

Secret Chorus Business

Integrity – Commitment - Fun
Dare to be Different

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2017

WEEK 2 – Different Location

**Crestwood Community Centre
Cnr Crestwood Drive and Chapel Lane
Baulkham Hills**



Please

- Wear CKC Black Bling top or other black top
- Wear CKC Name Badge

Week 1 Handout located at end of SCB.

STAR OF THE WEEK



Who is a Star! It may be that member you know who has gone above and beyond, who has personally helped you, who has made a special difference or contribution to the Chorus, who has tried extra hard. There are many other attributes you will think of which will be appropriate.

To nominate a member:

Please email Jen Senior (jasenior@hotmail.com) with the member's name and short description as to why you would like to nominate that person.

MEMBER LEAVE

Are you planning on taking holidays or unable to attend rehearsal?

If so please email absence@circularkeys.org

Using this email address ensures the Musical Director, Membership and the Music Team are all notified at the same time.

Current & Upcoming Member Leave

- Kaye Kendall 31/05/17 – 23/08/17
- Jesusa Helaratne 02/08/17 to 30/08/17
- Liz Vrhovsek 26/07/17 – 23/08/17
- Verne Mantova 23/08/17 – 18/10/17

- Betty Fuller 23/08/17 – 20/09/17
- Cheryl Wolfenden 06/09/17 – 04/10/17
- Cheryl Benson 12/10/17 – 02/11/17
- Anne Harris 18/10/17 to 22/11/17

SUPPER ROSTER

16. AUG	NO SUPPER - CRESTWOOD	
23. AUG	DORIS , PIPPA, RACHAEL M, ALISON	ALISON & INESE
30. AUG	CAROL L, ANNE H, SUSAN K, INESE (cake)	ANNE H, SUSAN K
6. SEPT	JENNY D, JUDITH, DEBBIE P, LIZ PW	JENNY & CATHY
13. SEPT	KAYE K, KAREN TOTARO, SUE G, DEBORAH M	KAYE & INESE
20. SEPT	DORIS, ALISON, LISSA, INESE (cake)	ALISON & CATHY
27. SEPT	NO SUPPER - EPPING	

SUGGESTION BOX

The Suggestion Box is kept on top of the microwave during rehearsal for you to place a note you would like management Team to address.

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Deborah Martin Aug 13
Stephanie Wallbank Aug 14
Marea Witt Aug 23

Pippa Anderson Sep 10
Rina Pinto Sep 17

DIARY DATES

2017	
August 11	Music Team Meeting
August 16	Section Practices - Crestwood Community Centre (Baulkham Hills)
August 24	Management Team Meeting
September 27	Rehearsal at Epping Creative Centre
September 17	Graduation Performance Membership drive – Ron Dyer Centre Details TBA
October 15	Trivia Night – St Josephs
November 1	REF Visit – Lea Baker

November 5	Coaching – Judy Pozsgay
December 15	Bunnings BBQ – Castle Hill
2018	
February 23, 24, 25	Coaching – Lynda Keever
March 23 & 24	Coaching – Molly Huffman
May 5 & 6	Coaching Workshop – Lynne Smith
June 27	Coaching – Lori Lyford
October	SAI International – St Louis

RISER ETIQUETTE

As we begin our new member drive it is timely to remember riser etiquette during rehearsals to help set a good example and expectations with our vocal workshop participants.

Honour thy Director She knows what she's doing

Believe that your Director knows what she's doing and restrain yourself from offering advice on how to run the chorus (or any other topic) while standing on the risers.

Ten second rule

If the Director has not addressed the chorus within ten seconds, then you can talk quietly with your riser neighbour until the Director resumes.

Listen, don't correct

Often when there's a pause, chorus members try to correct their mistakes or those of their neighbours. Although this may seem important, RESIST. You will miss important comments from the Director that affect everyone in the chorus. Bear in mind that the Director fixes all the problems eventually.

Listen, don't sing along

When the Director is demonstrating how to sing a particular passage, listen. Do not sing with her. She's usually doing that to demonstrate micro-differences in pitch, nuances of vocal quality, or in some cases, notes or words. If you sing with her, you keep yourself and everyone else from hearing her, and instead, you become the example. That keeps us all from learning from the expert.

Listen, don't distract

When the Director is speaking to the chorus, listen. Don't pass the time singing or reviewing your part. It makes it difficult for all of us to pay her proper attention and to learn, because we're instead paying at least some attention to you.

Listen, don't sing

When the Director is working with another section or sections, listen. Don't sneak-sing your part with them (unless she asks you to). You may think no one will notice, but it's guaranteed the Director will notice, and be distracted by it.

Listen to the pitch, don't hum

When the pitch pipe is sounding, listen. Don't hum the pitch. It keeps you and everyone else from hearing the pitch accurately.

Wait to be invited

Plan to arrive on time; but if you arrive late, or step down from the risers and are returning, simply stand on the side and wait until invited by the Director to take your place. Don't stop to do anything else on the way.

Don't cross the Director

If you need to step down for any reason, stay on the risers until there's a break in the singing, then step down and leave quietly. If you need to cross to the other side of the risers, walk behind the risers if possible or walk behind the Director instead. Under no circumstances should you ever cross in front of the Director while getting on the risers.

Wait your turn

If the Director is debriefing with Assistant Directors after rehearsal, wait until they have finished before talking to them.

Watch

Watch the Director at all times.

VOCAL LESSON #1, PAGE 1

POSTURE: THE BASIS FOR ALL GOOD SINGING

POSTURE is the basis of all good singing. When you study a musical instrument, you are first taught to hold it correctly so that you have the ability to play it properly. The human voice is the most versatile and flexible of musical instruments. Since we sing with our whole body, it is important and the basis of all good singing, to learn how to hold the body properly.

The ultimate goal in singing is a freely-produced, rich, open and resonated sound. The vocal apparatus must be relaxed. The way the body is held, "its posture," has a major impact on whether the vocal mechanism can remain relaxed and free.

Proper singing posture, from the toes up:

- One foot slightly in front of the other, feet comfortably apart for good balance
- Weight forward on the balls of the feet, heels on floor
- Knees, relaxed and flexible
- Buttocks tucked under
- Chest (sternum) lifted high and spread wide
- A feeling of the ribs being lifted up out of the waistline
- Shoulders relaxed, as if hanging on a coat hanger
- Neck relaxed, head able to move freely
- Head remains level
- Chin parallel to the floor, neither lifted nor lowered

Exercise & Posture Drill

Stand up as straight as possible with spine stretched tall and crown of head trying to touch the ceiling. Raise arms horizontal to floor with palms down. One foot should be slightly ahead of the other, with weight balanced forward on the balls of both feet. Unlock the knees and keep them flexible. Tuck the pelvis under and slightly forward. Now turn the arms over so that the palms are facing toward the ceiling. Notice the extra stretch that occurs in the ribs. The chest is now very wide, separated and high. There is a lot of space between the bottom of the ribs and the waistline. Keep everything aligned and lower the arms to a normal position. The back of the neck is pulled back against an imaginary wall. Now put a smile on your face and walk around the room. Restate this good posture often.

Common posture problems:

1. Locking the knees: When the knees are locked, the body is off balance. This causes body tension, which creates a tense singer. Be sure to put the weight forward on the balls of the feet and keep the tail bone tucked under to help avoid inadvertent locking of the knees.
2. Swayback: Sometimes a singer tries to attain a lifted chest by pulling the shoulders back (and consequently tensing them) instead of using the muscles around the rib cage to lift the ribs out of the waistline. The intercostal muscles surrounding the rib cage are the muscles that should be used to lift the ribs and the sternum. When the shoulders are pulled back instead of the sternum being lifted high, and the buttocks are not tucked under but are thrust backward, sway back posture is the result. In this tense, unbalanced position, good vocal production is not possible.
3. Chest droop: As a musical phrase is sung and air is exhaled, it is easy to allow the chest to cave in and the rib cage to drop back into the waistline. At the end of the phrase, if this occurs, the singer has lost the height of the sternum. As you sing a phrase, consciously retain the height of the sternum and resist the collapse of the rib cage.

VOCAL LESSON #1, PAGE 2

BREATH: THE FUEL FOR SINGING

BREATH is the fuel for singing. The tone we produce when we sing rests on a cushion of air; thus, the breath is the fuel for the sounds we produce. We see, then, how important it is to supply the fuel properly.

The muscles involved in breathing are the intercostal muscles, including the epigastrium; and the abdominal muscles, including the diaphragm. (If you are not familiar with the epigastrium, place your right hand just below your breast bone, where you can feel the inverted V of your rib cage. Make a fist with your left hand, put it to your mouth and blow gently onto the fist without allowing any air out. Your right hand will feel the epigastrium pop firmly outward.)

The lungs are where the fuel is stored, but the lungs are organs, not muscles; they are elastic, but not capable of independent movement unless the movement is initiated elsewhere. The lungs are attached to the rib cage and to the diaphragm. When the rib cage is expanded, it pulls the lungs upward and outward; when the diaphragm is lowered, it pulls the lungs downward. When the lungs are stretched in this manner, through expansion of the rib cage and lowering of the diaphragm, a partial vacuum is created and air rushes into the lungs. If the muscles are working properly, the singer does not have to help the air into the lungs, but simply ensure that the passageway is open. It is the movement of the intercostal muscles and diaphragm that causes inhalation to occur.

BREATHING FOR SINGING: THE DISTINCTION

What makes breathing for singing different from normal or other specialized breathing is the action of the rib cage. In normal breathing, the rib cage expands to bring in oxygen, then collapses or lowers as the breath is used. In singing, we want to create a feeling of firm support for the lungs in the intercostal and epigastric muscles, so that as we use the air the rib cage does not collapse. It is a feeling of nonviolent resistance keeping the rib cage high and wide and not allowing the ribs to drop into the waistline.

Practicing intercostal and epigastric breathing helps the singer because successful resistance to collapse of the rib cage gives us control of the breath, allowing us to feed the cushion of air into the tone in a steady stream (like the control provided by the adjustable nozzle of a garden hose). Breath control provides constant support and a sense of projection of the tone being produced. We achieve that by successfully resisting collapse of the rib cage as we sing the phrase.

ABDOMINAL MUSCLE AND BREATH SUPPORT

At the same time as we are using the intercostals to keep the rib cage high and wide, we use the abdominal muscles for support. The abdominals need to be relaxed during inhalation, so the diaphragm can be lowered completely, without resistance from below. As we sing, the diaphragm gradually lifts, pushing air up and out of the lungs as the tone is produced. Because the rib cage is kept high and wide, the diaphragm will lift gradually and we have better control of the breath.

The nonviolent resistance that keeps the rib cage from collapsing also keeps the breath from rushing out too fast. It can be compared to isometric exercises, in that we have external and internal intercostal muscles, creating a push pull situation. We strive for balance, so we don't collapse and push air out too fast or tense up and produce a strangled tone. With support from the abdominal muscles and resistance to collapse from the intercostals, we achieve relaxed control.

VOCAL LESSON #1, PAGE 3

TO RECAP, THEN, BREATH IS THE FUEL FOR SINGING.

- Assuming that the upper chest is wide and the shoulders are level, neither the shoulders nor the upper chest should rise as air comes into the lungs.
- Expansion ultimately will be felt in the lower rib cage and the back. The abdominal area visibly expands during inhalation.
- There should not be any audible sound upon breath intake.
- During exhalation or singing, the lower abdominal muscles lift upward and inward, lifting the abdominal bulk up against the diaphragm.
- While singing, the singer must resist the urge to let the rib cage contract and go down. The conscious maintenance of an expanded rib cage will aid the singer in developing a supported tone.

BREATHING EXERCISES

1. Sit down. Place forearms across knees and relax head. Inhale deeply. Feel back expand and stomach relax into your lap. Exhale and pull tummy away from thighs. Keep back wide.
2. Begin with singer's posture. Inhale by expanding lower rib cage as far as possible. "Hiss" out breath between teeth to count of twenty. Do not let lower rib cage collapse downward until absolutely necessary. Keep upper chest as wide as possible during entire exercise. Never let the sternum bone collapse downward. Repeat five times.
3. Same exercise as above, but instead of "hissing," count aloud to twenty. Work up to forty counts over a period of time.
4. Take a breath and expand rib cage. Hold breath and use intercostal muscles to move rib cage in and out 15 times. Repeat.
5. Standing in singer's posture, inhale quickly by allowing lower abdominal muscles to relax and drop down. Lift lower abdomen in eight quick motions, shushing the breath out in eight quick motions. Do not allow the chest to fall during exercise.
6. While standing, place weight on the forward part of the feet. Lift the heels off the ground, and slide down an imaginary wall with the back as straight as possible. Do not lean over. Now lift your arms to shoulder height in front of you and make a circle with them. Maintaining this position, sing.
7. Full breath standing. Lift both arms up above head with arms close to ears as you rise up on your toes. At the same time, inhale through the nose. After a full breath has been taken, place palms together, stretching as high as possible and hold breath to count of six. Repeat five times.

VOCAL LESSON #1, PAGE 4

TERMS DEFINED

- Column of air: The idea is of a solid, constant source of air coming from the bottom of your lungs through the top of your head. Imagine a blow dryer pointing up from your diaphragm. A continuous column of air allows notes to be sung with the same excellent quality no matter where they fall in the singer's range.
- Massage your vocal cords: Tense muscles make tight, forced sound. Visualize the air coming from the bottom of your lungs massaging your vocal cords and the sound will be smooth and relaxed.
- Energized breath: A quick, deep breath that adds energy to the vocal line.
- Forward motion: The feeling/sense that the vocal line is moving toward something in anticipation, making the song interesting to listen to and keeping the tune from dragging. Proper breathing is critical to the success of forward motion.

SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Singers are vocal athletes and must learn to be expert breathers. The chorus only sings as well as it breathes.
- A musical phrase is like a spoken sentence.
- The singer should mark breathing places on the music and memorize the breathing plan along with the words and notes. Occasionally changes can occur from the original plan at the director's discretion.
- Not enough planned breaths can cause the music to lose its energy and to sound strained.
- Too many breaths make the music sound choppy and difficult for the listener to follow the musical story.
- Rhythm (or lack thereof) is strongly affected by breaths. Taking too much time to get a breath can cause lost beats and poor synchronization.
- Proper breathing is critical to the success of forward motion - the feeling/sense that the vocal line is moving toward something in anticipation, making the song interesting to listen to and keeping the tune from dragging.

Rest assured that breath support and management are topics that are discussed, reviewed and refined continuously. You are as close to breathing properly as your very next breath!

CIRCULAR KEYS CHORUS 12-STEP PROGRAM TO LEARN MUSIC WITH LEARNING TRACKS

This is a 12-step Program to assist you in learning your music.

The success of this program is contingent upon the effective listening skills of the learner much more than upon the musical background or ability to read music.

Any of the 12 steps may be repeated before continuing on to the next step. But, remember, EACH step is important to the overall successful results of learning ALL the right notes, words and timing of the new song.

DO NOT eliminate any of the steps because they may appear to be insignificant to you.

STEP #01

Listen to the music of the Learning Track while you close your eyes. (This will familiarize you with notes, timing and general flavor of the song.)

STEP #02

Watch the notes on your music while you listen to the track. DO NOT SING YET!

STEP #03

Again, watch the notes on your music while you listen to the track. DO NOT SING YET!

STEP #04

Watch the words on your music while you listen to the track. Please, no singing yet!

STEP #05

On a separate piece of paper, write down all the lyrics to the new song. (You can refer to your music if you need to.) Now, watch your own paper while you listen to the learning track. No, not yet - don't sing, please!

STEP #06

Watch the notes again while you listen to the track. Remember -no singing!

STEP #07

Watch the words on your music while you listen to the track. Be careful - not a sound!

STEP #08

Try to write down all the words again on a separate piece of paper without looking at your printed music. If you have trouble, listen to the CD again while you watch the words. Then try writing it again without looking. Stay on this step until you have all the right words written without looking back at the printed music. Now proceed to Step #09.

STEP #09

Hurray! Finally, you can add YOUR voice! Now watch the notes on your music while you hum along with the track. Hum – Hum -SINGING IS NEXT!

STEP #10

Watch the words on your music while you SING along with the track. CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS, YOU ARE REALLY GOING TO SING THIS SONG FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME!

However, if you have any difficulty, circle the spot on your music as you go all the way through. Then, go back and listen (don't sing) those parts again. Happy singing!

STEP #11

Put your own practice tape in your tape recorder. Now, on your own tape, SING the new part all the way through WITHOUT looking at your music. Bet you can hardly wait to hear this step!

STEP #12

THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT STEP - YOU ARE ABOUT TO GRADUATE!

Watch your music and listen to your own tape and see if you are correct. You should be WONDERFUL! But, should you have any doubt, go back and check your part again on the Learning track.

Concentrate on LISTENING to the parts you circled earlier to be sure you have made the corrections.

CONGRATULATIONS!!! With a little bit of luck plus all your hard work, YOU are now the proud possessor of one more selection of music made beautiful by your addition of all the correct notes, words and timing!