

# Chorus Chatter

News and Musings for Young at Heart Chorus Members

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## October...

comes from the Latin word for eight, "octo," because it had been the eighth month of the early Roman calendar.

*Old Farmer's Almanac*

## When the Saints Go Marching In

will lead off our October program. Often referred to as simply "The Saints", this Black spiritual originated as a Christian hymn but is often played by jazz bands. It was famously recorded on May 13, 1938, by Louis Armstrong and his orchestra. The origins of this song are unclear.

It apparently evolved in the early 1900s from a number of similarly titled gospel songs. The first known recorded version was in 1923 by the Paramount Jubilee Singers. The earliest versions were slow and stately, but as time passed, the recordings became more rhythmic.

The song is apocalyptic, taking much of its imagery from the Book of Revelation. As the hymn expresses the wish to go to Heaven, picturing the saints going in (through the Pearly Gates), it is entirely appropriate for funerals.

*Wikipedia*

## Fun Facts About Your Heart

- The average human heart beats 100,000 times a day.
- Over a lifetime, an average heart will beat more than 2-1/2 billion times.
- When you're exercising, it takes your blood about 10 seconds to get from your heart to your big toe and back.

*RV Magazine*

## Play a Simple Melody

is a song from the 1914 musical, *Watch Your Step*, with words and music by Irving Berlin. We'll sing it on our October program. The show was the first stage musical that Berlin wrote. It ran for 175 performances at the New Amsterdam Theater in New York City. The one song from it that is well-remembered today is "Play a Simple Melody," one of the few true examples of counterpoint in American popular music — a melody running against a second melody, each with independent lyrics.

In the printed music, first the "simple melody" plays alone. Then comes the contrasting melody. Finally, the two play together. The lyrics of "Play a Simple Melody" also track the counterpoint duet with one singer yearning for the music that mother sang (the style of bygone days), but the other singer disdaining such classic fare as lacking interest and rhythm.

*Wikipedia*



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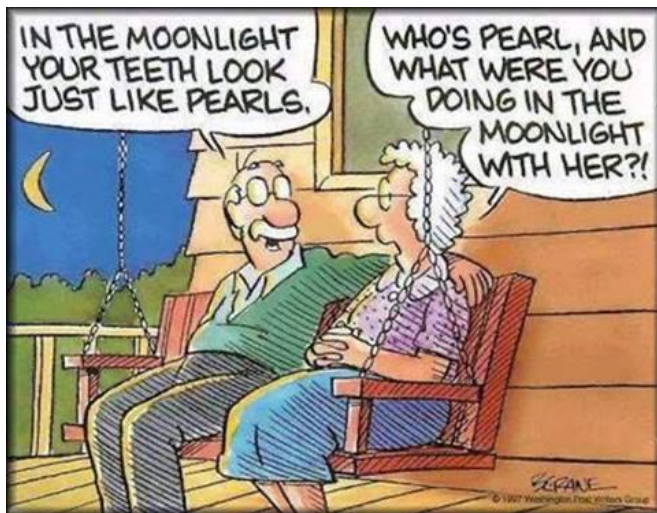
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## Let's Make Our Songs Tell a Story

All the songs we sing tell a story of one kind or another-sometimes sweet, sometimes funny, sometimes sad. How well do we convey the story we are telling our audience through song? It's too easy to just go through the motions of singing without showing any of the emotions in the words we sing. If we put a little more of ourselves into our performances and share our feelings with the audience, we'll get more out of it too!

As I mentioned at rehearsal, the director of a chorus I sang with in Wisconsin said he would change the group's name to the "Great Stone Face Chorus" unless we did a better job of looking alive when we performed. Let's not let that happen here.

Ray



## Who wrote the Song "America"?

The national anthem for the United Kingdom, *God Save The Queen (King)*, and the patriotic song, *America (My Country, 'Tis of Thee)*, are set to the same melody.

In 1745, the British composer, Thomas Arne (1710-1778), arranged what would become the official British national anthem.

The words to *America (My Country, 'Tis of Thee)* came about while a theology student from Boston, Samuel F. Smith, was studying in Germany. He noticed how German students began the school day by singing a hymn. He wrote the *America* text in 1832 with the hopes that American students would do the same. He set it to the tune of the British national anthem. We're singing it on our October program.

## Moves That Could Hurt You

Every day we are faced with chances to make small mistakes during very common movements that can lead to painful injuries. Here are four:

### Lifting Heavy Objects:

People overestimate how much they can lift or underestimate an object's weight. Then they reach for it by bending over at the waist and attempt to lift it by simply straightening back up again. This leaves the lifting to the back muscles, which have evolved to hold the weight of your head and torso when you are standing up, not bent over. Instead, lift with your feet planted shoulder-width apart, squat halfway down until our thighs are parallel with the ground while keeping your torso relatively upright. Then try lifting the object.

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### Putting on a Jacket or Shirt:

The motions of putting on a coat, jacket or button-front shirt can trigger a rotator cuff injury. It is a collection of tendons and muscles that surround and protect each shoulder. When you put on the above items, you hold your arm up and out, often at an unnatural angle, which can strain a tendon in your rotator cuff. Instead, keep your arm below chest level and push your hand downward into the sleeve, using your other hand to pull the garment up.

### Overusing Your Neck

If you wake up with a stiff or sore neck, you probably blame it on sleeping in an odd position. The more likely cause is overusing your neck muscle the previous day. Everyday activities such as gardening, using your cell phone, working on your computer and even spending too much time reading all require you to look down a lot, which taxes your neck and shoulder muscles.

Chin tucks are a safe and effective way to strengthen the neck and help prevent strain. Sit in a comfortable chair, looking straight ahead. Move your head backward, tucking your chin slowly and steadily toward your neck. Don't tilt your head. Hold the tuck for five seconds, return to the starting position. Repeat five times, twice daily

### Navigating Stairs

More than a million Americans hurt themselves on stairs every year. A common mistake is missing the last step

or two. More injuries happen when descending, because gravity makes it more difficult to catch yourself.

Paying attention is one obvious solution, as is using the handrail. Avoid carrying objects that are heavy or bulky and can obscure your vision. Wear non-slip shoes and avoid overly long pants.

*Jonathan L. Chang, MD in BottomLinePERSONAL*



*I haven't gotten anything done today. I've been in the Produce Department trying to open this stupid plastic bag.*

**I never thought I'd be the kind of person who'd wake up early in the morning to exercise ...**

**And I was right.**