

# PEACEMEAL

| A Volunteer Effort of the Portland Peace Choir |

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The Portland Peace Choir strives to exemplify the principles of peace, justice, equality, stewardship of the Earth, cooperation and unity.*

*We sing music from diverse cultures and traditions to inspire peace in ourselves, our families, our communities and the world.*

## In This Issue

- PPC "Springs" Into Action
- Joint Peace Choirs Event Revisited
- Kristin's Values
- New Feature: Recipe Corner

## More Vocal Anatomy

Another fun submission from Pam W. (soprano) is this interesting video. Check it out and see what you think they're doing: <https://www.facebook.com/hintmag/videos/10160168501895261/>

Pam also sent me these two articles about the tongue and its influence on our singing, its connection to the vocal cords, and ideas for improving your control your voice by controlling your tongue. Check out these links to learn more:

<https://www.thoughtco.com/how-the-tongue-can-make-or-break-a-singer-2994163>

<http://singingmastermind.com/your-singing-tongue1/>

## Exciting New Things Ahead for PPC

Outside, the world is awakening with life. Everywhere you look there are flowers, and the trees and bushes are showing signs of bright green leaf buds. Birds are singing and building nests, and the temperatures are gradually warming. In this season of burgeoning life, as the world awakens from its chilly hibernation, the Portland Peace Choir, too, has a chance to awaken from Winter doldrums and "spring" into action with renewed energy and excitement, as we approach our Spring concert and make plans for the next season.

Everything is in motion for the Spring concert: we have our location secured, date confirmed, collaboration arranged, our music is progressing well. Plans are underway for the bake sale and recording the concert for posterity. For more details, see PPC Happenings on p. 4.

There is exciting change in the wind as well. We are going to try a new way of choosing our concert themes and music for the coming year, giving all choir members the opportunity to be part of the decision making process. We will be having two potluck meetings this Spring, one in March to choose themes for our three concerts for next season (Fall, Joint Choirs and Spring); and a second to choose the music we will be performing. The first potluck, the "theme party" will be held on Sunday, March 25, at 5:30 pm. The second will be held on Sunday, April 29, also at 5:30 pm, to choose music. Both will be held at the Lincoln United Methodist Church,

*cont'd. p. 2*





## Food for Thought

Music is introspective. Music is cathartic. Music bonds us all together. Music allows us to take stock of our lives. Music helps us choose our path. This is why we sing.  
~Joshua Kauffman

Spring is Nature's way of saying "Let's party!"  
~ Robin Williams

The garden of love is green without limit and yields many fruits other than sorrow or joy. Love is beyond either condition: without Spring, without Autumn, it is always fresh.  
~Rumi

Music comes from an icicle as it melts, to live again as spring water.  
~ Henry Williamson

Without music, life would be a mistake.  
~Friedrich Nietzsche

Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything  
~Plato

I think music in itself is healing. It's an explosive expression of humanity. It's something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we're from, everyone loves music.  
~Billy Joel

Where words fail, music speaks.  
~ Hans Christian Anderson

Information is not knowledge. Knowledge is not wisdom. Wisdom is not truth. Truth is not beauty. Beauty is not love. Love is not music. Music is THE BEST!  
~ Frank Zappa

*cont'd. from p. 1*

located at 5145 SE Lincoln St., just a few minutes from our normal practice space. We want to give everyone an opportunity to weigh in on these important choices, and the plan is to have fun while doing it.

We're looking forward to a good turnout, good food and lots of fun at the potlucks. So please plan to join us in these grand experiments — the more people who participate, the more fun it will be, and the more the choices made will reflect the desires of the choir as a whole. This is an exciting opportunity for us to move forward in a positive and united way, by making the choice of next season's themes and music truly a community affair.

~bb

## Joint Choirs Concert Revisited: I Survived Ashland

Many thanks to the folks who sent us their pictures and "I survived Ashland" experiences; we appreciate your input and humor.

We'll start off with this anonymous but extremely informative and helpful collection of tips for homestay hosts ... pay attention, anyone who might be considering offering to be a homestay host when the Joint Choirs Weekend comes to Portland next year!

### Hosting Tips for Happy Homestays

*Inspired by actual homestay adventures in Ashland!*

#### For the beginning host

##### Don't:

- ...ask your guest on the day they're scheduled to arrive to bring their own sleeping bag AND their own pillow AND their own coffee AND their own cream for their coffee!
- ...request that your guest bring a spendy gift for you from their city.

##### Do:

- ...clear off a place at your kitchen table for your guest to sit down and drink their coffee!

#### For the advanced host

##### Do:

- ...ask your guest 1-2 weeks prior to their arrival what they like to eat for breakfast – including coffee, tea, juice, etc – and inform them that you are happy to provide that for them during their stay
- ....offer to drive and/or accompany your guest on foot/bus/etc to wherever they need to go during their stay.\*

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## Practice: Curiosity, Kindness and Awareness

Every week, the Portland Peace Choir attends choir practice. On the surface, this is to learn the songs that we will sing together in performances. As we look a little deeper, we find that music is multi-faceted, and that as we come together each week, we are practicing many layers of skills. Curiosity, kindness and awareness are three of these skills that I'd like to bring our conscious attention to, and to prioritize as we "practice" together.

Curiosity is the most helpful tool I have found to stay open to new ideas and to connection with other people. When I show up to a rehearsal and decide my curiosity is more important than my tiredness, the irritating thing that happened earlier in the day, or even than my own agenda, magical and renewing things happen. Questions like "Could that chord sound better?" or "What is the most beautiful part of this line?" helps me to perform the music in a new way. When I ask, "Why did this song get chosen? What do people love about it?" I have greater empathy and understanding for the people I'm singing with and for those who helped choose the music. When someone says something that might make me angry, if my first reaction is "Did I understand that right?" I can ask more questions and am more likely to avoid a conflict and hurt feelings. I'm better able to help in a situation, rather than reacting and making a situation worse. Curiosity tells the brain it is time to learn. It is easier to form new neural connections and develop new skills when in a state of curiosity. Curiosity helps keep me humble and learning, and creates pathways for me to have deeper and more meaningful connections.

One of my favorite quotes about kindness comes from Kurt Vonnegut's book *God Bless you, Mr. Rosewater*:

*"Hello babies. Welcome to Earth. It's hot in the summer and cold in the winter. It's round and wet and crowded. On the outside, babies, you've got a hundred years here. There's only one rule that I know of, babies – "God damn it, you've got to be kind."*

Life does not need to be harder than it already is. Everyone struggles, and the more empathy and kindness that we can show each other, the easier all of our lives will be. I hope that as a Peace choir, sowing seeds of kindness will be part of our regular practice. We are 40-50 living, breathing instruments. When we stand in a room we all have an effect on each other. Every presence is important. Every voice has something to add. When we extend our curiosity to what is going on both inside ourselves and with others, our awareness expands. We can better understand and appreciate our own instrument and we can align it with the other instruments in the room. When we are aware of our vowel shapes and the shapes of others, we can create a unified sound. When we are aware of the tones others are producing, we can harmonize and amplify the beauty of that creation. When we are aware of our own and each other's needs and emotions, we amplify our ability to create peace in the world.

We practice because these are difficult skills that require attention and dedication. Sometimes we get it wrong. And hopefully, we can be kind to ourselves and each other when we do. Hopefully, we can return to awareness and curiosity which will allow us to try something different next time. Practicing these tools each Wednesday will help us make beautiful music, but perhaps more importantly, it will help us to continue developing the skills that will build a more peaceful world.

*Cont'd. from p. 2: Tips for the advanced host*

- ...provide the most comfortable bed in your home to your guest, even if that means you will be sleeping on the couch.\*
- ...prepare a home-cooked meal for your guest (after finding out your guest's food restrictions, of course) or, if you don't like to cook, treat your guest to a meal at one of your favorite restaurants.\*
- ...serenade your guest to sleep with a few songs or pieces of music played and/or sung by you.\*\*

\* Inspired by experiences in cultures where excellent hosting skills are learned at a very young age

\*\* Inspired by a super host in Ashland

Our next story from Ashland comes from Nicole K. (tenor). It should be sung to the tune of "I Left My Heart in San Francisco". And as Nicole says, "With a LOT of apologies to Tony Bennett".

I left my pants in Ashland, Oregon  
Room one three seven, Recital Hall.  
They were hanging on a chair  
At least I think I put them there  
My black dress pants,  
My on-ly pair – I left them there!

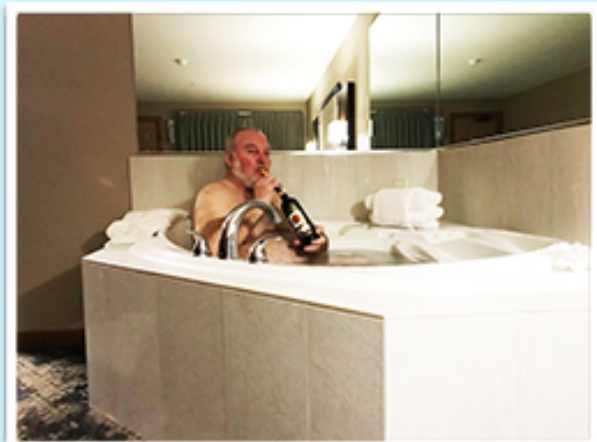
The top's too big, but still I love them  
The cuffs were hemmed with safety pins  
So if you find my pants down in Ashland,  
please mail them back to me – C.O.D.!

(Probably more apologies to Tony Bennett!)

Sandy L. (soprano) sent us this tale of mishaps:

- \* Went to the bathroom before performing. I bend over to flush and oopsie, my scarf falls in.
- \* Went back to hotel room to change clothes. My key didn't work. Asked maid to let me in. Started taking off pants to go to bathroom ... realized I'm in the wrong room! I'm in Nancy Sullivan's room. Yikes!

Our next entry comes in the form of the slightly risqué photo below from Darrell W. (bass), who paid extra for a room with a whirlpool bath, that worked great for 20 minutes, then stopped working for the rest of his stay ...



**Above:**

Note the elegance as Darrell sips his wine through a straw. Note the look of bliss as he enjoys his fully functioning (for a few more minutes) whirlpool bath.

**Below:**

Happy singers ready for the road trip! You go, girls!





## PPC Happenings

**Winter/Spring Session:** Join us **Wednesday evenings, 7-9pm** in the lobby of the Mt. Hood Wing at the Courtyard at Mt. Tabor for our regular weekly rehearsals.

**Reminder: Don't forget to wear your name tags!**

### Sectionals with Kristin

Sectionals are held at 6:30pm every week except for the first week of the month when we have our Happy Half Hours.

3/28: tenors

4/4: Happy Half Hour hosted by the Awesome Altos

4/11: basses

4/18: sopranos

4/25: altos

**First Annual "Theme Party" Potluck**, Sunday, March 25, 5 - 7 pm, in the Fellowship Hall at the Lincoln United Methodist Church, 5125 SE Lincoln. Bring a dish to share and help us decide the themes for our three concerts next year: Fall, Joint Choirs Weekend, and Spring. This is a new

**First Annual "Music Party" Potluck**, Sunday, April 29, 5 - 7 pm, in the Fellowship Hall at the Lincoln United Methodist Church, 5125 SE Lincoln. Bring a dish to share and your song suggestions and help us choose the music we will perform next season.

Everyone is welcome and all are encouraged to attend these potluck meetings. This is your chance to have your voice heard!

**Spring Concert: Saturday, May 12.**

**Location: Unity of Portland, 4525 SE Stark**

We will be singing many of the songs we've been working on so far this season. In addition, we'll be collaborating with Sky in the Road for this concert and will sing some of their songs and have them sing with us on some of our songs.

As always, there will be a bake sale at the intermission and after the concert. Also, this year we will ask each section to bring a basket of goodies to be raffled off as a fund raiser.

The concert flyers will be sent out soon so you can encourage people to attend.

More details on the day's schedule and the songs we'll sing will be coming later.



A bumper sticker spotted recently in a parking lot. We could use this guy's help, don't you think?

## Recipe Corner

*In response to reader request, we have initiated this new feature: a place to share your favorite recipes with the choir. This month we have two submissions: one by request for the cheese wafers Mary T. (alto) brought to Happy Half Hour a while ago, and the second a favorite salad recipe from soprano Carrie S.*

### Mary's Yummy Cheese Wafers

#### Ingredients:

1/2 lb sharp cheddar cheese  
1/4 lb butter  
1-1/3 cup flour (can be gluten free)  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/4 tsp red pepper  
Pecan halves



#### Directions:

- Cut cheese and butter into chunks
- Blend all ingredients (except pecans!) in food processor until you can squeeze the ingredients into a soft ball.
- Divide into 3 balls and roll each into a cylinder, ~1 inch in diameter.
- Wrap cylinders in plastic wrap and put in fridge for at least an hour. (*If there is time, I like to leave them in overnight*)
- When cylinders are very firm, cut them into slices between 1/8" and 1/4" thick.
- Place a pecan half on each slice and bake them in 400 oven for ~8 minutes.
- Spread on cooling racks until they are cool and firm.
- Place a pecan half on top of each.
- Enjoy!

### Carrie's Easy Gorgonzola Salad

#### Ingredients:

Mixed greens or spinach  
Red onion  
Celery  
Tomatoes  
Walnuts  
Cranberries  
Feta or Gorgonzola cheese

#### Directions:

- Toss ingredients together.
- Dress with olive oil, lemon juice and celery salt.



## Opportunities to Sing or Listen

- **Friday, April 13, 7-9pm** Second Friday 60's & 70's Harmony Singers at Friendly House, NW 26th & Thurman St (FREE) This is a Meet-Up group especially for folks who like to sing harmony -- Man in January we were on FIRE! Songbooks provided or join Meet-Up group and download e-version (which includes links to youtube versions of all the songs} <https://www.meetup.com/Song-Circle-Folk-Music-singalongs-from-the-60s-70s/>
- **Friday, April 20, 7-9pm** 3rd Friday Song Circle at Friendly House NW 26th & Thurman St. (FREE) This is a larger group with a variety of musicians (all acoustic). Singing this month is from the "Rise Again" songbook. There are some loaner books available if you don't have one.

## Thank You, PPC!

I'd like to thank everyone who has helped me out with the newsletter by sending me ideas, suggestions, articles and pictures. Your help and support are invaluable and much appreciated.

As I've said before, this is meant to be a community effort, and your participation helps bring that about. Any ideas, suggestions, photos, videos, etc. that you might want to share would be welcome.

Thanks again!

~Barbara B., Editor  
[barbaraPPC@comcast.net](mailto:barbaraPPC@comcast.net)

## Sing ...

*Sing with passion, for singing is love*

*Sing for joy, that pours from your heart*

*Sing for nature, for singing is nature*

*Sing to yourself, and find your peace*

*Sing with others, and share the joy*

*Sing for others, and share the love*



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Thanks to Jeff J. (tenor) for sharing the story of the Estonian Singing Revolution and for being Prof. Jones.