

Chorus Chatter

News and Musings for Young at Heart Chorus Members

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Cynthia Apostalon is always in the front row at Northrise Morningside, singing along with most of our songs. She moved here about two years ago from Albuquerque when her husband of 61 years died. Her only daughter, Wendy, lives in Las Cruces, while her four sons all live elsewhere.

Cynthia was born in the Bellingham, Washington area, where her father was a government entomologist. When he decided to farm, the family moved near a small town in western Washington State. Singing has always been a part of her life, in church choirs since junior high school and also in a high school chorus.

After high school, Cynthia attended Stevens College in Columbia, Missouri for two years and then the University of Washington in Seattle, studying sociology and education. After college, she worked for United Airlines as a flight attendant for about three months before meeting her husband. History repeats itself as her granddaughter (Wendy's daughter) is now a United flight attendant.

Cynthia's husband was a US Air Force officer, so their family lived all over the world. She says they lived in about 25 different houses. Each of her five children was born in a different state, including Alabama, Wyoming, Georgia, Massachusetts and Nebraska. They lived in Albuquerque from 1974 until June, 2017 when

she moved to Las Cruces. Here, she says she misses singing, since her church doesn't have a choir. She's hoping to join Young at Heart and add her voice to ours.

The Cattle Call was written and recorded in 1934 by American songwriter and musician Tex Owens. We'll be singing it as part of our October program. Owens wrote the song in Kansas

City while watching the snow fall. "Watching the snow, my sympathy went to cattle everywhere, and I just wished I could call them all around me and break some corn over a wagon wheel and feed them. That's when the words 'cattle call' came to my mind. I picked up my guitar, and in thirty minutes I had wrote the music and four verses to the song," he said.

Eddy Arnold recorded Cattle Call in 1944, and it became a signature song for him. It also was recorded by Tex Ritter Carolina Cotton, Slim Whitman, Chet Atkins, Elvis Presley and many others.



Tin Pan Alley is the name given to the New York City music publishers and songwriters who dominated popular music in the U.S. during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Originally it

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referred to a specific block in Manhattan on West 28th Street, now commemorated by a plaque on the sidewalk. While the start of Tin Pan Alley is usually dated to about 1885, when a number of music publishers set up shop in the same district of Manhattan, its end is less certain. It likely was during the Great Depression in the 1930s, when the phonograph, ration and motion pictures supplanted sheet music as the driving force of American popular music.

Although the origins of the name are unclear, the most popular account claims it was a derogatory reference to the collective sound made by many "cheap upright pianos" all playing different tunes. That apparently reminded some people of the banging of tin pans in an alleyway, and the name stuck.

Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean, the patriotic song on our October program, was popular during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Composed around 1843, it was long used as one of several unofficial national anthems of the United States. The song uses the historic informal name "Columbia" that once was popular for the United States. It also borrows and modifies the phrase "land of the free and the home of the brave" from Francis Scott Key's "Star-Spangled Banner."

Sign in a Restaurant

Please don't criticize the coffee. You may be old and weak yourself someday.

Country Corner-Saratoga Springs, NY

Music Lowers Stress

Music decreases levels of the stress hormone cortisol just as well as massage therapy, according to a 2010 study. Scientists assigned

anxious patients randomly to listen to music either during massage therapy or while lying in a dim room. After three months, those who just listened to music experienced the same drop in anxiety as those who also got massages.

Readers Digest



Why do they sing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" when they are already there?

Therapy for Aging Voices

The voice ages just like every other part of your body. It can become softer and scratchier. It can waver and simply conk out after a few hours of speaking. The pitch of men's voices tends to rise with age, while women's voices tend to get lower.

Age-related voice problems can begin as early as age 50. Changes in the respiratory system can mean less air to power the voice. And to make strong and stable sounds, the two vocal cords-which are made up of tiny, precise bits of muscle, ligament and mucous membrane-need to touch and vibrate.

But as people get older, they lose muscle mass in the voice box (or larynx), just as they do elsewhere. The vocal cords (what doctors call

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vocal folds) lose volume and strength. The mucous membranes on the vocal cords stiffen and get thinner. These changes can cause the vocal cords to bow, leaving too much space between them.

Aaron Ziegler, a speech-language pathologist at Oregon Health & Science University, co-created a therapy specifically for aging voices. Here are a few of the exercises:

- Breathe from low in the abdomen, not the throat. Coordinate this breath with the sound 'Ah' using a strong, energetic voice. Repeat. This increases the power of your voice and brings the vocal cords together.
- Using the same strong voice, say 'Ah' while sliding from a low pitch to a high pitch and back down again. This stretches and contracts the vocal cords.
- Create 10 or so phrases that you typically use when speaking. Practice saying them using a slightly higher pitch than normal, as if you were calling to someone in the next yard over. Then try using a lower pitch, using a voice of authority.
- Speak in this strong, energetic voice for 30 seconds, as if you were having a conversation in a noisy restaurant. Then try a minute. This builds endurance.

Ziegler is also launching a study to see if participation in a weekly singing group will change the anatomy of the voice. (It sounds like we're doing the right things.)

The Wall Street Journal



Irving Berlin wrote many of the songs we sing, including *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, *White Christmas*, *Happy Holiday*, *Blue Skies* and *God Bless America*. Born in Russia as Israel Beilin in 1888, he became a song writing and show business legend and lived until 1989.

He wrote hundreds of songs, many becoming major hits, which made him famous before he turned thirty. During his career, he wrote an estimated 1,500 songs, including the scores for 20 original Broadway shows and 15 original Hollywood films.

It is believed that he could not read sheet music and was such a limited piano player that he could only play in the key of F-sharp unless using his custom piano, which was equipped with a transposing lever. Composer George Gershwin called him "the greatest songwriter that has ever lived," and composer Jerome Kern said "Irving Berlin has no *place* in American music—he *is* American music."

