



The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



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We meet at 7:00 most Thursdays at Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran, 7860 Southside Blvd, Jacksonville, FL
Guests always welcome 904-355-SING No Experience Necessary

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WHAT MAKES IT BARBERSHOP HARMONY?

from Live Wire

Barbershop is a style of arranging in close, four part, a cappella harmony; it is not an era, style of music, or genre. The melody is usually in the second voice with harmony above and below. The arranger harmonizes every melody note with few passing tones or doubles, and creates more harmonic movement by adding secondary dominant chord progressions. The baritone part functions in a unique way, filling in the missing note of each chord.

Here is a short video that explains a few A Cappella arranging styles, including barbershop:
<https://youtu.be/FKDem6OW5wg>

Early Barbershop History

Barbershop is largely an African American folk art (<https://www.barbershop.org/about/history-of-barbershop/roots-of-barbershop-harmony>), and was inspired by professional vocal groups that toured the United States in the mid 1800s. These amateur singers combined elements of these vocal groups with their own musical practices, adding new embellishments, complex rhythms, and a much wider harmonic vocabulary.

As patrons socialized in the barbershop and other places, someone with a strong voice would lead others in a popular song. The crowd would improvise harmony with a person singing harmony above, someone below, and someone jumping above or below the melody to fill out the chord. Barbershop harmony was born!

To learn more, including early recordings and history of the Barbershop Harmony Society, check out our history page (<https://www.barbershop.org/about/history-of-barbershop>).

WANTED!!

PEOPLE WHO LIKE TO SING



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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.

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

EDITORIAL

The fall convention was likely the last time for our Oliver Set, we anticipate a My Fair Lady Set for the spring convention.

We are now working toward the Christmas show(s). We currently plan on two full Christmas shows, with five subset Christmas shows. 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.

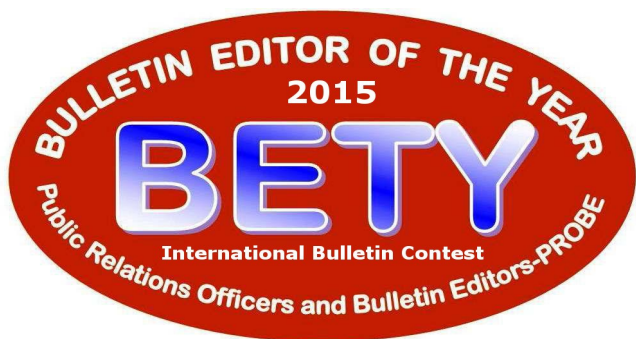
Let's see if we can get more people interested in coming to our rehearsals. Ask anyone you know who likes to sing. Invite friends, acquaintances, and even strangers. Singing is fun. Singing well is even better. Performing in public shares that fun with lots of people. Everybody wins.

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.

We recently received a check from Harmony Foundation International. Those who donate to them have the option to designate a portion of their donations to a BHS entity of their choice. Those listed below have exercised that option in favor of our chapter.

- Alexander, John & Margaret
- Gipp, George & Cathie
- Henry, Sue
- Sobolewski, Mike & Jan
- Stump, Bob & Fran



TOP CHORUS DISTRIBUTION ANNOUNCEMENT FROM SCJC

from barbershop.org

The Society Contest and Judging Committee (SCJC) aims to ensure that top-seeded **choruses** are distributed fairly while maintaining a random draw for the 2025 International Convention order of appearance. The plan is to assign one top-seeded chorus to each group of 5 performances. Here's how it works:

Step 1: Group Choruses into Fives

Divide the choruses into groups of five for the draw (e.g., groups 1–5, 6–10, 11–15, etc.). If the total number of choruses isn't divisible by five, the final group of each day will include the remaining choruses.

Step 2: Identify Top 20% of Choruses

Determine the top 20% of choruses based on qualifying scores. If this doesn't divide evenly, round up. For example, with 35 choruses, you'd select the top 7; with 36 choruses, you'd select the top 8. This ensures that one, and only one top-seeded chorus is placed in each group of five.

Step 3: Mark Top Choruses

Mark the top-seeded choruses with an identifier (e.g., an asterisk) next to their names, keeping it concealed from the person conducting the draw.

Step 4: Conduct the Draw

Choruses are drawn randomly. If a top-seeded chorus (marked with an asterisk) is drawn and there isn't already one in the group, it is placed in the next available spot. If a top-seeded chorus is drawn in a group that already contains one, it is moved to the first available spot in the next group. If necessary, continue moving it to the next groups until an open spot is found.

Step 5: Handling Groups Without Top Seeds

If a group of five is drawn without a top-seeded chorus, the last spot in the group remains open for the next top-seeded chorus. The next chorus drawn that is not a top seed will fill the first available spot in the following group, and that will continue until an asterisk is drawn. When this happens, the asterisk chorus is placed in the first available spot left open from earlier groups.

Example:

Imagine you're drawing choruses for positions 1 through 5. If the first four drawn are not top-seeded choruses, the fifth spot will remain empty. As you continue drawing choruses, when you eventually draw a top-seeded chorus, you will place it in the first available spot from the earlier groups (e.g., position 5, which

was left open).

If a second top-seeded chorus is drawn in the same group, it's moved to the first available spot in the next group. This ensures that each group contains only one top-seeded chorus.

Conclusion:

This method guarantees that every group of five performances contains at least one top-seeded chorus, while still allowing for the possibility of two top-seeded choruses being drawn consecutively.



**The reason that many people
don't believe in Santa is
because of a secret society
trying to discredit him.**

The Illuminaughty.



NOT AN OPTIMIST? HOW TO MAKE PESSIMISM WORK FOR YOU.

by Dr Noa Kageyama
from bulletproofmusician.com

Our brains like things to be neat and tidy, so we have a tendency to engage in “either-or” thinking. Up or down. Hot or cold. Half full or half empty. For richer or poorer. In sickness or in health.

In much the same way, we often think of optimism and pessimism as being opposites, where optimism is a good thing, and pessimism is bad.

But the reality is actually a lot more interesting and nuanced.

There are, for instance, potential downsides to unbribed optimism (a.k.a. wishful thinking) where we ignore important data or feedback and maintain an unrealistically sunny outlook so as to avoid facing reality and doing the difficult work we might need to do.

And though pessimism typically gets a bad rap, there appear to be different types of pessimism, some of which may be performance-*enhancing* for certain folks

Types of pessimism

There is the regular ol’ vanilla variety of pessimism of course, where we simply think things are probably going to end badly no matter what.

There is also *self-handicapping*, where we put obstacles in our path to give ourselves an excuse in the event that we don’t succeed. Like waiting until the last minute to study for a test, so that if we get a bad grade, we can keep our ego intact by telling ourselves that the bad grade is not a reflection of our intelligence, it just means we didn’t study enough.

Then there’s one of the more intriguing varieties of pessimism, know as *defensive* pessimism.

Defensive pessimism

Defensive pessimists tend to get more anxious than optimists. And they tend to set their performance expectations unrealistically low – despite past successes. With internal dialogue that might go something like “This performance is going to go badly; I’m never going to be invited back” (which actually sounds a lot like a backstage mental technique that oboist Nathan Hughes described in his podcast

episode).

However – and this is the really key part – they don’t stop at envisioning all the ways in which things could go badly. They also work really hard to *prevent* any of these undesired outcomes from happening.

So ultimately, rather than detracting from their potential for success, the pessimism actually increases their drive and adds more fuel to their efforts.

And does this have an impact on performance?

A study!

Well, in a study of Division 1 track and field athletes (Wilson et al., 2002), researchers found that 41% were optimists, 35% were real pessimists, and 24% were defensive pessimists.

The real and defensive pessimists did experience more anxiety before competition than the optimists. But in terms of performance, the defensive pessimists did just fine! If anything, they performed ever so slightly *better* than the optimists did (91.2% of the NCAA qualification standard vs. 90.5% for the optimists).

Oh! So would it better for us to all just adopt a mindset of defensive pessimism?

Another study!

Well, not so fast!

In another study involving dart throwing (Spencer & Norem, 1996), researchers identified 49 defensive pessimists (who set low expectations for performance but plan out how they’d like to respond to all the things that could go wrong), and 48 “strategic optimists” (who set high expectations for performance and distract themselves to avoid thinking too deeply about the upcoming performance).

Three types of imagery

The researchers were curious to see what would happen to each group’s performance, if they used imagery that was either aligned or misaligned with their natural preference.

So some of the defensive pessimists were encouraged to engage in **coping imagery**, where they imagined ways to prevent negative things from happening or how best to respond to mistakes during a performance. Which is very much in line with the natural tendency for defensive pessimists.

(Continued on page 5)

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT REALLY (continued)

(Continued from page 4)

Others were encouraged to use **relaxation imagery**, by concentrating on their breathing and releasing tension. Which is more aligned with how strategic optimists approach performances, and not at all what defensive pessimists would typically do.

And then there were some who used **mastery imagery**, where they imagined a perfect performance.

Likewise, some of the strategic optimists engaged in coping imagery (a strategy mismatch for optimists), while others did relaxation imagery (their natural preference), and a third group did mastery imagery.

And was there any impact on performance?

Results

Indeed there was!

The defensive pessimists performed best when imagining what could go wrong, and then correcting their mistakes. Better than when they distracted themselves with relaxation imagery, or even when they imagined things going perfectly!

Similarly, the strategic optimists performed best when they engaged in relaxation imagery to distract themselves. And they performed worse when visualizing how to respond to mistakes, or when they visualized a perfect performance.

So what are we to do with all of this?

Takeaways

Well, I do think there's still value in cultivating your ability to envision exactly the kind of performance you want. But these studies suggest that if you're more of a pessimist, you don't have to sweat it if your visualization sessions aren't all puppies, sunshine, and lychee oolong bubble tea.

When the occasional glitch, snafu, or train wreck inevitably pops into your head, use it as an opportunity to practice implementing your contingency plan. Or your optimal response to adversity.

That way, when something undesirable really *does* happen at your big audition or performance, you'll already know exactly how to respond, and won't have to waste precious seconds in the heat of the moment, frantically searching for the best response.

Reflection

How does this align with your experience?

If you tend towards real pessimism, could you imagine adding some coping imagery into your mental routine in advance of performances?

If you're more of a defensive pessimist, have you found low expectations and coping imagery to be more helpful than visualizing perfect performances?



Harmony Platoon 2025

Out Sing!
Out Smile!
Out Perform!

2025 HARMONY PLATOON: \$35 FOR ALL 2025 EVENTS (DATES OF HP BELOW)

- **Mar 13-16** FWD Prelims & SE/SW Division, Riverside(Tent), CA
- **Mar 28-29** FWD NE/NW Division, Davis(Tent), CA
- **Apr 10-13** CSD Spring Convention
- **May 1-3** SUN Spring Convention, St. Augustine, FL
- **May 2-3** Arizona Division Convention, Phoenix, AZ
- **June 12-13** Harmony College NW, Tacoma, WA
- **Sep 26-27** RMD Fall District Convention, Ogden, UT
- **Oct 2-3** Evergreen District Convention, Surrey(Tent), BC
- **Oct 2-3** SWD District Convention, DFW Airport, TX
- **Oct 9-12** CSD Fall Convention, Lawrence, KS
- **Oct 9-12** FWD Fall Convention, Fresno, CA
- **Oct 16-18** SUN Fall Convention, St. Augustine, FL

- Learn at least the 5 "MODERATE DIFFICULTY" songs. Learn them COLD, to compete in the contests. You are guaranteed to sing with prepared singers.
- These are NOT EASY. You will have to WORK to BE PREPARED to sing these five songs.
- For the sake of other singers, do NOT underestimate your responsibility to learn the music!

HERE ARE THE NEW SONGS:

Title	Arranger	Contestable	Track Artist
I'm Gonna Live 'Til I Die As sung by Keepsake	Western Continentals & Greg Volk	Yes!	BHS (Tim Waurick)
No More Sorrow Fun classic © 1926	Shelton Kilby III	Show	BHS (Tim Waurick)
Stand By Me Popular Classic by Ben E. King	Steve Delehanty	Show	BHS (Tim Waurick)
Frog Kissin' One of Kermit's Greatest hits	Bob Jones	Yes!	BHS (Tim Waurick)
You've Got a Friend in Me From Pixar's Toy Story	Dan Wessler	Yes!	BHS (Tim Beutel)

\$35 USD GIVES YOU:

- CHARTS and all LEARNING TRACKS for 5 songs: every part predominant + full mix.
- More QUARTET SINGING than you ever did at a convention (before Platoon came along).
- A quality QUARTET CHALLENGE that is exciting, fun, and memorable.
- NEW FRIENDS from all over your district (and beyond) who can't wait to sing with YOU!
- Deluxe color-coded Harmony Platoon LANYARD to locate other HP singers ALL WEEKEND.

THERE ARE **TWO STEPS** TO REGISTER FOR THIS YEAR'S EVENT:

1. **STEP 1: COMPLETE THE REGISTRATION FORM** using this link:
 - <https://forms.gle/DavZrV1Gu7EpbEfD6>
2. **STEP 2: ORDER YOUR MUSIC** using one of these options:
 - PAYPAL to donsalz@rosve.com (use Friends & Family option), or
 - VENMO to [@Donald-Salz](https://venmo.com/Donald-Salz) or
 - SEND CHECK to Don Salz. Email donsalz@rosve.com for an address.



QUESTIONS? Email platoonharmony@gmail.com (add this to your contact list to avoid messages going to spam)

By completing these two steps, you are automatically eligible to participate in ANY and ALL of this year's Harmony Platoon Events.

17 THINGS THAT WILL DESTROY YOUR SINGING VOICE FOREVER!

by James Mann
from becomesingers.com

Voice care is the most important task for a singer. As a singer, you must be able to understand and identify the factors that were affecting your voice and the steps to solve them. Anything that is abused or not taken care of usually atrophies. Similarly, if you don't take care of your singing voice, chances are, you may end up with a broken voice. Here are some of the habits that you should avoid to protect your voice.

1) Disparity Between Your Singing & Speaking Pitches

The disparity between singing and speaking pitch may lead to the voice problem. It's because the Sopranos with natural speaking vocal voices are considered very low in pitch as compared to the singing voices.

Furthermore, some researchers found that speaking in relatively low pitch is the main factor of the vocal problems. It will cause vocal strain since you need numerous muscle and energy to speak at lower pitches.

2) Vocal Fatigue

Vocal fatigue is one of the biggest problems for voice care. It may lead to incorrect voice use, vocal misuse, abuse, vocal injury, or organic or functional voice problems.

If you are in the vocal fatigue condition, your voice may be feeling exhausted and tired. Furthermore, you may feel the dryness in your mouth while talking or singing with an aching throat.

As a result, you will need extra effort when singing.

Its a biggest sign that you need a vocal rest.

3) Heartburn & Acid Reflux

Heartburn and other acid reflux symptoms also can affect your voice and vocal quality too. In this situation, there is a possibility that two gastric acids called "**Gastroesophageal**" and "**Gastrolaryngeal**" reflux push up the esophagus, and it may even spread up to the larynx. And it might lead to a serious voice and health problems.

4) Throat Problems

The other common causes of voice problems are a sore throat, harshness, bitter taste, halitosis, dry mouth, chronic throat clearing, cough during sleep, phlegm, a lump sensation in the throat and extensive warm-up time for singers.

5) Laryngeal / Vocal Fold Paresis

Laryngeal or vocal fold paresis is a type of condition where a person has lost his/her partial or full functioning of the nerve in the voice box muscles. This severely affects his/her ability to sing, speak, and at times, swallow and breathe, which usually happens after an extended use of the voice. It can be mild in some cases and severe sometimes, but people miss it out as a result of vocal cord damage.

6) Side Effects of Medical Treatment

A lot of treatments affect the voice according to medical practitioners. So far, taking a type of asthma inhaler has caused the worst medication found. This causes a lot of patients to suffer from yeast infections in their white plaques or larynx. Swelling and inflammation are often noticed in these areas if there is no infection.

Some doctors agree that several medications in the market can greatly affect your voice. However, they have declared that some of these drugs do not result in the damage of your vocal cords permanently. Perhaps there are asthma inhalers like Advair that can cause inflammation or irritations of your vocal cords, but once you have done something to treat it, your voice will recover completely, and be back to normal. Therefore, it is not common for medications to result in permanent damage to your vocal cords.

7) Unhealthy Diet

Diet – Some researchers have proven that no correlation exists between milk consumption and [mucous production](#) unless she/he has an allergy reaction to lactose. When you're suffering from reflux, then you should avoid eating acidic foods like citrus, caffeine, spices, tomatoes, and taking your meals late at night. Moreover, you should avoid eating foods that cause you to have an allergy.

8) Incorrect Singing Techniques

Let's presume that you're born with a great talent. However, poor technique can destroy it eventually. Thus, you should know the right way of using

(Continued on page 8)

17 THINGS THAT WILL DESTROY (continued)

(Continued from page 7)

your valued instrument efficiently and safely since you're a famed vocal athlete. Belting and screaming are the most vulnerable singing techniques that will damage your vocal chord easily if you don't handle them correctly.

9) Drugs

Whether prescribed or illicit, the hormonal pill can do something to destroy the thickness of your vocal cords. Taking asthma puffers, antiseptics and antihistamines can dry up your vocal cords. There are also some acne medications and antidepressants that can affect the surface of your vocal cords.

You should also refrain from taking drugs that cause numbness to your throat and thin your blood as well as aspirin. When you indulge in smoking pot, it's worse than smoking cigarettes for your vocal cords.

10) Alcohol

This can dry up your mouth, and makes you hallucinate that you can sing well then what you can, when in fact, you may just be yelling. Alcohol will lead to dehydration in your throat and will result in excessive mucous that will cover your vocal folds. Furthermore, you will experience the vocal chords numbness that will destroy your voice permanently if you are in the alcoholic situation in the long run.

11) Air-Conditioning & Heating Systems

Your vocal cords are dried up with air-conditioner in the extreme heat and extremely cold environments in the long term. You must pay very close attention to it if you have dust allergies. It may strain your vocal cords and make you feel very weak and unstable while singing.

12) Smoking

Tobacco smoke can cause dryness and irritation to your throat. Thus, it will strain your vocal chord. Aside from drying your vocal cords, it can cause you a lot of dreadful throats and lung-related diseases. The second-hand smoke may have the same risk as to the smoker. You must drink lots of water constantly if you are singing in smoking environments such as night club or pubs.

Smoking is undoubtedly another type of habit that could significantly damage your voice. It can eventually cause lung diseases and throat diseases that could substantially limit your singing capability. It can also lead to the accumulation of phlegm in your respiratory tract. Hence, if singing is your bread and butter, you should refrain from smoking or quit it. You can improve your health and eventually preserve your voice along the way if you quit smoking. Moreover, the sooner you quit it, the better it would be for you.

13) Foods and Drinks that Cause Acid Reflux and Heartburn

Several foods and drinks are known to trigger acid reflux and heartburn. These foods and drinks include caffeinated drinks like sodas, alcohol, and coffee. These foods and drinks usually trigger the acid production of the body and can eventually cause a hoarse voice due to the onset of throat inflammation. This initial throat inflammation may lead to acid which is characterized by an upward ejection of digestive acid towards the esophagus. This can cause heartburn. To avoid reflux, you should learn how to avoid foods and drinks that could trigger reflux.

14) Medications That Could Harm Your Voice

Some drugs and medications can significantly harm your healthy voice. Some medicines are considered to be the primary factors that could damage your voice. Hence, if you don't necessarily need medications like anesthetics and antihistamines, you should refrain from taking them. Moreover, you should consult your physicians before taking these types of medications.

15) Fatty Foods and Snacks

Some foods and snacks could gradually damage your voice, and you should be aware of these foods and snacks. You should carefully watch out your diet for you may inadvertently eat these foods and snacks on a regular basis. Some of these foods and snacks are enticingly delicious such as those of fatty foods and snacks. If you usually engage in eating these foods, you may end up with an unhealthy body and hoarse voice. High-fat foods, for example, can damage your voice. As mentioned above, frequent eating of these foods can cause over-production of acid in the stomach. The stomach then secretes more acid in an attempt to metabolize these fatty foods. To avoid the overproduction of acids, it would be wise to avoid these fatty foods days before your singing engagement to prevent the onset of the overproduction of stomach acid.

17 THINGS THAT WILL DESTROY
(continued)

(Continued from page 8)

16) Clearing Your Throat Frequently

As a singer, if you have phlegm, the most natural thing to do is to clear it with an “ahem” sound. This may be an effective way to disgorge phlegm from your respiratory and vocal tract, but if you often do it, you may end up damaging your throat. Moreover, you may never notice it, but this method is, in reality, violent to your throat and may damage it. Eventually, your vocal cords may swell inadvertently, and you may experience vocal fatigue. There are many alternative ways to loosen up the phlegm and to clear your throat. You can, for example, drink water or warm tea. One proven way to clear your throat is by drinking warm tea with droplets of lemon.

17) Staying Late at Night

One surefire way to damage your voice, aside from drinking and eating harmful foods is that of staying late at night and to be regularly lacking in sleep. If you frequently lack sleep, you may eventually damage your body. Soon enough, frequently staying late at night and lacking in sleep may take its toll on your health and may eventually lead to respiratory diseases and voice disorder. To maintain and enhance your health, you should refrain from staying late at night and should get ample sleep every day.

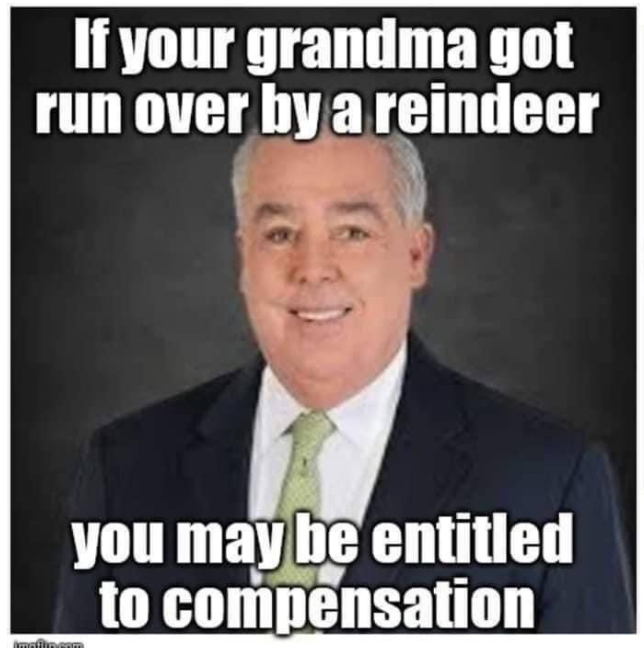
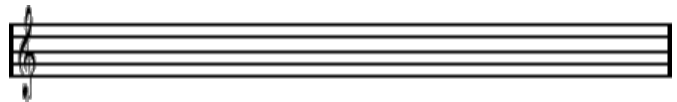
In conclusion, you have to consult your voice coach or voice teacher if the problems listed above unsolved. Anyway, a task to voice care is the most fundamental task for you as a singer to keep sparking in the singing arena.



THE SEASON THE REASON

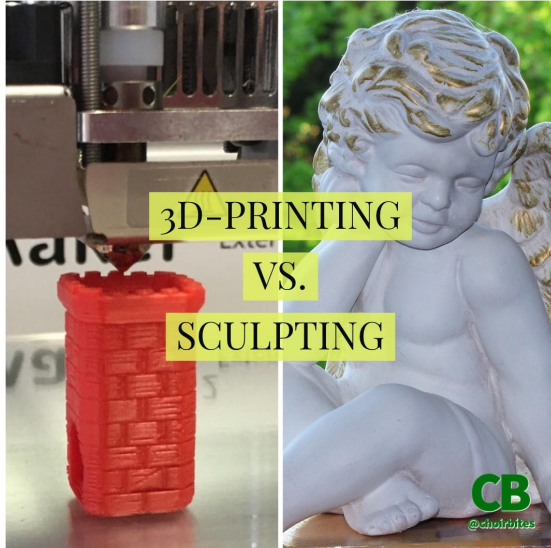


BARBERSHOPPERS
BLESSINGS TO ALL!



3D-PRINTING VS. SCULPTING

by Brody McDonald
from choirbites.com



So many times I'm directing choirs full of students who "like to sing" but just don't sing out. There's tons of reasons why, including:

- shyness
- fear of "sounding bad"
- fear of voice cracking
- doesn't want to be perceived as a "show-off"
- lack of awareness

Helping singers overcome fear is a whole different animal and another post entirely. For right now, let's just take a look at your output. Many beginning singers don't understand all the muscular coordination required to sing properly, but they can take a big step forward by just singing louder/bigger. By getting involved. By MAKING SOUND. I'm a big believer that increased activity is good, because then that activity can be steered/refined.

I began to consider how one "builds" a voice. I think a lot of my singers think "I'll sing out when I know that part" or "My voice is what it is." Even if they plan to build their voice stronger over time, they approach it like a 3D-printer: adding one tiny layer at a time, over a long time. They start small and only make incremental changes, slowly.

I think of singing more like sculpting: let's start with a BIG hunk of stone, then knock away chunks until we have a closer shape to the desired sculpture. Over time, we'll use finer and finer tools to get into details until we are sanding and then polishing the

stone into a work of art. It just makes sense to me. If we want to improve sound, we must start by making sound! It would be impossible to make a life-sized statue of, let's say a dog, with only a golf-ball-sized stone.

YES - a beginning singer's "stone" will be smaller than a trained singer's "stone." The stone gets bigger as technique is established and muscles strengthen. But first and foremost is the idea, the visualization, that something substantial must be created before it can be shaped. It is said that sculptors can see the beautiful art within the stone, that they just have to set it free. I think the same is true of the human voice - get it out so we can get a good look at it - then let's get to sculpting to set that beautiful tone free!

**For anybody else
that's getting coal
for Christmas,
maybe we can link
up and get the grill
going or something.**



CONVERSATIONS ABOUT LEARNING MUSIC

by Liz Garnett
from helpingyouharmonise.com

I've been having a lot of conversations recently about how people go about learning music: within Rainbow Voices, with other conductors I've been mentoring, and then just chatting with friends at the recent LABBS Convention. One of the latter conversations brought a key theme into focus in a way that helpfully organises various other interesting ideas people had shared.

My friend Mick Dargan was commenting on a previous blog post of mine where I made the point that people aren't just empty vessels that you can pour the learning tracks into and then they know the music. He said that he could have the tracks on in the background for hours and still not know his part: he can't learn by just passively listening, that is, he has to *do*.

And that experience encapsulates why it matters to think not just about learning materials we have, but also what we do with them. Passive, in the background listening does have useful roles, especially if you are listening to the full mix of the tracks, or an actual performance of the piece. It helps internalise things like harmonic structure and groove, so that when you come to learn your part, you understand how it fits into the whole.

But it isn't the same as learning your part. For that, just having the tracks on repeat play is probably the least efficient way of going about things. The more familiar the music becomes in general, the more your mind wanders as you listen, giving diminishing returns on actual learning.

So, here is a collection of things people have said they do to create a more active learning experience:

- Write out the lyrics. This is a popular one, and very effective. You create a visual memory at the same time as processing all the lyrics through your brain in the act of writing. It doesn't directly teach you the music, but if you have also been listening, your brain recalls a lot of what you have heard as you do it and connects it with the words.
- Sketch the contour of your part. Once you've

written out the lyrics, drawing squiggles above or below them as you listen to your part to indicate where your part goes up and down makes you actively think about what it does, and thereby creates a record you can refer back to as you try to remember. Someone else couldn't learn your part from this, but it will help you remember it. (This is basically the origin of musical notation btw.)

- Act out the contour of your part. It's like the previous one, but instead of doing it on paper, you gesture in the air. This doesn't create anything you can refer back to of course but for kinaesthetic learners it is really helpful. It also recreates the kinds of gestures you'll have seen when being taught things by ear, and helps you internalise them for yourself.
- Call-and-response. This is a classic learning technique for in-person singing, which you can recreate at home without having to sit through everyone else's parts between hearing yours. Basically, listen to a small chunk of your part track, then stop the recording and sing it back. Repeat a few times until you are confident, then move onto the next chunk. If you use an app that has a loop function, this gets even easier.
- Identify patterns. Go through your music (leading with ear or eye, depending on which suits you better) and mark up your sheet music with (a) all the patterns that repeat, and (b) all the patterns that nearly repeat but don't quite. This is a really useful memory aid as it helps you sort out bits you might otherwise get muddled up.

Having mentioned the loop function in some apps, it's also worth mentioning changing the speed. If you have fast music to learn, slowing it down gives your brain time to process it properly. If you have music mostly learned and want to challenge yourself, speeding it up makes your brain work harder. Music Speed Changer is the app I use for this, but others are available.

Anyway, please keep having interesting conversations about music-learning. It's easy to think that what is obvious to you is obvious to everyone, but actually once you start exchanging ideas you hear about lots of approaches you'd never thought of, some of which turn out to be really productive for you.



HOW TO ACHIEVE PROPER SINGING POSTURE IN 4 SPINE-STRAIGHTENING STEPS

by Alicia Lutes
from backstage.com

Here's something you may not have considered: Singers are athletes. Singing is an activity that works your whole body and a lot more muscles than you may think. This is exactly why maintaining proper singing posture is so important; without it, you'll lack the strength and breath support you need to achieve the pitch or tone you desire. Sit up straight and read on for more details.

How does good posture affect singing?

When first starting out, it's easy to assume that singing only really involves your vocal cords. (There are many misconceptions about this skill set.) But hitting notes is a full-body endeavor: You need to be able to breathe, stretch, and hold your body with strength in order to utilize the muscles in your head, neck, and chest—often while moving around a stage. And while it certainly helps to have a naturally good voice, your ability and stamina will be determined by your physicality.

How to achieve proper singing posture

In a word? Exercise! Stretching, moving, and strengthening your body—especially your core muscles—will help you to find the right position. Here are some specific tips on how to do that.

1. Stand against a flat wall or surface

This will help you to understand what a straight back and spine actually feels like. Notice how everything is in alignment: head, neck, shoulders, trunk, hips, and legs. Your eyes should be looking just below whatever's straight ahead (you will likely notice how your jaw and chin naturally relax when you do this correctly).

2. Relax

Tension is a singer's nemesis. Always keep your shoulders dropped and back, knees unlocked, and every other muscle in your body as relaxed as possible. Your chest should feel lifted and open, like after a good, full breath. (Breathing exercises will help you achieve this.)

3. Breathe with your whole core

When most people think of breathing, they imagine the lungs filling up and that's it. But effective breathwork also uses your diaphragm (the muscles below your lungs) in order to support your voice. Activating

all of your core muscles will not only help your posture align, it will also help you feel how weight distribution can affect your tone.

4. Do strengthening exercises

Your core (your back, abdominals, butt, and hips) play a major part in posture. If you feel as though this area is lacking in any way, research some exercises that strengthen those muscles.

What does proper singing posture look like?

Essentially, it's a strong, confident-looking stance with your head up, shoulders back, chest open, knees relaxed, and pelvis engaged. Imagine an opera singer standing onstage or a guard standing at attention—this is what good posture looks like. Just remember: Don't forget to release any tension in your body!

How to maintain your singing posture while moving

Practice, practice, practice, as is the truth with most things. By working these muscles with exercise and stretching, falling into correct posture will become second nature. And over time it will become easier to achieve—even when moving around or singing in a musical number—because your body will naturally want to do what is correct to achieve singing support. Running, if you're able, will also help (and increase your lung capacity)!

The 5 elements of singing posture:

<https://youtu.be/epNEiWCpslo>



HOW TO FIX VOCAL FATIGUE

by Arden Kaywin
from backstage.com

From Adele's struggles with hemorrhage during her 2011 tour to Freddie Mercury's legendary vibrato causing vocal nodules, many singers grapple with the challenges of vocal fatigue. When nurtured with proper technique, your voice should last as long as you need it to. For the times your pipes need a tune-up, however, here's a breakdown of the top 10 causes of vocal fatigue, plus ways to avoid or remedy them so you can get back to belting.

What is vocal fatigue?

Vocal fatigue takes place when the voice is strained, hoarse, or weakened from overuse or exposure to damaging environments. "Just as it sounds, vocal fatigue results when you've overused your voice without proper recovery time," explained voice teacher Connie de Veer. "The vocal folds are muscles, and just like any other muscle or muscle group, they get tired, sore, and don't work as well after a strenuous workout. You might have vocal fatigue if you find that along with the hoarseness, you're running out of breath when speaking or singing, your throat or neck feel tight or tense, you've lost facility in your upper and lower parts of your range, your voice feels scratchy, or your mouth feels very dry."

Most vocal fatigue is caused by improper or insufficient breath support. If a singer does not have stable and consistent support for their sound, then the body will adapt by using other less efficient and often damaging ways of getting the sound out.

Vocal fatigue causes and fixes

1. Cause: Belting—pushing too much chest voice too high up in the scale.

Fix: Support the top of your chest voice through steady breathing. Try increasing the sensation of flex in the lower support without interruption as you rise in pitch. Feel your abdominal muscles stiffen when you're using your chest voice, and keep them flexed as you enter your head voice.

2. Cause: Smoking and/or drinking alcoholic beverages.

Fix: Reduce harmful behavior by stopping smoking and drinking entirely, reducing your consumption, or using less abrasive options—for example, beer instead of liquor.

3. Cause: Periods of excessive loud talking, such as trying to have a conversation over the DJ at a loud party.

Fix: Avoid speaking loudly whenever possible, especially before an audition or performance. If you must share your music suggestions with the DJ, rest your voice afterward.

4. Cause: Singing with a high larynx, which manifests most often as pushing the larynx up in the throat to "help" the pitch rise.

Fix: Lower your larynx by doing vocal warmups such as "hooty gees," advised voice educator John Henny. "Using a dopey cartoon voice (think Yogi Bear), say the word 'gee.' You should feel your larynx drop. The 'g' consonant should also help with cord closure due to the backpressure it creates, so you can experience accessing the upper register with a stable larynx and closed cords."

5. Cause: Tongue tension, primarily manifesting as a grabbing or bearing down by the base of the tongue onto the larynx while singing to create the perception of a richer tone.

Fix: When trying to reach a lower register, focus on relaxing your throat first, then relax your tongue moving from the back to the front of your mouth.

6. Cause: Singing without proper soft palate space.

Fix: Expand your palate by yawning and doing the "ng" exercise. "Make the 'ng' sound from the word 'rung,' Henny explained. "This sound is produced with the tongue and soft palate together. This... provides backpressure, while also making the transition between the lower and upper registers (chest voice and head voice) easier."

7. Cause: Jaw tension while singing, which does not allow for the proper stretch of the soft palate.

Fix: To create more freedom in your jaw, make a soft smile and allow your jaw hinges to open slightly. Chant "ya-ya-ya" and "la-la-la" on a single pitch as you travel down the scale, allowing your tongue to do the work rather than your jaw.

8. Cause: Pushing too much breath pressure through the larynx.

Fix: Do breath control exercises such as square breathing—breathing in for a count of four, pausing and holding for a count of four, letting the air out for a count of four, and holding for a count of four—until you feel breath traveling through your body effortlessly.

9. Cause: Singing with the head/neck pushed for-

(Continued on page 14)

HOW TO FIX VOCAL FATIGUE
(continued)

(Continued from page 13)

ward, as though the singer were reaching for the notes out or up in front of him.

Fix: Hold your head high, directly over your shoulders, and maintain proper singing posture.

10. Cause: Lack of stable diaphragmatic support for breath so the singer ends up supporting their sound by other detrimental, unintended means.

Fix: Sing from the diaphragm by taking deep, slow breaths from your chest.



WHAT IS A
HARMONY BRIGADE?

from barbershop.org

Somewhere between the formal, continuing structure of singing in a chorus or an organized quartet, and the free-for-all of pickup tag singing and woodshedding, lies the Harmony Brigade, the eXtreme Quartetting experience. Brigades are invitation-only, semi-auditioned events for capable quartetters who want to sing at a high level in many combinations over a weekend.

Several months prior to a Brigade event, singers receive sheet music and high-quality learning tracks for eight to twelve songs to be sung throughout the weekend. Participants count on each other to be 100% prepared, with all the notes, words, and interpretations fully memorized, so that everyone can leap right into mixing and matching as many different quartet combinations as possible. It's a little like wanting to jog with athletes of similar speed and endurance as your own; more fun to run side by side than waiting for the slowest or panting to keep up with the fastest.

Brigade activities typically include lots of informal singing in quartets, a random draw quartet contest, a show for the public, great food, and good camaraderie. All attendees also sing in the Brigade Chorus and present a public show. Some Brigades reach out into the communities with educational demonstrations and performances, as well.

Visit each Brigade's individual website for details on application. <http://harmonybrigade.org/>



FREE YOUR VOICE

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

(continued from last month)

Voice Placement & Weight (cont)
Strategies & Exercises

This is a collection of ideas, strategies and exercises. See, feel, and hear what works for you. Some may be helpful, some not. Everyone is different.

After going through these, return to the section about the soft palate. In other words, do these exercises with your soft palate relaxed and become comfortable with them. Then experiment with soft palate adjustments in small increments.

- The key to resonance is to relax. If your sound pushes or bursts out, stop and start over. Aim for consistent easy breath flow from start to finish and consistent suppleness in your throat. Keep your tongue loose and relaxed so it lays down 'lazily' for vowel sounds and does not twitch around or retract or bunch up. release your sound rather than push or force it out. Get yourself out of the way and allow your voice to rediscover its natural resonant power.
- Try singing with a feeling that you are doing nothing. That means allow sound out of your in the easiest way possible. Use no control mechanisms and no muscles to pitch. Just allow sound out and let your voice to where it wants. It can be quite fun to do this.
- Ignore what your voice sounds like inside your own head. It is not how others hear it. It is easy to develop a voice quality inside your head that you like and want to reproduce. But have you even heard yourself in a recording? You probably were surprised at how different you sounded. You must learn to trust physical sensations and the feedback from trusted people instead of shaping your voice quality to suit your internal hearing.
- Refer back to the sections about the tongue and neck tension.
- Sing notes and lines like they are placed at the roots of your top front teeth and spread out at that level across the width of your face. Imagine you have warm vapour or steam rising gently through the nasal space. This is the 'mask.' Maximum resonance in this space is achieved only when the other muscles relax and get out of the way. Trusting it can require a big paradigm shift but the results are worth it because you can achieve 'energy efficiency' - stronger output and better stamina from less effort.

(to be continued next month)

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Yvonne DeBandi
from a2z-singing-tips.com

C = Communicate the music's message. During performance it is very important to communicate the message of the song. If you make a "mistake" don't point it out to your audience. It is most likely they did not even notice.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Nicole LeGault
from a2z-singing-tips.com

C is for Criticism. Everyone always has something to say – especially if you ask them! Gravitate towards your fans, disregard those whom you believe may have motive to see you fail. Take to heart constructive criticism you can use to make yourself stronger, and accept the fact that you cannot please all the people all the time.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Mick Walsh
from a2z-singing-tips.com

C. Care! There's nothing worse (ok, maybe root canal surgery is a little worse) than watching a singer perform a song that they just don't care about. Sing songs that you love and that you care about and your audience will care about you.

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Teri Danz
from a2z-singing-tips.com

C= Control -- control in singing is a combination of techniques. Breath control, resonance, pitch, placement, holding up and being able to ride the air are all elements of control. Like riding a bike, it's the balance of all of these things that contribute to effortless singing.



QUARTET CORNER

We have a new quartet that just formed. We need more.

What is YOUR quartet doing? Don't have one? Find three other people 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

Giocoso

Dale Martin tenor
Bob Ice lead
Mark Roblez bari
John Humble 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	05 Dec	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	12 Dec	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	19 Dec	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	26 Dec	Holiday Break
Thu	02 Jan	Holiday Break
Thu	09 Jan	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	16 Jan	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	23 Jan	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	30 Jan	Shepherd of the Woods

BIRTHDAYS

Tommy Arteaga	21 Dec
John Alexander	31 Dec

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Sat	07 Dec	Christmas Show (JU)
Wed	11 Dec	Christmas Show (Leadership)
Fri	13 Dec	Christmas Show (Christ Episcopal)
Sat	14 Dec	Christmas Show (Clay Library MBurg)
Sun	15 Dec	Christmas Show (Church services)
Mon	16 Dec	Christmas Show (Starling Assisted)
Sat	21 Dec	Christmas Party
Fri	10 Jan	Icemen (SSB)
Sat	01 Mar	Icemen (AAFM)
F/S/S	2-4 May	Sunshine District Spring Convention
...more to come		

RECENT GUESTS

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
Jerome Santuccio	John Hall
Miriam Hall	Emily Batt
Kurt Butler	Carl Kircher
Anthony Mortimer	Art Billingslea
Bill Garlen	John Garlen
Ian Bula	Bob Sanders
Bill Mumford	Jasmine Perez
Nathan Ward	Brad May
Kealan Rivera	



**THE BEST WAY
TO SPREAD
CHRISTMAS
CHEER
IS SINGING LOUD
FOR ALL
TO HEAR**

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.

WELCOME

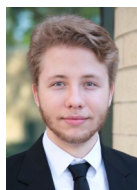
NEWEST MEMBERS

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
Bob Mandzi	August
Scott Hershey	October

2024 DIRECTING TEAM



Daniel Pesante
Front Line
Director



Timothy Keatley
Assistant
Director

2024 OTHER CHAPTER LEADERS



David Walker
Uniform
Manager



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

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

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

**Print off two copies
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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Bari
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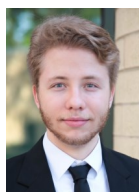
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Coordinator

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



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



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