



The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



Volume 44 Issue 6

June 2024

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 |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Gigs | 1 |
| Editorial | 2 |
| Will Power | 3-4 |
| On When To Persist, And When To | 4-5 |
| Why Practicing For Consistency May | 6-7 |
| The Topsy-Turvy Approach | 8 |
| How To Prevent Singing Flat | 9-11 |
| 5 Ways Singers Can Warm Up Faster | 11-12 |
| Singing Karaoke: Be A Star And Sing | 12-14 |
| 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 |

GIGS

On May 11th, we had two conflicting gigs. First was with Honor Flight, which flies older veterans to DC to tour various national cemeteries as well as monuments. Second was Festival of Choirs, which showcased local singing groups. However our premier quartet, On Point, also was scheduled in Festival of Choirs, so we asked to swap times. We then could do all three gigs. Big O could do the late morning gig in one part of town (with a substitute director, since Daniel is in On Point), while On Point did the noonish gig at Festival of Choirs in another part of town. Then we all met up for the afternoon session at Festival of Choirs. We only have pictures from the Honor Flight gig.



WANTED!!

PEOPLE WHO LIKE TO SING



2024 Board of Directors

President:
Mike Sobolewski

Immediate Past Pres:
Jason Dearing

VP Music & Performance:
John Alexander

VP Membership:
Ed Fitzgerald

VP Marketing & PR:
Frank Nosalek

Secretary:
Tom Frutchey

Treasurer:
Rick Morin

2024 Committees

Webmaster:
Frank Nosalek

Chorus Manager:
Les Mower

Uniform Manager:
David Walker

2024 Music Team

Director:
Daniel Pesante

Assistant Director:
Timothy Keatley

Music VP:
John Alexander

Section Leaders:
David Walker Tenor
Mark Roblez Lead
Jason Dearing Bari
John Alexander Bass

Presentation Team:
Mike Sobolewski

Music Librarian:
Ken Huang

2024 Committees

Pole Cat Program:
vacant

Equipment Manager:
Ken Moyer

Show Chairman:
vacant

We are proud to be supported by the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville.



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.

John Alexander, Editor
2429 Southern Links Dr
Fleming Island FL 32003
bulletin@bigorangechorus.com

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

EDITORIAL

The year marches on. We've done some good things. We are moving ahead, sounding good, and ready to move up to bigger and better things. Don't miss an opportunity to hand out chorus/quartet business cards and even singing valentine cards.

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.

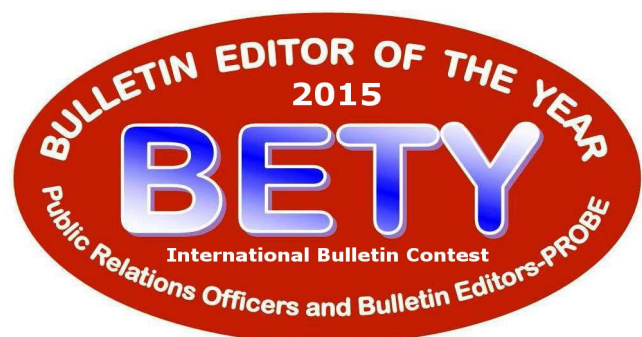
We have some positions (both board and committee) that need filling. If you can help, as a leader or a helper, please see Mike.

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

TODAY'S REMINDER

Warm up your
voice before using
it fully.

KATARINA H.



WILL POWER

by Brody McDonald
from choirbites.com

Growing up, I was addicted to comic books. What boy doesn't want to be a super-hero? I remember reading and re-reading the adventures of the X-Men, Justice League, and the Legion of Super-Heroes. Not only did I love reading all the adventures, I spent time day-dreaming about what my life would be like if I had super-powers. One facet of those daydreams was to ponder which hero I would be if I had the choice. After all, super-heroes come in a few flavors:

-The exceptionally-trained "regular guy" – Batman, Black Widow, Hawkeye, Karate Kid. These were people who had no special powers, just an immense amount of training in some form of combat, and occasionally a helpful gadget from a utility belt.

-The technologically-abled – Iron Man, Cyborg. Their heroics are facilitated through expensive suits or weaponry

-The accidentally gifted – Spiderman, Daredevil, The Flash, The Hulk. Normal people who, through some bizarre accident, were given amazing powers.

-The naturally gifted – Superman, Thor, Wonder Woman, The X-Men. These characters are typically aliens, mutants, or demi-gods whose powers are just part of who they are. They are, always have been, and always will be powerful.

While these heroes are great, one character captured my imagination beyond all others: Green Lantern. And... before we continue, let's be fair in saying that while I love that a Green Lantern movie was made – it isn't that good.

Hal Jordan became Green Lantern when he was given a "power ring." The power ring can do just about anything that Hal dreams up. It can make him fly, protect him from harm, and create any form of weapon imaginable. The strength of the ring is drawn from Hal Jordan's will power. That's the best part. While the ring does have a weakness (yellow), the only limit on its abilities is the limit of Hal's will power.

You are not Superman. You do not automatically have great power simply because you are alive on planet Earth.

You are not Iron Man. You cannot rely on external technology or toys to make things happen.

You are not Batman. No matter how much you train your body, that alone will not make you an amazing

singer. There is more to great singing than just coordinated musculature.

Singers are like Green Lantern.

Why? The answer is why I love singing.

Singers can improve through strength of will. There's an intangible property to singing that transcends mere physical action. Yes, it is a complex series of muscular actions that creates good singing, but great singing requires much more. Passion. Emotion. Soul. Joy. Human beings are amazing creatures, and somewhere down deep in our wiring is the ability to make both muscular and emotional adjustments through sheer force of will.

Tuning – singing in tune is a choice, and requires listening as well as muscular control. However, I have found that when singers REALLY need to dig down deep, they can improve their tuning through force of will.

Emotion and Expression – it is through the force of will that we tap into our humanity, our emotions, and express them. We must shut out the distractions of our day, the environment in which we are singing, and our performance jitters to be consumed by our music. That takes mental focus - will power.

Stage presence – when we focus on radiating energy in performance, we improve. It is as if we make the decision to glow with energy. We push outward with our will. Performing well on stage is akin to the stereotypical comic book scene in which the hero is hit with a huge boulder and then is buried in the rubble. They explode outward with energy, blasting away the rubble and setting the stage for the villain's final butt-whooping. So, too, do we decide through our will to project energy into the hall while performing. We blast out forcefully, turning "I hope you like it" into "you're gonna love this!"

Imitation – What is it that enables us to imitate sounds and voices? Think of a celebrity voice you might imitate (Bill Cosby, Jack Nicholson, Homer Simpson, Bill Clinton are all easy targets). Now talk like that celebrity. You likely just did it. You certainly didn't think "before I begin, the first thing is to move my jaw like so..." We think about our target sound; we hear it in our minds. Then we essentially will ourselves to make that sound. We might not nail it first time out, but we usually get close just because we will it to be so. Imitation is a huge part

(Continued on page 4)

WILL POWER
(continued)*(Continued from page 3)*

of learning how to sing well, so the ability to imagine a target sound and will it into being is of great benefit.

Training – It is will power that forces us to train when we don't feel like it. Strength of will pushes us to do the basics, the exercises that strengthen us for musical battle.

"It's not the will to win that matters—everyone has that. It's the will to prepare to win that matters." – Paul "Bear" Bryant

These are just a few examples of how will power can strengthen our singing, much like Green Lantern's will strengthens the energy flowing from his power ring. In every musical situation, there's just a little bit more to be had. All it takes is will power. Some people say "you gotta want it." Some people say "visualize your best you." Some people say "if you can believe it, you can achieve it." These are all many ways to say the same thing, but let's face it... pretending to be Green Lantern is cool.

ON WHEN TO PERSIST,
AND WHEN TO FORGIVE...

by Liz Garnett
from helpingyouharmonise.com

I've been thinking quite a lot recently about the balance between being uncompromising with one's standards, and about when to let things slide. I've been having a number of conversations with people about this, and have also (possibly as a consequence) been particularly aware of it as a question in my own praxis.

Clearly, holding people (including oneself) to a level that you know they can achieve is key to maintaining and developing performance standards. Jim Clancy puts transforming good things that you do sometimes into things you do all the time at the heart of excellence; John Bertalot writes about choral rehearsing as being like pushing a man up a greasy pole.

Equally, if you want to explore creative dimensions of your art, you need to accept a degree of messiness and uncertainty as part of the process. Nothing breaks the mood of playfulness and trust when you're wanting to explore new ways of imagining or feeling musical shape as readily as someone stopping to complain about picky concrete details.

I wrote about this many years ago in terms of the difference between practising for development and practising for polish, and conceived them as phases that exist in time-frames of several months. My old friends the Manager and the Communicator enjoy a similar sense of transfer of responsibilities over time in performance preparation.

But of course not all holding to standards is about polishing; it is also about the basic substrate of what we do, day-in, day-out. If we get used to letting things slide a bit, that's what we'll remain good at.

So it's useful also to think about this in terms of the time-frame of our regular (daily, weekly) practice and rehearsal. And experience suggests that the time to be persistent is at the outset. If we allow ourselves to think, 'Oh that was a bit ropey, but we're not really warmed up yet, it will get better,' then, well, it won't get all that much better. If we focus at the start on thinking, 'Just *how* do we do this? Is that right? What do I need to adjust?' then we get much more directly to that place where we find the current best version of ourselves.

That in turn gives that current best self the longest

(Continued on page 5)

ON WHEN TO PERSIST, AND WHEN TO
(continued)*(Continued from page 4)*

possible time to operate, and thus consolidate those neural pathways. Then, when we turn our attention to more creative activities, we experience them with these current best selves. Yes, things may become a bit chaotic, but the chaos will be more beautiful than if we went straight into it without connecting to our skills first.

Part and parcel of this observation is that when we are being persistent about holding standards, we will necessarily 'get through' very little music. We will probably find ourselves stripping back to a very small fragment, and giving it repeated focused attention to find that good place. And then when we put it back in context, we may well have to repeat the process, taking several goes to get the means whereby we do it in isolation to slot back into a longer fragment. If you're not used to being this pedantically patient, you will likely start to feel a bit antsy about sticking with such zoomed-in focused work for as long as it often needs. You may worry about all the material you had planned to get through that session, or about the other people you are working with getting bored or frustrated. You may find it tempting to let something slide in order to get on with things.

But the thing is, what ever you let slide at this stage in proceedings defines the limit of the level you will achieve in the rest of the session. You're not going to find your absolute best self if you accept your merely pretty good self in the first phase of the practice/rehearsal. Whereas, if you stay patient and avoid what Alexander Technique folk call 'end-gaining', you are much more likely to establish a level that then remains reasonably stable for the rest of the session. If you drill really deep at the start, that is, you won't have keep drilling that deep for the rest of the session.

(Though once you're working at that level, you may well find that you want to exercise the same level of patience periodically throughout to nail specific details that slip back away from it. Having the music sound really good is strangely addictive.)

Conversely, it makes sense to do the more holistic, imaginative work later in the session, when the motor skills for your current peak capacities are up and running. This will also be

the point at which everyone feels more tired, which makes attempts at extended focused cognitive engagement less effective. On the other hand, imaginative work can actually thrive at those moments when your executive control feels like it wants a rest.

You notice this gradient most keenly on long coaching days: the things you achieve at 4 pm are very different from those best done at 10 am. But it's also true of a 2-hour rehearsal, or a 45-minute practice session. And the more you have been insisting in your early phase, the more depleted your cognitive resources will be later on.

This is not the point at which to stop and pick up the details. You don't know at this point whether they're falling out because you're tired, because they need a night's sleep to get fully consolidated, or because they are not yet properly learned. You can come back to them when you are fresh, and the things that still require TLC will helpfully draw themselves to your attention.

b Flats

Blanket 



Explodes 



And 

Dad 



Gets 

Cold 



Feet 

WHY PRACTICING FOR CONSISTENCY MAY BE LESS EFFECTIVE THAN YOU'D THINK

by Dr Noa Kageyama
from bulletproofmusician.com

One of the most memorable exercises I can recall from my Suzuki days was the one where I was asked to flip my bow around and play while holding it at the tip instead of at the frog.

I remember it being more challenging than it looked (and it sort of freaked me out that I might break the bow), but this memory popped into my thoughts the other day and I started to wonder...

Was this just a goofy creative thing my teacher did to keep me engaged, or is there a research basis for something like this?

A study!

A team of Spanish researchers (Hernández-Davo et al., 2014) recruited 30 youngsters with about 2-3 years of tennis experience to practice improving the accuracy and velocity of their serves.

Each player started out by completing a baseline test of their serving abilities. Standing on the left ("ad") side of the court, they were given 20 serves, and the instructions "Serve at the highest speed and with the highest accuracy possible" while aiming at a ~20-inch-diameter target in the service box.

Then, the players were randomly assigned to one of two groups, and over the course of the next 4-6 weeks, completed 12 practice sessions with 60 serves per session.

Two approaches to practice

The consistency group practiced the serve while standing in the exact same spot, using the same movements, in an effort to produce as consistently accurate and speedy a serve as they could.

The variable group did the same amount of practice, but introduced all sorts of wacky variations and challenges into their practice. Things that they'd never actually do in a real match.

For instance, they practiced serving on one leg, changing the width of their stance, and standing on a thick mat to increase their height. They also served from a position several feet in front of or behind the baseline, near the center of the court, or way off to

the left. They tried serving with the ball tossed in front of them, behind them, to the left, to the right, really high, or really low. They even served while facing 45° or 90° away from the net.

Was there any benefit to practicing this way? Or was it just a waste of time?

Results

After the final training session, everyone completed another performance test. Just like they did before their 4-6 weeks of practice, they hit 20 serves from the left side of the court, aiming at a ~20-inch-diameter target in the service box.

When it came to speed, both groups improved. The consistency group was hitting serves that traveled 4.8% faster than at baseline. And the variable group increased their velocity by 7.68% (though this difference between groups was not statistically significant).

And what about accuracy?

Well, even after 12 practice sessions, the consistency group's accuracy did not improve at all.

Meanwhile, the variable group's serving accuracy improved by quite a bit. They went from an average error score of 2.67m before training to 2.21m after. Meaning, these participants were now serving the ball about a foot and a half or *18 inches closer* to the target than they did before the training.

What?!

How could practicing serves one-legged, behind the baseline, and with the ball toss all over the place – "incorrectly," in other words – lead to better performance?

Why wasn't it more effective to practice exactly what they'd have to do in a match?

Why did this help?

"Schema Theory" suggests that in learning a motor skill, our brain develops a Generalized Motor Program (GMP), or a basic template for a particular movement pattern.

So instead of having one motor program for hitting a tennis ball which comes towards us at waist height with topspin and a second motor program for a ball which comes towards us at knee height with backspin, we have a single program which we can adjust and tweak in the moment and apply to both types of balls.

(Continued on page 7)

WHY PRACTICING FOR CONSISTENCY
(continued)

(Continued from page 6)

The unique variables of the ball (height, speed, spin, etc.) are the “parameters” which determine what sort of adjustments we have to make to our Generalized Motor Program. So when we practice, not only do we need to develop a generalized program, but we also have to ensure that this GMP is *adaptable* and can be used successfully across a range of parameters. A process which some have called “parameterization.”

In the case of these tennis players, both groups already possessed a basic GMP for a serve. And while I imagine there’s always going to be some benefit from refining one’s GMP, it seems that the variable group’s practice emphasis on parameterization gave them an advantage over the consistency group.

So somewhat paradoxically, it seems that we may be able to increase consistency in performance, not by practicing the same old way all the time, but by working to develop a more *flexible* skillset. So that you can make a phrase sound exactly the way you want whether a hall has the acoustics of a bathroom or a sound-proofed panic room.

Pianists already know this?

A few years ago, I had a chance to ask pianist Julian Martin about how to adapt more quickly to unfamiliar pianos, and his take was that we need to practice producing the effect we want for a note, measure, or phrase in more than one way. So that even if the piano we are performing on feels nothing like our piano at home, our technique is flexible enough to adapt to the piano in front of us. Much like this tennis study suggests.

But how might one develop such flexibility?

He noted that Claudio Arrau’s teacher Martin Krause strongly believed that his students ought to be able to play a phrase with a huge range of dynamics and at a wide range of tempos – even if this means playing it (at least during practice) in a way that is totally inappropriate for the context of the piece.

Because this way, we at least have cultivated the option of playing it in whatever manner we feel is most fitting to the context of the music, regardless of how dead or live our performance piano may be. Or how subpar our reeds are that day. Or how fast our heart might be beating in the moment.

So how might this look in practice?

Take action

Well, I don’t know if you have to practice arpeggios while hopping on one leg. Or do the thing in Amadeus where Mozart played the piano while lying backwards and upside down on the piano bench.

But playing on different pianos, using your back-up bow or subpar reeds, playing faster, slower, louder, softer, with more or less vibrato, and any number of other creative challenges you could throw at yourself, could all be good practice. And prepare you for that day when the hall sounds like the inside of a middle school library and your duo partner seems to be insisting on a very different tempo than the one you thought you had agreed on...

And besides, it’ll likely make practicing more challenging, way more interesting, and perhaps even more fun!



GENTLEMEN, WE ARE GOING TO RELENTLESSLY CHASE PERFECTION, KNOWING FULL WELL WE WILL NOT CATCH IT, BECAUSE NOTHING IS PERFECT. BUT WE ARE GOING TO RELENTLESSLY CHASE IT, BECAUSE IN THE PROCESS WE WILL CATCH EXCELLENCE. I AM NOT REMOTELY INTERESTED IN JUST BEING GOOD.

- VINCE LOMBARDI -

LIBQ

THE TOPSY-TURVY APPROACH: SELECT REPERTOIRE LIKE A PRO

by Joe Hunter
from The Harmonizer

To make a bigger impact on your audiences, turn the typical barbershop repertoire selection process upside-down

So you are in a hot new quartet/chorus, and now you need to develop a repertoire. How do Barbershoppers generally do that?

Typical Barbershopper Approach 1

Let's see if this sounds familiar: you are a big fan of the hobby, so you turn to your barber-idols' best songs because you want to emulate them. You choose a few of your favorites and start working on the words and notes. After working on that for what feels like too long, you spend another number of rehearsals working on vowel matching, consistent resonance, quartet or sectional unity, tuning, breath plan, and dynamics. Then maybe two weeks before a contest/performance, you decide you need a visual plan and also some emotional underpinning, and you spend at least an hour or two on that. Sound familiar?

Typical Barbershopper Approach 2

Or how about this? You decide to do a song because the ranges work well for your ensemble and you have sung it in a stairwell and loved the way the chords ring in this chart. Now rinse and repeat the above process—spend weeks on words and notes, then vowel matching, sync, tuning, and finally graft on some visuals and possibly a story.

I can't tell you how many times I have either experienced the above or have been told "that's the way Barbershoppers do it."

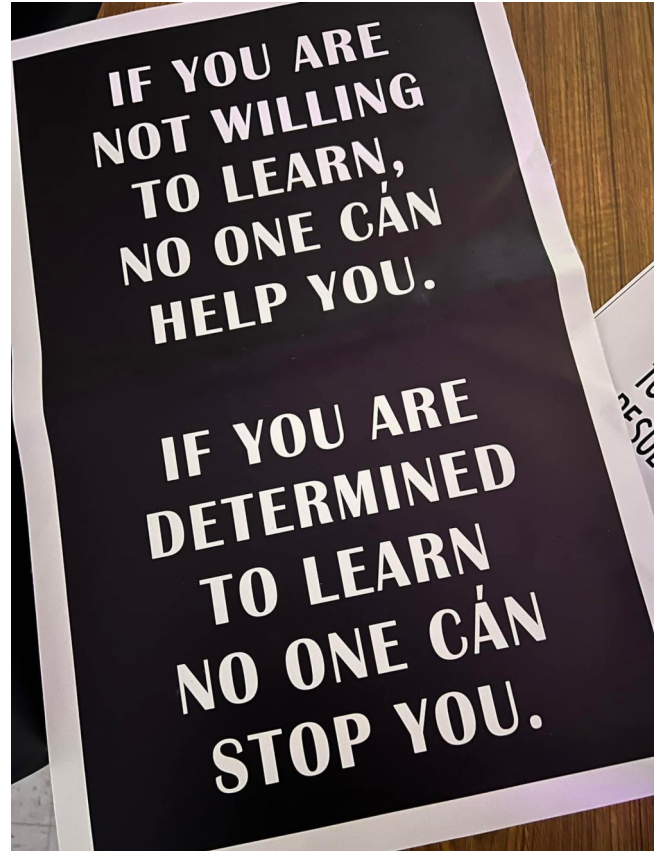
Professional Approach

Now let's look at how professional performers—cabaret, musical theater, pop music—do it. Do you think they start by emulating someone else's approach, or because the song allows their voice to ring? I would posit likely not. Sure, they have their own idols and influences, but they filter that through their own viewpoints and talents and their world-view. These artists approach music in a totally different way. These folks are paid the big bucks to entertain.

They start by looking for a song that speaks to them emotionally or allows them to connect and touch an audience. They select their repertoire to fulfill this basic entertainment requirement—to take their audience on a journey, give them a full gamut emotional and communal experience. They seek to express their group's identity and humanity via their art. Then the expectation is you learn your words and notes and do all the craft in service of your original goals. All that technique and craft are not endpoints; these are tools to get you to that ultimate point of expressing your humanity. And always keep that percolating while you work on technique. It provides you with the why of your performance.

So, let's learn from the bigger world of music and entertainment and turn our whole process topsy-turvy! Start with what you want to express, whether it's your identity or a feeling or telling a story. Look to share and enlist rather than to impress. Be open and generous rather than technique-focused.

Be willing to make mistakes—this is how humans do it!



HOW TO PREVENT SINGING FLAT – STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS

by Joanna Hamawi
from becomesingers.com

No matter how experienced you are as a singer, it's highly frustrating when you're trying to hit the perfect notes and deliver a flawless performance and end up singing flat.

Falling just one semitone below the desired note is a common problem that can leave a performance sounding weak and unpleasant.

But fear not! With the right vocal exercises and techniques, you can always train yourself to hit the perfect note every single time.

In this step-by-step guide, we'll explain the reasons behind singing off-pitch and how you can deliver a Grammy-nominated performance leaving everyone speechless and wanting more! So let's get started!

What Does It Mean To Sing Flat?

When a vocalist sings flat, that means that their pitch falls one semitone below the intended note. Lack of ear training and vocal warm-ups, as well as poor breath support and vocal technique, are only a few of the many possible causes that could lead to a poor performance.

Singing flat is a common problem that can affect even the best singers today. What we mean when we say a performer is singing flat is that they're singing one semitone (or half step) below the right note. But what does that mean exactly?

In other words, if a singer is meant to hit an A, they hit a G# instead. If they're supposed to sing a D, they hit a C# instead, etc. This fluctuation in pitch can make the song sound unbalanced and unpleasant and will make it hard for the singer to harmonize with other performers.

This can happen for a number of reasons, including a lack of voice control and breath support, a lack of proper training, and poor posture.

One of the most common causes of flat singing is a lack of vocal control. Controlling the duration, volume, and timbre of each note is equally as important as hitting the perfect notes when singing.

You want to be able to hold the perfect note for a period of time while keeping a steady and constant flow without getting tired AND going off-pitch. It will be very challenging for a singer to sing in tune if they lack the voice control and power needed to do that.

Poor breath support is another contributor to a flat vocal tone. When a vocalist has good breath support, their voice is better able to project because they have more air to work with, and a continuous air flow is necessary for singing in tune. So the ability to control one's pitch and deliver accurate notes when singing highly depends on having great breath support.

A lack of ear training can also lead to flat singing and make the singer struggle to hit the right notes. To train one's ear is to teach one's brain to detect and accurately reproduce notes.

And in order to sing in tune, it is necessary to have the ability to hear those subtle changes in pitch. This is why singers who have invested time in ear training are better able to identify and reproduce the right notes.

Exercises to Prevent Singing Flat

There are many exercises and techniques that can help prevent singing flat and help improve your pitch accuracy. Let's take a look at some of the most effective vocal exercises you can do right now to improve your singing skills.

Ear Training

One of the easiest and most efficient methods for training your ear is to sing along with a piano. It's as simple as playing a note and trying to match it with your voice.

You can also try listening to the melody of a song several times and try to identify the notes by playing it back on the piano and reproducing it with your voice.

Another great ear-training exercise is to listen to and sing along with common chord progressions.

A fun and simple exercise to do is singing using a tuner. Grab a tuner and sing a specific note (like a G or an A) and try to see if the tuner matches your desired note.

If you find yourself singing off-pitch, keep making the necessary adjustments to your pitch until the intended note and the note displayed on the tuner match.

All these exercises are guaranteed to develop your pitch accuracy.

(Continued on page 10)

HOW TO PREVENT SINGING FLAT
(continued)

(Continued from page 9)

Breathing Exercises

Performing breathing exercises can help you develop better vocal technique, which can help you hit your notes more accurately.

Learning to breathe with your diaphragm is one of the most crucial breathing exercises.

In order to practice diaphragmatic breathing, choose a vowel like A or O to sing, stand up straight with your head and shoulders relaxed, place one hand on your stomach and the other on your chest, and take a few long, deep breaths through your nose, allowing the diaphragm to expand while your chest stays relatively motionless. Then, exhale slowly and smoothly, keeping your abdominal muscles tight and engaged.

This exercise helps improve breath control, lung capacity, and support, which can help you sing on pitch more easily.

Another effective breathing exercise is to inhale deeply, then slowly exhale while counting to 10. Do this exercise several times, increasing the duration of the exhalation each time.

Articulation Exercises

Poor articulation has been associated with tension in the neck and jaw and restricted airflow leading to pitch issues. To fix this and improve your vocal technique and pronunciation, you can perform a simple and fun exercise called “tongue twisters.”

Tongue twisters are sentences with many words that are hard to say and sound similar when read together. For example, “Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.”

Try saying that a few times! Or “How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?”

Practice these tongue twisters slowly at first, then pick up the pace when you feel more comfortable.

Vocal Warm-Ups

There are many benefits to doing vocal warmup exercises before a performance, including improving your pitch accuracy. You can perform exercises

such as lip trills, tongue trills, singing scales, humming, and sirens.

To perform **lip trills**, just hum while you blow air through your lips. Take a deep breath and release it while blowing a steady stream of air through your mouth and nose.

This not only helps you warm up your vocal cords, but it also relaxes the muscles in your lips and cheeks.

To perform **tongue trills**, keep your lips relaxed and your mouth slightly open. Take a deep breath and then let it out slowly while generating a “brrr” sound with the tip of your tongue, much like the way the wind causes a flag to flutter. Ease into it first, then gradually work your way up to full speed. Do it for 15-20 seconds.

Now when it comes to **singing scales**, all you need to do is pick a pitch and a scale. Select any scale of your choice, like the B major scale, and find the lowest note you can sing in that scale.

Start at the lowest note and work your way up to the highest note before descending back down to your lowest note.

Focusing on breath support will help you sing with a clear tone, and relaxing your lips and neck will help you prevent vocal strain so you’re able to sing with perfect intonation and pitch accuracy.

If practicing your scales becomes too easy, try increasing the difficulty by boosting the tempo or loudness of your singing.

Humming is a form of vocal exercise in which a sound is made by vibrating the vocal cords with the mouth closed. Humming is as easy as gently closing your lips, taking a deep breath, and releasing it slowly through your nose while maintaining a continuous hum. If you hum at a low enough tone, the vibrations will be felt in your throat and chest. From there, you may hum along with the scale as you ascend or descend.

Humming exercises can be used with lip trills and other vocal warm-ups to help you reach your full vocal potential.

Humming exercises are simple to perform on a daily basis, and they offer several advantages, including preparing and warming up the voice for singing or speaking, helping with pitch accuracy, reducing vocal stress, and improving vocal technique.

(Continued on page 11)

HOW TO PREVENT SINGING FLAT
(continued)*(Continued from page 10)*

Recording and Feedback

Taking the time to record your own sessions and keeping track of your progress can help you check out the areas in which you may be sounding flat. Listening to the recording after you're finished can help you pinpoint specific spots in the song where your singing skills and pitch accuracy need improvement. Once you've figured out the note you're failing to reach, just continue to work on it until you hit it perfectly.

Conclusion

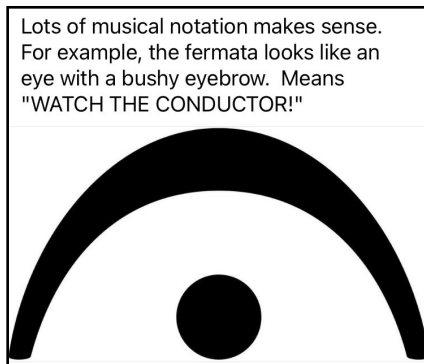
While it's true that singing flat might be frustrating and a bit discouraging at times, anyone can learn to sing better and on-pitch with some practice, patience, and the proper vocal techniques and exercises.

We highlighted some of the best methods today that will help improve your pitch accuracy and help you deliver flawless performance.

From doing breathing exercises to training your ear to do lip and tongue trills, these exercises are guaranteed to improve your breath control, strengthen your vocal muscles and be in control of your own voice.

Give it some time, and with consistent practice and effort, and you will definitely see improvement in your voice and pitch accuracy.

Remember that every great artist has suffered (and still suffers) from singing flat during a performance, so try not to be hard on yourself. Making a mistake every now and then is completely normal. Just stay positive and focus only on your love for music!

5 WAYS SINGERS CAN
WARM UP FASTER

by Andrew Byrne
from backstage.com

To warm up faster vocally you need to focus on your balance, breath, heart rate, warmth, vibration, and tongue exercises.

One thing I love about training singers is that everyone is different. There are no two bodies, brains, or voices that are alike, and that's endlessly interesting to me. One of the variables I often notice is the length of time it takes a singer to warm up: some performers do one exercise and they're good to go, while others need longer to feel ready to "play their sport" well.

If you're a slow starter when it comes to warming up, it's possible that your interoceptive system is slow. Interoception is basically self-knowledge in a visceral way and lives in a part of your brain called the insula which is in charge of sending blood to your muscles calmly and efficiently during exercise (including vocal exercise!).

If you suspect this might be you, try these five ideas to see if you can cut your prep time in half:

Balance: Balance is the oldest sense in our body. We start to develop our vestibular organs—the ones that control balance—at about 24 days in the womb (even a fetus needs to know which way is up!). Your insula is taking cues from your balance system and if this sense is weak, it will affect your warm-up.

Check your balance by standing on one leg with your toes facing forward, no turn-out. Count or time yourself to see how long you can stand on one foot without falling out of it. The goal for a singer is to last for one minute on each foot with your eyes closed. If you're able to do it for one minute, the next step is to shake your head yes, shake your head no, and tilt your ear toward your shoulder while standing on one foot, all with eyes closed. Try practicing randomly throughout the day instead of mindlessly being on your phone.

Heart rate: One of the easiest ways to jumpstart your interoception is to listen to your heart. Put your hand on your chest or place your fingertips on the side of your neck to feel for your pulse. Count at least 30 beats. You can also feel for Heart Rate Variability: you should feel a slight quickening of your pulse on the inhale and a slight slowing on the exhale.

Warmth: Making your abdomen warmer is like a boost for your insula. You can do this with a hot water bottle,

(Continued on page 12)

5 WAYS SINGERS CAN WARM UP FASTER (continued)

(Continued from page 11)

heating pad, or see if your pet cat will curl up on your belly. You can also wear a neoprene belt under your clothes; some models are slim and can fit under many audition outfits without anyone being the wiser.

Vibration: If you have access to a personal massager, add some vibration to your warmup. Singing is vibration in the body, so if you're a vocalist, you already know you love it. Adding some vibratory stimulus along your spine, the back of your neck, your abs and even your face/skull can be an awesome way to prep your body for singing more quickly.

Tongue exercises: The tongue is a big part of warming up faster from a brain-based perspective. Check out this article (<https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/tongue-moves-improve-articulation-1840/>) for some awesome tongue exercises.

SINGING KARAOKE: BE A STAR AND SING-ALONG WITH THESE FAVORITES

by Audrey Hunt
from hubpages.com

"You're always remembering songs you wanna sing except when you're actually at karaoke." ~ Sebastian Stan



Welcome to Center Stage

Just Look at you, being here and everything! You want to sing. Bless your pea-picking heart (as Ernie Ford used to say.)

Well, sing, you shall! You are about to take center stage where you are the star!

Now, don't you go worrying about your singing voice because It doesn't matter how you sound. Who's going to hear you? If this is a concern, head for the closet or even the bathroom, where the acoustics are quite good.

Are you ready to have some fun? Then, grab a bottle of room temperature water to keep those vocal cords hydrated and let's go!

Sing Out Loud and Sing Out Strong

"Words make you think. Music makes you feel. A song makes you feel a thought." ~E.Y. Harburg

Singing Karaoke Songs

Once in a while, I come across a song I'm not familiar with. When this happens, I simply google the title of the song and select the version I like. Once I learn

(Continued on page 13)



SINGING KARAOKE: BE A STAR (continued)

(Continued from page 12)

the melody and some of the lyrics, I go back to the karaoke version and sing along. It's helps to be familiar with the melody because the karaoke version is mostly accompaniment.

Before we begin let's warm up those vocal cords.

Why Warm-ups are Important

Besides preparing your voice to sing; warm-ups will help you:

- Minimize tension (a big enemy to the singer.)
- Liberate the voice.
- Increase vocal flexibility.
- Help you sing on pitch.
- Remove physical and emotional blocks.
- Prevent vocal strain.

Warning! Stay within your vocal range and avoid straining to hit the high notes. When you push your voice you're asking for trouble.

The following short exercise uses each primary vowel preceded by an "m."

Mah Meh Me Mo Moo. Keep the lips relaxed for a nice humming sound as you initiate each "m."

Take a sip of water, and let's begin!

Easy Vocal Warm-up

<https://youtu.be/YCQ8RMgh1iQ>

Let's Begin With a Song From "The Sound of Music"

Get ready to burst out in sound! When the words fly at you at this fast pace, I guarantee you won't have time to care how you sound. Have fun!

Ready? Let's go!

<https://youtu.be/wQiVq77jhwI>

Tip: When to Take a Breath

Your goal with "Love Me Tender" is to sing each line on one breath. Inhale from the belly which will give you a nice, smooth, sound.

<https://youtu.be/buHK8CwCHbE>

Tip: Avoid Straining During the Chorus

I suggest dropping the Chorus one octave lower if the notes are too high. It's perfectly acceptable to do this.

Billy Joel's Piano Man

<https://youtu.be/Z3mAlJGvuQ>

Tip: Sing With Clarity

Notice how every word is clear when John Denver sings. He pronounces each word with clarity making sure the consonants are articulated. Have fun with this one!

Sing Along With John Denver

<https://youtu.be/oTeUdJky9rY>

Tip: Avoid pounding the second note

Ladies (or gentlemen) the first two notes in "Over the Rainbow" are eight notes apart (an octave). Some singers tend to sing the second note louder than the first note. I'd like you to use a little control by not doing this. See if you can match the same dynamic (loud or soft) level with both tones. Hold back the urge to give more power to the higher note for a smoother transition.

This will be a challenge, but do your best.

A Timeless Classic

<https://youtu.be/OWTaPkqAoW0>

Tip: Share the Joy of Singing With Your Family

This old standard seems to reach out to everyone. It's easy to sing, short and simple. Gather family, friends, or even your pets around and encourage them to join in the fun.

You Are My Sunshine

<https://youtu.be/1moWxHdTkt0>

Karaoke Trivia

- The Japanese word for "Empty Orchestra" is Karaoke.
- Kobe, Japan is the birthplace of Karaoke.
- China, boasts over 100,000 Karaoke Bars.

(Continued on page 14)

SINGING KARAOKE: BEING A STAR (continued)

(Continued from page 13)

- Karaoke began in the 1970s.
- Kisaburo Takagi of the Nikkodo Company is the inventor.
- Johnny Carson introduced Karaoke on "The Tonight Show" in 1986.

Tip: Don't Worry About Your Voice; Just Sing

I love the lyrics in this song. Written by Joe Raposo, for "Sesame Street", the late Karen Carpenter made it a hit back in 1973. The message is clear. Even if you think your voice isn't good enough - sing.

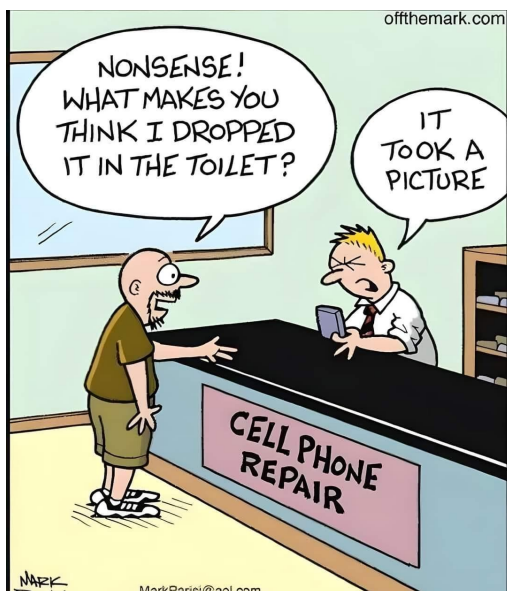
<https://youtu.be/UFRxZ10hJYw>

Nikkodo executive Akihiko Kurobe, quoted in Transpacific: "Karaoke has no boundaries or prejudices. It is ageless and impartial to gender. It will last forever. Karaoke is like your family or lover. It makes sadness half and happiness double."

Conclusion

When you consider all the health benefits connected with singing you'll be more inclined to burst out in song more often. Singing is a powerful, natural, anti-depressant, and also lowers our blood pressure. Whether you sing on-key or off-key the benefits are the same.

So, sing out loud, and sing out strong. Singing is your birthright!



CHOIR REHEARSAL BINGO

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| someone forgets their music | someone kicks a water bottle over | a song is sung that exceeds 6 parts | a few select sopranos are chosen for the final high note | director yells in frustration |
| choir is corrected due to improper vowels | warm up lasts longer than 10 minutes | sopranos are told to be quieter | the tenor section gets completely lost | choir is scolded for not having pencils ready |
| someone plays piano before rehearsal | a phone goes off | FREE SPACE | a section is repeated more than 10 times | someone is scarfing down food before rehearsal |
| only one or two basses can hit the lowest note in a piece | choir fails to do a song for memory | director says "I'll wait" | an alto asks for clarification on a section | someone misses the cutoff |
| sing a piece in a foreign language | the tenors are scolded for talking | a song is sung featuring a soloist | director lets out a heavy sigh | alto 2's are told to be louder |

What to Do When I'm NOT Singing

There are times in rehearsal when the conductor needs to work with one group in particular. They will expect you to be able to jump right back in to rehearsal once the problem has been fixed, so don't zone out! Here is a list of things to do so you don't get lost:

1. **Track the part that is singing**
(follow their notes with your finger and/or your eyes)
2. **Track YOUR part and THEIR part at the same time** (see how they are the same or different)
3. **Tap your toe silently to the beat**
4. **Lip-synce your part**
5. **Audiate your part** (sing it in your head)
6. **Listen actively for things in THEIR part that will help you sing YOUR part better!**

What's NOT okay:

1. Talking (at any volume level)
2. Sleeping or looking like you are sleeping
3. Wandering around the room
4. Distracting others
5. Working on things for other classes
6. Interrupting the conductor

FREE YOUR VOICE

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

(continued from last month)

SOFT PALATE (cont)

Strategies and Exercises (cont)

- Another way to think of it is that the smirk of your soft palate releases your jaw hinges, as if that mark were connected and supplying 'oil' to the hinges.
- Sing everything through the beginning hint of a yawn. Go no further than the barest hint or first twitch of a yawn. Do this only after getting the frontal mask resonance firmly in place. be sure it is the beginning sensation of a yawn and not the end. If you end up yawning through your practice, that is not at all unusual.
- Imaging that your ears are lifting,
- At all times, deal with the tiniest adjustments and increments that you can. It should always feel extraordinarily subtle and unforced.
- Always feel like your outward breath is rising like seam or vapour into your head cavities. Never allow your breath to be placed under heavy pressure nor your vocal sound to focus in the rear of your mouth and back of your throat.
- If a trusted listener tells you that your sound is bigger and more resonant, you may be on to something. If it is not, or if your feel muscular aches and fatigue, certain muscles are working too hard and getting in the way.

For some people, a big smile when singing can cause the larynx to leap up. The same can apply to some people when they sing with the sense of a smirking or broadening soft palate. For others, these approaches work very well. Use what works for you and provides a free, flowing, and relaxed tone. There is no cure-all that will help everyone.

(to be continued next month)

You don't become cooler with age, but you do care progressively less about being cool, which is the only true way of being cool. This is called the Geezer's Paradox

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Yvonne DeBandi
from a2z-singing-tips.com

V = Vibrato. Vibrato is a natural or forced fluctuation of a singing tone. Do not concentrate on learning how to sing with vibrato. Instead, concentrate on the basic foundations of singing, breathing and support. When the proper coordination is achieved, vibrato will occur naturally.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Nicole LeGault
from a2z-singing-tips.com

V is for Visualization. Many vocal coaches use visualization techniques for the placement and projection of the sound. For one example, if you imagine the sound appearing out of nowhere above and just in front of you, you can aim more accurately with your pitch (no fading, or "dipping" into the note) and from there, project it away from you (pushing with your diaphragm). Project in a outwardly round manner for a fuller sound.

FREE SINGING TIPS

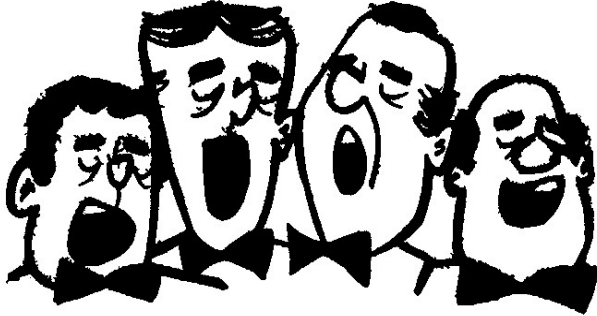
by Mick Walsh
from a2z-singing-tips.com

V. Vibrato Still on the subject of Sopranos, in relation to vibrato, Tony Soprano would say "forget about it"! Just let vibrato happen of it's own accord. If it aint happening just yet then it will, believe me. It can't not happen as your singing technique improves. Never try to force vibrato it will sound horrible.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Teri Danz
from a2z-singing-tips.com

V= Vocal Exercises -- Vocal exercises are critical to maintaining and building your instrument. Do NOT underestimate them. They warm up your vocal chords in ways just singing a song cannot and will not. Lip rolls are a good way to start any warm up routine and can be done on a variety of scales.



QUARTET CORNER

Our quartets have re-formed. We need more.

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

Taylor Gaspar tenor
Daniel Pesante lead
Timothy Keatley bari
Alexander Burney bass

Four More Guys

Dan Kulik tenor
Ken Moyer lead
Jason Dearing bari
John Alexander bass

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 Jun | Shepherd of the Woods |
| Thu | 13 Jun | Shepherd of the Woods |
| Thu | 20 Jun | Shepherd of the Woods |
| Thu | 27 Jun | Shepherd of the Woods |
| Thu | 04 Jul | Independence Day |
| Thu | 11 Jul | Shepherd of the Woods |
| Thu | 18 Jul | Shepherd of the Woods |
| Thu | 25 Jul | Shepherd of the Woods |

BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Jay Giallombardo | 10 Jun |
| John Humble | 11 Jun |

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

| | | |
|-------|-----------|------------------------------|
| Sat | 29 Jun | Brooks Rehab Assisted Living |
| Thu | 11 Jul | Cypress Village |
| F/S/S | 18-20 Oct | Sunshine Fall Convention |
| Sat | 07 Dec | Christmas Show |

...more to come



I'll talk to anyone about anything,
but sooner or later I'll tell them I sing.
I'll invite them to visit on Thursday night
and if they like what they hear, they just
might become members and maybe
they'll bring another person
who likes to sing.

RECENT GUESTS

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Mike Ryan | McKayle Callan |
| Dale Patricu | Gary Weddel |
| Stephen Gramza | Curt Shepherd |
| Conner Barber | Craig Dopp |
| Julian Bryson | Bob Lemons |
| Jim Hughes | Chris Loken |
| Elias Dandar | Dean Lang |
| J Brown | Bill Mumford |
| Margie Phillips | Shamus McIner |
| Sirlister Smiley | Rob Taylor |
| Peter Gugisberg | Toby Max |
| Carl Kircher | Dante Alcantara |
| Jon Woodbine | Bob Crino |
| Cody Rios | John Rios |
| Peyton Rios | Kadin Rios |
| Ian Bula | Bill Woods |
| David Ferriss | Henry Rodriguez |
| Bill Woodbeck | Missy Reardon |

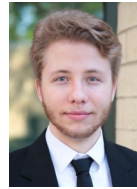
WELCOME**NEWEST MEMBERS**

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Daniel Pesante | March |
| Kenneth Moyer | June |
| Richard Chapman | July |
| Taylor Despars | September |
| Dan Kulik | September |
| Steve Moody | September |
| Margaret Phillips | September |
| Lee Hillman | October |
| Ken Huang | October |
| Ron Blewett | January |
| Bob Crino | February |
| Bob Ice | February |

2024 DIRECTING TEAM



Daniel Pesante
Front Line
Director



Timothy Keatley
Assistant
Director

2024 OTHER CHAPTER LEADERS



David Walker
Uniform
Manager



Les Mower
Chorus
Manager



John Alexander
Bulletin
Editor



Frank Nosalek
Webmaster &
Technology



Ken Moyer
Equipment
Manager

EDITOR'S NOTE

Article and column submissions are solicited.
Help make this a better bulletin. Send me stuff!
The deadline for July is 24 June.
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!**

2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Mike Sobolewski
Chapter
President



John Alexander
VP Music &
Performance



Tom Frutchey
Chapter
Secretary



Rick Morin
Chapter
Treasurer



Ed Fitzgerald
VP Membership &
Chapter Development



Frank Nosalek
VP Marketing &
Public Relations



Jason Dearing
Immediate
Past President

2024 MUSIC TEAM



David Walker
Tenor
Sec Ldr



Mark Roblez
Lead
Sec Ldr



Jason Dearing
Bari
Sec Ldr



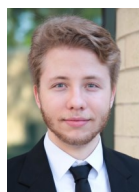
John Alexander
Bass
Sec Ldr



John Alexander
VP Music &
Performance



Daniel Pesante
Front Line
Director



Timothy Keatley
Assistant
Director



Mike Sobolewski
Presentation
Coordinator

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



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



«FirstName» «LastName»
«Address1»
«City» «State» «PostalCode»