

Chorus Chatter

News and Musings for Young at Heart Chorus Members

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Member Profiles

We hope you've enjoyed the member profiles we've been publishing for the past several months and that they've helped you to get to know each other a little better. With this issue, we've covered everyone that's been active, but we'll introduce our newest members and any returning inactive members in future issues.

The Aristocrat

Since we've almost run out of members to feature, we're going to share a little bit of background on the places we sing each month. Because our first monthly performance is at The Aristocrat, we'll start there.

Marilyn says the residents love the music we share with them and look forward to our performances but miss us when we are gone.



Joy directs the women singing "Moon Over Miami" at The Aristocrat in September.



Marilyn Lumsdon is the Executive Director at Aristocrat. She has been working in assisted living for more than 11 years and holds several certifications in the field. Her philosophy is that The Aristocrat is the resident's home and that their comfort, care and assistance in all areas is the most important focus for the entire staff.

The family atmosphere and respect shown to all are primary factors in The Aristocrat being voted "The Best Assisted Living in Las Cruces." Along with the Adobe memory care community, The Aristocrat assisted living is part of a second-generation family owned and operated business founded in southern New Mexico in 1970.



Carol Vaughn was raised in West Orange, New Jersey, in the middle-eastern part of the state, in the country at that time. She was part of a two-parent family with an older brother. Her mom was a "stay at home" mom, and her dad worked for an insurance company in Newark.

Music has been a part of Carol's life since she attended the local New Jersey schools and took part in musical presentations whenever they were offered, always in the chorus, and usually in the back row of the soprano section. Church choirs were a part of her life as well, and at college in Montpelier, Vermont, she also took part in the chorus and choir.

Returning to New Jersey and completing her last two years of college, Carol majored in elementary education. She married her husband, John, and they raised two children and both taught school. He was in a large district about an hour from their country home, and Carol ran a nursery school locally. When their son

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was of school age, Carol taught in public schools for 18 years, which included kindergarten, second grade, gifted and talented, basic skills and reading. She has a Master's Degree in reading.

They retired to Silver City and enjoyed the four gentle seasons for twenty years. When John passed away four years ago, Carol decided she didn't need the house, land and all of the care and maintenance it required. She says it was a very hard decision, as she was very active in local groups and was leaving many dear friends. But with Silver City only two hours away, Good Samaritan fit her needs perfectly. She says, "I am comfortable letting someone else take care of me now."

After getting to know the many folks at Good Sam's from Silver City, Judy Waite introduced Carol to Young at Heart. She says, "I enjoy the music, Joanie on the piano, also the friendliness of its members. It's easy to expand my friendships in this community now."



Bob Phillipson started singing with us about three years ago when his mother-in-law was at Good Sam's. He played a coronet in grade school but between then and high school forgot how to read music. Bob took up the guitar when he was in University during the last century. He says his 12-string was purchased in 1964, which means it's been with him longer than his wife, Kathy, with whom he celebrates 50 married years this year.

As native New Mexicans for several generations they moved away to find work and had a house in Northern Virginia which they called home for almost 40 years, although they spent most of their time living overseas in Asia and Latin

America. They moved back to New Mexico and to Las Cruces four years ago.

Following his service with the Army, Bob briefly ran a factory in Santa Monica, California, but being easily bored, he asked the CIA if they still had the job they had offered earlier. They did not but said they had a better one, so he went to SE Asia as a paramilitary officer and continued his career as a field officer for a total of 27 years. Following that, he was employed handling International Licensees for Cluett, Peabody and Co., Inc. (Arrow shirts and clothing and Gold Toe socks) in Latin America and Asia. Since then, he has been involved in a tech startup, due diligence work, and some training overseas. Bob and Kathy have three children; the eldest is a teacher in Boston, their son in the middle is a career Engineer Army officer currently at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, and the third is a State Department officer currently in La Paz, Bolivia. They have seven grandchildren; four boys and three girls.

Engaging the Audience

When we perform for any of our audiences, we share the joy of music with them and with each other. The more we can relate to and engage with our audience, the better the experience will be for everyone. Here are a couple of ideas that might help.

- **Posture and Expression:** Your posture, body language and facial expression help you and the audience connect with each other. Show that you're enjoying what you're doing. Smile (unless it's a sad song). Raise your eyebrows to look more engaged. Practice in front of a mirror, and see what you look like during a song.
- **Tell the Story:** Each song tells a story, so think a little bit about the story, both before we begin and as we are singing. Try to reflect what the words are saying as you sing.

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- Sing to a person: As you sing a song, watch the director, of course, but also try to pick someone in the audience who is enjoying the song and try to relate to them. It might even be several different people as the song goes on. They'll get more out of the song, and so will you.

Blowin' in the Wind, a song we will sing in November, was written by Bob Dylan in 1962. Although it has been described as a protest song, it poses a series of rhetorical questions about peace, war and freedom. The refrain "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind" was described in a 2002 magazine article as "impenetrably ambiguous: either the answer is so obvious it is right in your face, or the answer is as intangible as the wind." Dylan released it as a single and on his album, *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, but it was Peter, Paul and Mary's release that sold a phenomenal 300,000 copies in the first week and made the song world-famous.

The White Cliffs of Dover, about which we will sing in November, are closely linked with bluebirds, even though the bluebird is not native to Europe and is non-migratory. Instead, the lyrics refer to the RAF and RCAF fighter pilots who wore blue uniforms and express confidence that they will prevail. The song was written about a year after British and German aircraft had been fighting over the Cliffs of Dover in the 1940 Battle of Britain. Neither America nor the Soviet Union had yet joined the war, leaving Britain as the only major power fighting the Axis in Europe at the time. The song's lyrics look hopefully toward a time when the war would be over and peace would rule over the iconic cliffs, Britain's symbolic border with the European mainland.

How I Ended Up in Las Cruces

Although many of the profiles you've shared

have included the story of how you ended up in Las Cruces, I thought it might be fun to include a collection of very short versions in a future newsletter. Here are the ones I have received so far. I'll include more as I receive them. What's your story?

When a couple of friends in Wisconsin kept talking about moving to Las Cruces, we thought it sounded interesting enough to check out. We came, liked the area and found it was a college town with plenty of music, art and theatre, so we bought a town house the first day we got here.

Ray Scroggins

I lived in northern Minnesota and met Chris on the internet. She said "no" to cold, so the only other choice was Las Cruces...I came here for love.

Rob Pearson

I quit my job in Las Vegas, NV and drove a friend to Las Cruces to see her mother in the hospital. The mother and I got along well, and she asked me to stay and take care of her until she passed away months later; then I chose to stay here and bought my mobile home.

Joy Webb

My husband and I moved to Hobbs from Quemado after his stroke because of a son's family, two daughters' families and good medical facilities; however, four years after husband passed, I began to yearn for mountains or even a little hill and pure mountain air! My other daughter and family live in Las Cruces, so after 10 yrs. in Hobbs, I decided to move here to spend time with my other four grandchildren and enjoy the Organ Mountains every day of the rest of my life!

Carol Briggs

When retiring in San Diego, our options on moving to New Mexico were Deming or Las Cruces. We visited here, saw the Organ Mts. and stayed.

Carole Rickman

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I was living in Roswell, my son was in El Paso, and my youngest child had come to NMSU in 1991. He said "come on, move here before you get too old," so after several years shopping in El Paso, I said I am not a Texan, (was living in Santa Teresa), and bought a house in Las Cruces in 1997. *Marcie Palmer*



After the "Teddy Bear's Picnic"

The Definition of a Cowboy

Between the security of childhood and the insecurity of second childhood we find the fascinating group of humanity called cowboys. They come in assorted hat sizes, shapes, weights and stages of sobriety. They can be found anywhere, in cities, in towns, the wilderness, in bars, in jails, on the road and always in debt.

A cowboy is laziness with a deck of cards, bravery with spurs, energy on the dance floor, legend of the old West with a copy of Playboy, and seldom without a case of beer. He has the energy of a turtle, the shyness of a fox, the stories of a sea captain, the operations of a Casanova, and when he wants something, it's usually connected with girls or horses.

Some of his likes are women, beer, girls, alcohol, females, booze, dames, firewater, the opposite sex, rodeos, dances and the smell of horse manure, Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Bob Wills, good bucking horses, and double-rank fighting bulls. His dislikes are stupid women,

some poor ole thing that her mind is gone bad, answering letters, his boss, officers of the law, getting up on time, and being told to take his hat off. No one else can cram into one pocket a little black book, a photo of his best girl, a pack of crushed cigarettes, a book of matches, a can of Skoal, a comb, a beer opener and what's left of last week's pay.

He likes to spend some of his money on girls, some on poker, some on beer, some for shooting pool, and the rest on foolishness.

A cowboy is a majestic creature. You can lock him out of your heart, you can scratch him out of your little black book but not out of your mind. You may feel like giving up on the beady-eyed, good for nothing, long way from home lover boy, but all your shattered dreams become insignificant when "your" cowboy knocks on your door, looks at you with those bloodshot eyes and says, "Hi Railhead. Monkey's back in town." *Submitted by Marcie Palmer*

September Program Accolades

Louise Forshaw, one of the residents at Good Samaritan sent a review that was published to their residents. Here are some excerpts.

The 2nd Thursday of September, the Young at Heart Chorus entertained us with a delightful concert based on the theme "Travel and Places." Among the singers were our Carol Vaughan, Sue Lashley, Marcie Palmer, Skipper Botsford, and Murray Kugler. Adding to our pleasure was the news that the Chorus will return to sing for us the 2nd Thursday of each month. Songs like "California, Here I come," "Moon Over Miami," and "Kentucky Waltz" not only carried out the theme but also set our toes and fingers tapping and had some in the audience singing along. The piano accompanist's jet-propelled fingers amazed us and filled the auditorium with infectious sounds.