

# Chorus Chatter

News and Musings for Young at Heart Chorus Members

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*Editor: Ray Scroggins*

## Welcome Back!

It's been a long haul. Our last performance was in March 2020, but we're closer to getting back together. When we do, we'll be practicing in the Creative Arts room on the first floor at Good Samaritan. For now, we'll be singing at only three places, Aristocrat, Morningside Northrise and Good Samaritan Auditorium. We may find a fourth location once we get up and running. We also may have to wear masks and show proof of vaccination to enter some of these facilities, so be prepared. We won't be wearing masks to sing, and visiting with the residents usually is discouraged.

There've been some changes in people too. With Joanie's move to Oklahoma, we're fortunate to have two pianists to provide the accompaniment we need. Fran will be back, after breaking her wrist, and Barbara Reed is joining us to create the dual team we need.

A few people have dropped out, but we've gained several new or returning former members. Among the latter are Marye Wagoner and Murray Kugler. New members include Gayle Eads, Carolyn Monahan, Dora Somerville, Patricia Painter, Nancy Evey, Lila Ziegler and, of course, our new pianist Barbara Reed.

We're still hoping to kick off with our traditional Christmas/Holiday program in

December. We haven't scheduled any performances in January but may do our Veteran's tribute then. We hope to also practice then for a February program of love songs. We'll keep you posted.



"Youth is a gift of nature—but age is a work of art." *Stanislaw Jerzy Lec, considered Poland's most-gifted poet*

## Learn to Love Your Voice

It seems that most people don't like the sound of their voice when they hear a recording of it. That's usually because there's a difference between what they expect their voice to sound like to other people and what they actually hear in a recording.

Whenever we speak or sing, we hear and feel vibrations internally as well as the vibrations that leave our mouths, bounce around the room and come back to our ears. No one else can hear us the same way we

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hear ourselves. Every voice is unique, and your instrument is physiologically different from anyone else's. You may be more of a piccolo, a saxophone or a tuba, so don't expect to sound like another instrument. Just be the best YOU that you can be. Here are a few ideas to help you learn to love your voice:

- Record yourself singing something simple that is in the middle of your range, even a children's song.
- Play it back and find one thing you like about it—even a single word.
- Build on that and do it again. Make some adjustments.
- Don't imitate other singers, but emulate in your own way the good things you hear.

Kathleen Hansen in *The Harmonizer*

## Better Breathing

Stronger breathing muscles and deeper breaths are fundamental to good health. Deep breathing reduces anxiety and helps protect our lungs against the viruses, pollution, chemicals and dust that attack them constantly. Studies show that it can help to lower blood pressure, ease back pain, banish insomnia and resolve a whole list of digestive problems.

Most of us are under-breathers. We don't have the strong breathing muscles that allow us to take consistently deep, oxygenating breaths. Your breathing muscles can become weak and constricted from stress, spending too much time sitting in front of a computer or texting, smoking

or pollution, carrying extra abdominal weight and many other causes.

The diaphragm is the main muscle that controls breathing. It's a pizza-sized, parachute-shaped muscle at the bottom of your rib cage that flattens and spreads when you breathe properly. Other muscles used in breathing include the muscles between the ribs, those on either side of your spine, the muscles that flank your abdomen and your pelvic floor muscles. When those muscles are weak, shoulder and neck muscles must step in to help, but they aren't built for the job and don't allow you to take full, deep breaths. While cardio exercises such as walking, biking or jogging make you breathe more heavily, they don't actually help your breathing muscles. You can only strengthen your breathing muscles with exercises when your body is relatively motionless.

Here is one such exercise, called a diaphragm extension. Lie down on your back. Place a large book, or a stack of smaller books) on your abdomen, right on top of your belly button. Gaze toward the books: You should be able to see them at the very bottom of your field of vision. As you inhale, try to make the books rise. On exhaling, watch them lower. Repeat this 20 times.

There are many other exercises that can strengthen the breathing muscles, although they are beyond the scope of this article. You can probably find YouTube videos or descriptions online. I can also send you a

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copy of the full article that contains descriptions of several other exercises.

*BottomLine Health*

## The White Cliffs of Dover



We'd planned to sing about these cliffs in November. They 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.



The jaws of the Nile Crocodile can apply 5,000 pounds of pressure per square inch! It is the

strongest bite in the animal world. The Nile crocodile's bite is even stronger than that of a Great White Shark, which measures 4000 PSI.

*Natural Gas News*

## An Amazing Voice



Bass vocalist [Tim Storms](#) holds the Guinness World Record for the "lowest note produced by a human." His lowest frequencies can only

be heard by elephants and other animals that use low frequencies for communication or by dedicated scientific measurement devices. For you musicians, he hit a G -7 (0.189 Hz), which is eight octaves below the lowest G on the piano! He also holds the world record for "widest vocal range", a G-7 (0.189 Hz) to G/G#5, which amounts to ten octaves.

Storms (born August 28, 1972), is an American singer and composer and the bass singer for the vocal group 'Pierce Arrow.'

*Wikipedia*

