

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.

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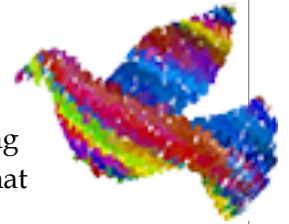
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Peace Village Day Camps for Children

Peace Village day camps teach children from 6-13 a curriculum of mindfulness, media literacy, connecting with nature, and conflict resolution. The curriculum is designed for school, faith and community organizations. The program offers children ways to confront bullying, make wise choices with social media and connects them with the natural world. It also offers children a comprehensive look at the messages and practices of peace from a variety of world traditions, both spiritual and secular.

For more information about the camps, curriculum, or information about starting a Peace Village Camp, email winty@peacevillageinc.org.

New Season, New Location, New Director ... New Beginnings



The past year or so has certainly been a learning process for our choir. We've struggled somewhat with maintaining a positive attitude while we weathered a period of change unprecedented in the history of the choir, and we've made it through. We now have an opportunity to spread our wings and grow into a better, more positive and more active choir. Under the leadership of our new Director, and with the support of current members, the return of many past members, an influx of new faces, and a new location, we have been feeling our way towards a fresh start, with renewed energy, hope and enthusiasm.

There will still be obstacles to overcome (like making the best of the parking situation at our new rehearsal site), but working together, with a sense of purpose and harmony, we can move ahead and make our choir experience better for all of us. I hope we can all concentrate on living up to our mission statement and embodying peace, harmony and unity in our choir and in our lives. Together we can and will make a difference, not just in our own lives, but in the lives of those we touch with our songs.

Welcome to the new, improved and re-energized Portland Peace Choir. May we move forward in peace, harmony and the joy of singing!

~ Barbara B., Editor





Who Said That?

Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.

~ Albert Einstein

If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships – the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together, in the same world, at peace.

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

We must restore hope to young people, help the old, be open to the future, spread love. Be poor among the poor. We need to include the excluded and preach peace.

~ Pope Francis

Peace is not absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.

~ Ronald Reagan

Islam teaches tolerance, not hatred; universal brotherhood, not enmity; peace, and not violence.

~ Pervez Musharraf

I speak not for myself but for those without voice ... those who have fought for their rights ... their right to live in peace, their right to be treated with dignity, their right to equality of opportunity, their right to be educated.

~ Malala Yousafzai

Men often hate each other because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don't know each other; they don't know each other because they can not communicate; they can not communicate because they are separated.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Sing for PEACE ... The Song Is LOVE

Choir member Darrell W. (bass) has made us aware of a worldwide choral celebration of peace that takes place every year as part of the Reykjavik Peace Festival in Iceland. This celebration, which is held yearly on October 9 (John Lennon's birthday), began two years ago. Yoko Ono donated Lennon's song "Love" to the choirs of the world and the Artistic Director of the festival, Ben Parry, wrote choral arrangements of the song for SA, SATB and SSAATTBB, which are available (free of charge) for download on the festival's website (link below) The Icelandic festival's dream is for all choirs around the world to join in singing the song – at the same time – every year, to promote World Peace. The festival invites choirs from around the world to gather in Reykjavik for the festival, and those who can't attend in person are encouraged to record themselves singing the song and send it to the festival's organizers, who will post the recordings on their website

<https://www.reykjavikpeacefestival.com/>

where you can also find free sheet music (under the Repertoire tab) and more information about the event.

Thanks to Darrell's efforts, PPC will be participating in the event this year, and we have been practicing the song on breaks at our weekly rehearsals. We will do some more practicing at this month's Happy Half Hour on Wednesday, October 4 and then record our efforts to be sent in as part of the project. Our goal this year will be to sing the song in unison, then work on learning parts for next year. To view the version that Darrell is proposing we sing, just Google "LOVE by John Lennon".

In addition, Darrell is inviting us to meet him at Director Park in Portland at 9:00am on Monday, October 9th so we can sing the song at 10:00, at the same time as the rest of the world. Please let Darrell know if you are interested in participating and want more information: You can call him at 503-359-4596 (home) or 503-679-3928 (cell), or email him at (winterbourned1948@gmail.com).

Please join us for the recording session at rehearsal on October 4, and come to Director Park on Monday, October 9 (arrive 9-9:30, singing at 10:00 am) to be a part of this inspirational worldwide action for peace.

**REYKJAVIK
PEACE
FESTIVAL**

“HOW-TOs” OF A NON-AUDITIONED CHOIR

by Diane T. (alto)

In some ways it's easier to be in an auditioned choir because it is clearer what is expected and where you fit ... and there is probably less turnover. How does a group of individuals who may not know each other very well, or at all, with different abilities and knowledge, come together? The answer is even more important in a “Peace Choir” in order that we may be sure we are practicing what we preach!

Whenever I start a new contemplation, I like to go to how others do it, to get ideas and a frame of reference. At the end, I will list a number of links of other choirs I found which may provide ideas about other subjects for our choir. The most detailed “*Guidelines & Procedures*” I found is from the **Australian Rugby Choir**; the document has eighteen chapters, seven attachments and an impressive history. Their first performance was at Bruce Stadium with their 80 members. They perform weekly and perhaps we could borrow a couple of their ideas, which include singing at funerals, citizenship ceremonies and at a war memorial. Another choir I was impressed by was the **Touch of Class** choir in Vancouver, WA. They do four concerts that focus on world peace and raise funds for the food bank, the homeless and the YWCA, among others. This year's theme was “**There Will Be Peace In The World**”. One member says about the experience of singing in the choir, “*Our bodies connect and our minds connect. It's like group meditation...probably the ultimate cooperative activity*”.



Another choir has a blog with a list called “*How To Be A Good Choir Member*”, which offers some very good advice. The points that I found most relevant were:

1. **Trust:** It can be uncomfortable to be in the middle of a learning process ... give yourself up to it and trust that it will come out right in the end.
2. **Consideration of Others:** Have respect for yourself and the choir as a whole; don't be a prima donna, help out new members. If they're struggling, stand next to them and help them out gently.
3. **Listening Skills:** *Everyone can sing* and **hearing** is more important than **production**. Use self-awareness, listen to others and, of course, to the director.
4. **Sense of the Whole:** Hear the harmonies working, check the blend, get the volume, balance and feel a part of a creative team – a living organism.
5. **Sense of Humor:** Perhaps the most important aspect? Find the humor in the person next to you constantly singing the wrong note. Relax, be playful, make it fun. After all, although you take the whole choir thing seriously, *it's only a bit of singing!*

I remember being very embarrassed by my father singing loudly and off-key in church. Life has been a learning experience with many Homer Simpson “*Doh!*” moments of realizing that maybe I should think before I speak. Not every thought needs to be expressed! I have been reprimanded by other singers for singing a **G** instead of an **E** in music we had only recently received. My “deer in the headlights” look helped her realize she had gone too far and she apologized. Sometimes, **reaction** can be as important as **action**. If you are inquiring to help your own understanding of what you should be singing, then go ahead. If you can't say it in a helpful, **non-judgmental** way, maybe it shouldn't be said? If you hear someone making comments from an unhelpful place, speak up!



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Sometimes, we get caught up unconsciously “mirroring” things that we might have seen or heard and we just need someone to bring it to our attention. Sectionals may be a better place for fine tuning than at practice. I know of some people who only want to sing their own version of what's on the written page. I think there's room for everyone and if we **trust**, it's my experience that a choir of a sufficient number of people always sounds beautiful!

A while ago I made a conscious intention to let go of perfectionism and to always see things as a process. Over time, I grew to embrace the adventure of a new undertaking. I let go of most list making. If I can't keep it in my head, it's not really that important. A book by Anne Wilson Schaef, *Living in Process: Basic Truths for Living the Path of the Soul*, was a lot of help in re-shaping how I approached a lot of things. One particular undertaking which involved my designing & making costumes for a parent-written co-op school play would have been a lot less stress if I had embraced this at the time. They turned out beautiful but if I'd just lightened up, fewer feathers would have been ruffled & I would have enjoyed it more. Embracing diversity *in all ways* is a good thing! A choir full of individuals who have let go of perfectionism, making relationship a priority, will find the right balance of how to engage cooperatively in beautiful song!

For more information, check out the links below:

The Australian Rugby Choir: rugbychoir.org.au/get/files/3202.pdf

Touch of Class Chorale: <http://touchofclasschorale.com/>

“How to be a good choir member” from the Spirits Call Choir blog: http://www.spiritscallchoir.ca/Singing_workshops_with_Chris_Rowbury

PPC Happenings

Fall Session: Join us **Wednesday evenings, 7-9pm**

in the lobby of the Mt. Hood Wing at the Courtyard at Mt. Tabor for our regular rehearsals.

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

On **Wednesday, October 4** we will have our first **Happy Half Hour** of the season, hosted by the Steering Committee. Join us at **6:30pm** for great food and great company. It's a wonderful opportunity to get to know your fellow singers.

Please Note: Since there is no kitchen available to us in our new space, we ask everyone to bring your own plates, cups and utensils for future HHHs. Those who bring food will also need to bring their own serving dishes and utensils.

Sectionals with Kristin

We have resumed our regular schedule of sectionals, held at 6:30pm every week except for the first week of the month when we do Happy Half Hours. Coming up are:

10/11: tenors
10/18: basses
10/25: sopranos

Saturday Market Gig: Saturday, 10/21, 2-3:30 pm.

Mark your calendars. More info on songs and attire TBA.

New! Fall Concert: Saturday, 11/18, time & location TBA. Save the date! We're going to try doing a shorter concert in the Fall in addition to our regular one in the Spring. More details as they become available.

Suggestion Box

This is an opportunity for you, our readers, to tell us your ideas for ways to improve our choir.

Please send your suggestion to:
barbaraPPC@comcast.net

We can include your name with your suggestion or keep it anonymous, your choice.

Suggestions:

How about letting us wear our choir T-shirts for performances instead of "concert whites"?

I overheard a comment that when we're marching onstage in concert whites, we look like we all shopped at Goodwill and bought the wrong size. Our T-shirts look much better and also act as advertising for the choir!

Quiet, please! It's nice to chat to friends you only see at rehearsals, but not while the Director is trying to talk, please. All the chatter can be very distracting and make it hard to hear.

Less talking, more singing, please! I enjoy singing a fun song at the end of practice!
 ~ A. Nony Mouse



Choral Singing Promotes Mindfulness

As we've mentioned in a series of articles in early issues of the newsletter, there are many recognized health benefits associated with singing in general and singing in a choir in particular. New research out of Ireland suggests that one reason choral singing is so good for us, both physically and psychologically, may be that it helps promote mindfulness. Published in the journal *Psychology of Music*, the study reports what the researchers term a specific "choir effect".

Participants, all members of community choirs in urban Ireland, filled out questionnaires designed to measure their state of mindfulness – the ability to stay fully present in the moment – both before and after rehearsals. Later in the same week, the same choir members were asked to fill out the same questionnaires before and after listening to a 30-minute long recording of choral music by composer Gabriel Fouré. Analysis of the questionnaires showed that while listening to choral music did significantly increase participants' level of mindfulness, actually singing the music did so to a far greater degree.

Many studies have shown that practicing mindfulness can reduce stress, improve focus and concentration, and alleviate anxiety. And the researchers believe that singing in a choir, which requires focused concentration that enables singers to set aside the worries and stresses of their everyday lives, can serve as both a meditative and social activity that promotes physical health while enhancing mental and emotional health as well.



Somehow It's Not Enough . . .

Food for Thought by Nicole K. (tenor)

I was sitting at New Seasons the other day, having coffee with Al and Sheila. The TV news was showing pictures of Hurricane Maria heading toward the East Coast. We began relating stories of friends and relatives living in the region and wondering how they could cope with another category 5 hurricane.

"My college friends are military retired and have lived in Houston for years." I said. "Their kids all live in the area. It will take more than a hurricane to make them move."

Al related, "My cousin lives near Tampa Bay, loves to sail, has season tickets for the Buccaneers and you couldn't pry him out of Tampa. But Irma took off part of his roof and destroyed most of his yard. They were out of power for almost a week."

"It's funny how your point of view can change when a tragedy becomes more personal." Sheila remarked. "I really feel for the people on TV and might send some money to help; but I don't really lose sleep over their situation. But when it's my relatives - or me - it really makes me want to get up and do something."

Walking home, I thought about another situation. Earlier this year, I was outraged when the first immigration ban was such a fiasco. I was proud of the people, especially attorneys, who showed up at airports to protest and help people caught in the melee. Good on them!

Later, the news had footage of I.C.E. agents randomly stopping people and asking for their identification papers - in Pioneer Courthouse Square. Outrageous, I thought! This can't be happening in America - in Oregon - in Portland. Talking with others, we speculated on what we would do if we were stopped. My friend Yoshi overheard our conversation.

"You know," she said, "I have lived and worked in Portland for 15 years. But I am still a Japanese citizen. I have a permanent green card, but I never carry it. I wouldn't carry my Japanese passport or my Social Security card around and I don't drive so I don't have a drivers license. All I have is my bus pass and credit cards."

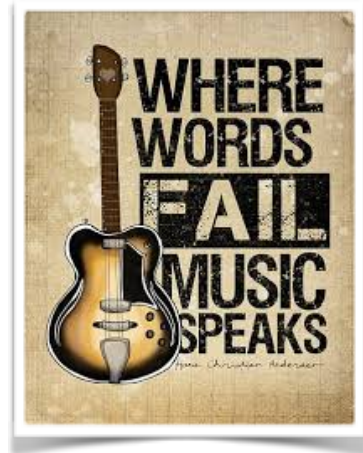
"When Trump started this talk about deporting illegal aliens, it bothered me." She went on: "But I'm Japanese, not Mexican. And I'm not illegal. I saw that incident on the news and they said it was happening in other parts of Portland. Suddenly, for the first time in 15 years, I felt afraid. I actually began looking over my shoulder and when I'd see two men in suits talking together and watching people, I would get chills and wonder if they were watching me. I became anxious to take the bus downtown - something I've done almost daily for years."

That really hit me. I've known Yoshi for years. She's always cheerful and has a positive outlook on life. What is happening in America today is causing a real change in my friend. Somehow, it no longer seems enough to sit around and complain about changes that are happening. I feel like I need to do something more than sign petitions, or carry a banner in an occasional march. But what?

Peace can't just be the absence of conflict - it has to include freedom and justice - for all. As a college student, I went to Alabama and worked in a voter registration project and taught in a freedom school. We were fired up! We were changing the world! But suddenly everything we worked for is sliding backwards. So what can I do now - what can *we* do now? Or do we all just sit by and talk about it?

A message from the editor ~ Barbara B.

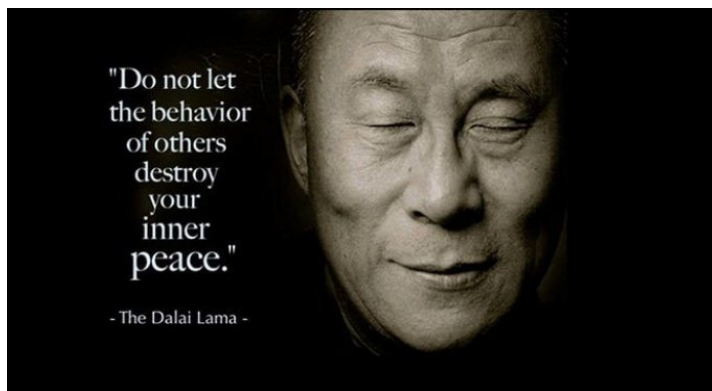
I would like to express my thanks to everyone who stepped up to help me with this issue of the newsletter: Susan and Darrell W., Diane T., Nicole K. and Pam W. (and A. Nony Mouse) all sent me articles, ideas, and suggestions to help me get this one out, and without them it wouldn't have happened. This issue is what I would like to see the newsletter be: truly a community effort. Any and all ideas, articles and suggestions are welcome and appreciated!



Opportunities to Sing or Listen

Stressed out? Do yourself a favor! Relax and sing some fun songs with a group of fun people. A couple of hours and you're smiling again!

- **October 9 – Meet at 9am, sing at 10am:** Join members of the PPC and other singers at Director Park, 815 SW Park Ave. in downtown Portland, to celebrate John Lennon's birthday at the same time as choral groups worldwide by singing Lennon's song, "Love", which was donated by Yoko Ono to the choirs of the world, in an effort to promote world peace. Organized by our own Darrell W. (bass), this will be a casual and fun way to symbolize our support for peace efforts around the world.
- **October 13 – 7–9pm** 2nd Friday 60's and 70's Harmony Singers at Friendly House , NW 26th & Thurman St. (**FREE**) This is a Meet-up Group especially for people who like to sing harmony! You don't have to join – just show up! Several PPC members have been attending these sessions, but we'd STILL like to see more altos and sopranos! Songbooks are provided or join the Meet-Up group and download the e-version (which includes links to youtube videos of all songs!) <https://www.meetup.com/Song-Circle-Folk-Music-singalongs-from-the-60s-70s/>
- **October 15 – (Note new time: 1:30–3:30pm)** Portland Sings! with Mark Bosnian in the coffeehouse at TaborSpace. Cost: \$5-10 sliding scale. Go to <http://portlandsings.com/> for location address and digital songbook download. Bring your laptop or e-devices, or you can print a copy or look on with a friend. Check out the songbook on the website for the variety of songs we sing.
- **October 20 – 7–9pm** 3rd Friday Song Circle at Friendly House (**FREE**) This is a larger group with a variety of musicians (all acoustic). Singing this month is from the "Rise Again" songbook! Bring your own copy if you have one – we do have some loaner copies available to share. Use the info link from 2nd Friday's Meet-Up page (above) for address, map.



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