50% the next morning.

However, on their **stimulation** visit, when pink noise was played during the night, they improved their scores by about **9.2%**. Whereas on their **placebo** visit, when no sounds were played during their sleep, they improved by just **3.1%**.

Pretty intriguing, right?

And does this mean we should be downloading pink noise apps, swapping out our white noise generators, and asking Alexa to play pink noise during the night?

Caveats and takeaways

Well...before you go too pink noise crazy, there are a couple things to keep in mind about this study.

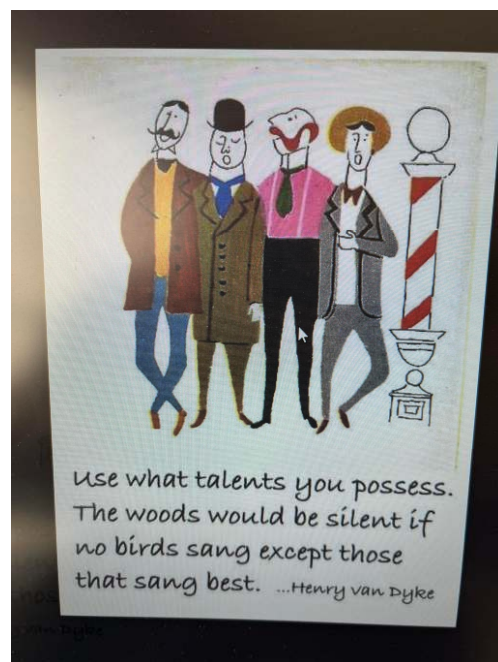
First off, the sample size of this study is on the small size, and it followed an older adult population. Also, the pink noise didn't play continuously during the night, but was targeted to activate at specific points in their sleep. Plus, their memory performance was tested only over the course of a single night, rather than over a longer period of days or weeks.

All this to say, there were a number of little details that make it tricky to generalize these results more broadly to all people, and all types of learning.

However, previous and subsequent studies in this area do paint a reasonably consistent picture of the relationship between pink noise, slow wave activity, and memory consolidation. And studies on younger adults in their 20's have found similar results, so this doesn't seem to be an effect that's limited just to older adults.

So at the end of the day, especially if you're in the habit of using white noise to get to sleep anyhow, replacing that with pink noise might be an interesting thing to try.

After all, learning and memory does become a little more challenging as we age, so if this little change could give us an edge in our ability to retain more from day to day, that would be pretty cool!



UNDERSTANDING SUPPORT IN SINGING

by Andreas Grussl
from thebalancedsinger.com

Support is a term that we hear about almost everywhere in the vocal world. By some, it is even considered the holy grail of singing—a remedy to every vocal problem.

Then there are others who don't seem to care for support at all.

Let's take a closer look at what this concept of *support* is all about.



What does the term *support* mean?

The concept of *support* goes back to the Italian term *appoggio*, which derives from the word *appoggiare*. In English, it means “to back up” or “to support.”

It was used to refer to the feeling that the voice seems to work all on its own, when the singer doesn't have to use any effort to produce it. It's like a magical force supporting the voice.

Over time, though, due to different influences—especially from the German singing schools—the idea of *support* became more about having to support the voice through the activity of the diaphragm while exhaling.

That's why today, support (in most cases) is associated nearly exclusively with breathing.

So *support* has evolved from a description of a desirable vocal condition to a means to *get* to this condition. But not every etymological development is a step in the right direction.

There are two traps that have come up due to this change in what *support* means that you want to avoid.

Trap #1: Support is only
about breathing

The feeling of the voice being supported has very little to do with breathing. A little later, we'll address the role of breathing in this context. But first, let's give you a better understanding of what creates support if it isn't just breathing.

From watching our video in the **Start Here** section, you should already know that sound is created when the vocal folds are set into vibration through an air-stream from the lungs. (If this is news to you, please watch this video [here](#) before you continue to read this blog.)

What drives the vocal folds is the amount of air (or airflow) that makes it through them while you sing. In order for singing to work well, the airflow needs to be within a certain range: neither too much nor too little.

If you manage to keep the airflow within that optimum range, your voice will feel supported. That's it. Pretty easy, isn't it?

Well, one would think so, but the advice you'll find on how to achieve this can be pretty misleading.

The people in the “support is all about breathing” camp believe that the vocal folds are totally passive in this process. According to their theory, if you push air up from your lungs, the vocal folds will let the right amount of air pass through, so no need to worry about optimum airflow.

But in reality, nothing could be further from the truth.

The vocal folds have the ability to act like a valve that regulates how much air gets through during phonation. And experience shows that as they change pitch, many singers don't manage to keep vocal fold closure the same and the airflow balanced. Instead, they have the tendency to close the valve either too hard or too soft.

You may also have encountered this problem in your own voice. If too much air gets through, the sound is breathy and the voice feels weak and unstable. If too little air escapes, the tone sounds pressed or strained and singing takes a lot of effort.

So what you have to learn if you want to sing with support isn't just better breathing, but how to regulate the

(Continued on page 12)

UNDERSTANDING SUPPORT IN SINGING
(continued)

(Continued from page 11)

airflow through your vocal folds. This task involves coordinating how hard your vocal folds close as you sing through your range and vocal passages.

Trap #2: You need to push with your diaphragm as you exhale

Contrary to what most people think, the important part about breathing in singing happens on the in-hale, before you sing. It is about creating good starting conditions for a balance between your vocal folds and the airstream.

You want to avoid taking a high (clavicular) breath, because it will likely force you to close the vocal folds pretty hard so that they keep the air from escaping your body.

Why is that? As gravity pulls your ribcage back down (which you had to lift for taking a high breath), the weight of your ribcage presses on the lungs. This in turn pushes the air out of your lungs.

Remember how the vocal folds can act like a valve? In order to keep the air inside, the valve has to close by adducting hard. With that much adduction, you start out your singing with pretty bad conditions for finding balanced airflow.

On the other hand, when you take a low diaphragmatic breath, you don't have this problem—the ribcage doesn't press on the lungs.

So all you have to do with your breathing in order to find support is make sure you take a low diaphragmatic breath.

Please don't fall for the idea that you have to actively push the air out with your diaphragm as you sing. If you are still alive (you must be if you're reading this!), your exhaling works perfectly fine.

Balanced airflow and support don't depend on how much air you push out of your lungs, but rather on whether the closure of the vocal folds is in balance with that airstream.

So if you create too much air pressure by trying to push air out, it becomes much more unlikely that you'll find balanced airflow. Instead, your vocal folds will either close much harder to resist the pressure or just give up and burst open. This is when you hear a break or yodel.

But what if you still feel the diaphragm working when you sing? Does that mean you're doing it all wrong? Certainly not! If you've achieved balanced airflow, it's perfectly fine to feel your diaphragm working.

The point is that you shouldn't try to push with the diaphragm in order to get support.

Beniamino Gigli, one of the greatest tenors of all time, had this to say on the matter:

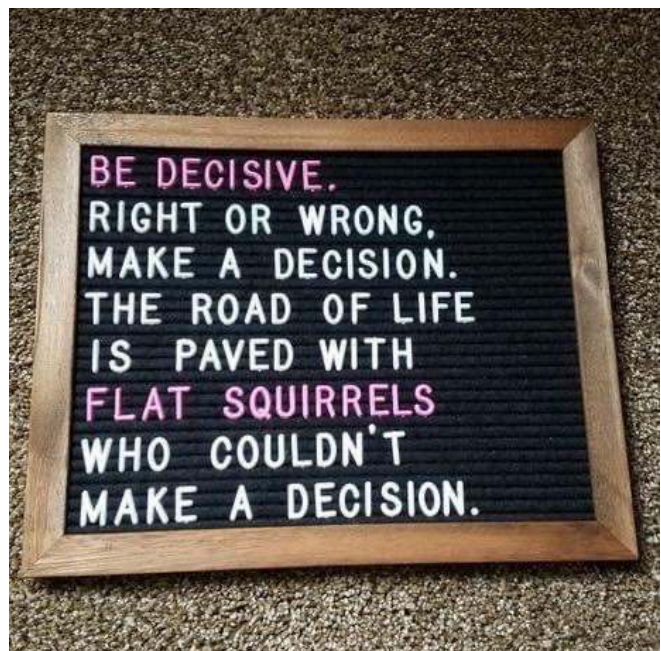
"As soon as I commence to sing, I forget all about the diaphragm and ribs, all about the breathing machinery and its action, and sing on the accumulated air right underneath the larynx."

What's the takeaway?

Support isn't only about breathing. It's a condition that you find if you manage to control your airflow and balance it. You do so by learning to coordinate how hard your vocal folds close over the airstream from your lungs.

By inhaling the right way, you create optimal conditions for finding balanced airflow. Suboptimal breathing won't result in balanced airflow, thus making support impossible.

If you are interested in some practical exercises to find balanced airflow, check our video on this topic.



YOUR VOCAL WARMUP PROBABLY ISN'T EFFECTIVE— HERE'S HOW TO FIX IT

by Arden Kaywin
from backstage.com

Over the years as a professional singer and voice teacher, I've come to a new way of thinking about the vocal warmup. Earlier in my vocal development, I thought of my singing warmup in the way I think a lot of you do—as this thing I needed to do to get my voice up and running. I would do my warmup automatically, plowing through with the mindset that I just needed to get my voice warm so I could do the thing I really wanted to do: practice my repertoire.

But here's what I've noticed after all these years of performing and teaching. Using warmup exercises just for the purposes of warming up is a huge missed opportunity and a total waste of time. The mere fact that you're doing vocal warmup exercises is not going to make you a better singer—in fact, for a lot of you, it's probably keeping you stuck at the level you're at (I'll explain in a moment).

Today I challenge you to change the purpose of your warmup so that it's not a waste of time and not a missed opportunity, but rather it becomes something that will 100 percent make you a better singer.

So what *is* the purpose of warming up? The common answer is that it gets your body, breath, resonance, and energy moving for singing. But that's only going to help you sing better if your body, breath, resonance, and energy get moving in the right way. That is the purpose of warming up. Not to get your voice moving, but to get your voice moving in the right way. Here's the fundamental shift I want you to make in your mindset around warming up: There is no difference between warming up and practicing. The warmup is the practice. The practice is the warmup.

It's in the warmup that you set the foundations in your body and in your mind for the singing to come. In this sense, it really doesn't matter which vocal exercises you do to warmup. I'm always asked what are the best warmup exercises to do and really, any exercise can be beneficial or detrimental depending on how you do it.

That's what I meant when I said that for a lot of you, your vocal warmup may be keeping you stuck at your current level. It's not that you're do-

ing the wrong exercises or need new ones. You aren't progressing because you're not focusing on the *how* of the warmup exercises. Right now your warmup isn't practice. It's just warmup. The *how* wasn't part of the way the warmup exercises were taught to you and it isn't the focus of the way you do them now. You just end up warming up all your old habits, carrying that into whatever song you're singing, and getting frustrated because the song doesn't feel or sound as good as it could.

For instance, I start every lesson the same way. Whether you're an advanced singer with lots of technique who's been studying with me for a long time, or a brand-new student, I always start with lip trills. I do that because in my view, lip trills are fundamental to understanding consistent breath support. Since consistent support is the foundation of great singing, that's the first thing I want to set in a warmup. If you're not focused on the *how* when doing them, then you'll blaze through them semi-efficiently and miss out on reinforcing one of the foundations of your singing. In focusing on the *how*, we bring our attention and awareness to our breath support, reinforcing the muscle memory of what efficient support feels like in our body and warming that up.

When you are super present to the *how* of your warmup exercises, you set the foundations of your technique. The exercises stop being a mere warmup and instead become a practice that will have a huge effect on your ability to reach the potential of your voice much more quickly and with much less frustration.



<https://youtu.be/wYtwjgT0jTk>

PHRASE LIKE SMARTIES

by Brody McDonald
from choirbites.com

A lot of singers sing note-to-note, giving each note a beginning / middle / end. That is to say, each word or even syllable is delivered as its own separate entity. This causes a choppy sound, undermines syllable stress, and robs the phrase of a connected line.

One could visualize this type of singing by imagining several individually-wrapped candies in a row. You know, like those Starlight Peppermints? Lay out 10 or 12 of those in a row so that they touch only at the edges of the twisted cellophane that represent consonants and/or the pulsing of airflow (different singers create different issues this way). Seems like there's about as much cellophane as there is candy!



Now picture a pack of Smarties. If you've never had Smarties, then (a) I feel sorry for you (b) they are fun for kids to drop into Coke to make little fizz-bombs, and (c) as you can see in the picture of this post - they are little candy discs. They come wrapped in cellophane just like a Starlight Peppermint, but there are many Smarties in a row. This packaging creates a solid TUBE of candy.

This is how I like to visualize a phrase:

- The cellophane twist at the beginning = the breath/attack, Smarties = vowels/tones
- The minuscule spaces between the Smarties = consonants
- The cellophane twist at the end = cutoff
- The cellophane "tube" that holds it all together = constant, spinning breath

The candy factory made a plan to keep all the Smarties together in one line, and you singers can do the same with their phrases. Your singers can be SMART if they PHRASE LIKE SMARTIES (see what I did there?)



Here's a simple way to financially support the Big Orange Chorus, at no cost to you! If you shop on amazon.com you can sign up for the Amazon Smile program, and designate the Big O as your charity of choice. Then anytime you make a purchase on Amazon (Smile), they make a donation to us! No cost to you, and a donation to us: win win!

To sign up, visit smile.amazon.com/ch/59-1981228 and sign in to your Amazon account.

From then on, any Amazon purchase you make (at smile.amazon.com) will help the Big O.

Thanks in advance!!

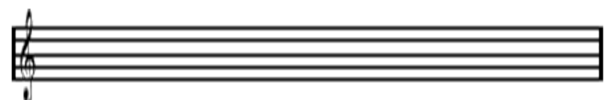


Here's a simple way to financially support the Big Orange Chorus, at no cost to you! If you shop at any of the more than 400 merchants or like to purchase eGift Cards, FlipGive will give us back from 1% to 20%, depending on the merchant.

To sign up, visit <https://www.flipgive.com/f/570688> and start shopping.

Thanks in advance!!

Editor's Note: The latest version of the Amazon app (both android and iOS) now has an option to activate smile in the app, so that you can get the charity donations for purchases made in the app (if you enable it). Open the app and find 'Settings' in the main menu. Tap on 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to turn on AmazonSmile on your phone.



FREE YOUR VOICE

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

Breath Management

The general goal is for a quick inhale and slow, consistent exhale.

Do the exercises listed earlier in this chapter. Keep at them until you feel totally at ease.

If you find yourself running out of breath regularly towards the ends of phrases, there are two common problems:

1. too much is expelled in the first few syllables of a phrase
2. breath is expelled too quickly overall

Both problems involve blowing wasted breath through your larynx. They also may result in tension and pinching of your breath and sound (along with many muscle groups) in an effort to force yourself to make it to the end of a phrase.

This in turn causes a more frantic and tense inhale to follow, thus causing a heavier attack on the next phrase, and the problem goes into a cycle.

To break that cycle, you need a flow of breath that is gentler and more consistent throughout a phrase. It is essential to get that flow rate in the first few syllables of a phrase exactly the same as later in the phrase. You must also let go of the idea that pushing your breath or over-emphasizing some words will make your performance more exciting. If it causes strain, pinching, or running out of breath, it is not more exciting.

Aside from referring back to the breathing exercises in this chapter, and the section about exhaling, here are some other ideas to help with breath management:

- The word is flow, not gush. Make it an even and steady flow, from start to finish, especially on higher notes and softer volumes. On the higher notes, it is easy to find yourself choking off some of the air flow as your throat muscles contract. Stay free and allow the breath to flow effortlessly.
- Let the exhaled breath rise like steam or vapour into the cavities of your head. {OK, this is a repeat of an earlier part.) Do not push the air out in a column, but allow it to float up the back of your throat and into the nasal cavities from behind them.
- Sing vowel to vowel in a legato line. That means open the vowel immediately on a note and sustain it to the last possible moment before you change to the next syllable. (If you are singing to a tempo, the vowel must be on the beat rather than the consonant.) This sustained, legato sound is exciting to a listener, no matter how boring it may seem to you in the delivery. Excitement comes from a free-flowing vocal tone rather than any explosive heaviness. You may need to overdo this legato concept in your personal practice so you do not have to be so deliberate with it in performance.

...to be continued next month...

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Yvonne DeBandi
from a2z-singing-tips.com

Y = You Can Sing with Impact! Exercise your voice daily with contemporary voice lesson products. Don't Just Sing when You Can Sing with Impact!

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Nicole LeGault
from a2z-singing-tips.com

Y is for Yak and Yell. Once you have developed your skill with regard to using your voice without damaging it, use this technique in your daily life. If you speak a great deal, or need to project your voice in a noisy environment, or cheer at a concert, scream on a roller coaster, shout instructions at a sports event, argue with your family, etc... you must preserve your voice with skill - or it won't be there when you need it to sing!

FREE SINGING TIPS

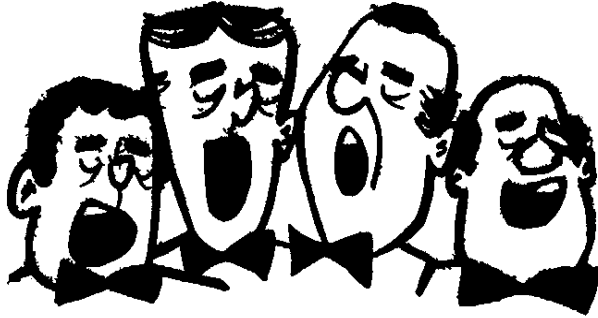
by Mick Walsh
from a2z-singing-tips.com

Y. Your voice is your instrument. Look after it and it will look after you long into old age. Treat it with respect and you will reap rewards.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Teri Danz
from a2z-singing-tips.com

Y= You are the Messenger -- If you're on stage or in the studio and you have to be perfect, it never works. Focus on communicating the song, sharing that experience with the audience. It's easy to make mistakes when it's all about us (how great or not we are).

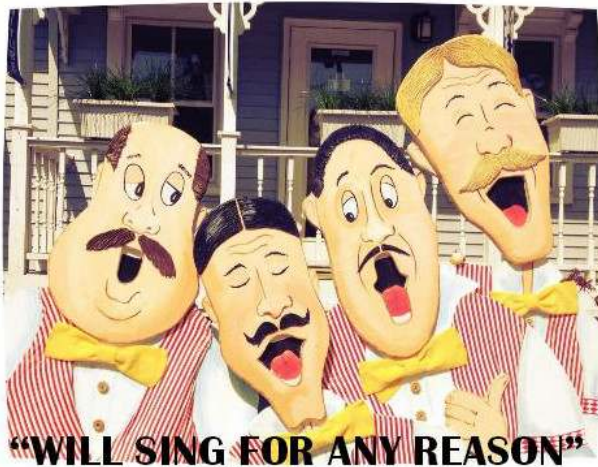


QUARTET CORNER

Our quartets are practicing social distancing or re-grouping.

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



On Point (disbanded)

Dillon Tidwell, tenor
Daniel Pesante, lead
Timothy Keatley, baritone
Alex Burney, bass

Slice!

Terry Ezell, tenor
Eric Grimes, lead
Jason Dearing, baritone
vacant, bass

No Name Yet

? tenor
? lead
? baritone
? bass

Big Orange Chorus

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Thu	07 Apr	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	14 Apr	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	21 Apr	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	28 Apr	Shepherd of the Woods

Thu	05 May	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	12 May	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	19 May	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	26 May	Shepherd of the Woods

BIRTHDAYS

Ken Mull	15 April
Jason Dearing	20 April

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Thu	28 Apr	First Baptist (Baldwin)?
-----	--------	--------------------------

...more to come

RECENT GUESTS

Chuck Cashin	Jim Akers
Willy Vidmar	Mike Morgan
Dale Pratt	Hudson Pratt
Dan Newsom	Trans Maynard
Asrul Dawson	Bill Caruso
Ethan Erastain	Alex White
Tristan Arthurs	Mark Murillo
Roger Erastaine	Ron Blewett
Jon Greene	Jim Harper
G Lane	Brandon Edwards
Joe McLean	Adom Panshukian
Christian Cornella-Carlson	
Ray Parzik	Michael Reynolds
Ed Fitzgerald	Kyle Batchelder
David Brown	Thomas Barhacs
Pat McCormack	David Brown
Thomas Barhacs	Richard Breault
Justin McGhie	Emily Dearing
Sean Henderson	Doug Owens
Chris Redman	Steve Moody
Jeff Fullmer	

⇒ **BIG O BUCK\$** ⇐

BIG O BUCKS SCHEDULE

...more to come

WELCOME

NEWEST MEMBERS

Les Mower	April
Ray Parzik	August
Ed Fitzgerald	September

I'll talk to anyone about anything,
but sooner or later I'll tell him I sing.
I'll invite him to visit on Thursday night
and if he likes what he hears, he just
might become a member and maybe
he'll bring another good man
who likes to sing.

2021 DIRECTING TEAM



Jay Giallombardo
Front Line
Director

2021 OTHER CHAPTER LEADERS



Dave Walker
Uniform
Manager

PHOTO
NOT
AVAILABLE

vacant
Chorus
Manager



John Alexander
Bulletin
Editor



Frank Nosalek
Webmaster &
Technology

PHOTO
NOT
AVAILABLE

vacant
Show
Chairman



vacant
Big O Bucks
Coordinator

EDITOR'S NOTE

Article and column submissions are solicited.
Help make this a better bulletin. Send me stuff!
The deadline for May is 26 April.
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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Jay Giallombardo
Front Line
Director



Mike Sobolewski
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Coordinator

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



John Alexander, Editor
2429 Southern Links Dr
Orange Park FL 32003



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