

The Appoggiatura

All the Chorale News that will fit

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2020 was a good year for me

Dear West Shore Chorale Members and Friends of the Chorale,

2020 was a good year for me!

Yes, I know the past year was a terrible one with a world-wide pandemic and domestic political firestorms and I don't mean to minimize these things, but being an optimist I like to look at what good happened during the year....So I want to share some of the good things that have happened to me and maybe it will spark some remembrances of your own.

2020 started with the Chorale going full steam and it's hard to remember, but we gave two concerts at the end of February, and the beginning of March - all American program...two good concerts at two different churches. Mike directing all the hard music and the easy stuff I assigned to myself. :)

Then the roof fell in. We had to stay home and all those other regulations. But staying home meant that we had a great deal of time. We don't often get large, uninterrupted chunks of time to use any way we want. Here's some of the things I did with my extra time:

I started giving piano lesson on line to adults who have never taken lessons before and so far in 2020, I've given 139 lessons. What a joy to see these folks learn a new skill. I was able to start up the "Appoggiatura" again, the newsletter of the Chorale, and in 2020, we put out 25 issues and oh what fun that was learning things about members of the Chorale I never knew before, and seeing photos of their homes, and travels. And making a Chorale cookbook and a virtual Christmas concert. (PS - all issues, cookbook, and concert are on our website.)

Zoom has played a big part in my life. I take part in a weekly Zoom party that includes such an interesting and intelligent group: a former NASA scientist, a former engineer, a doctor, a former nurse, former member of the FBI, a former air traffic controller, computer specialist, a former labor relations specialist, project manager/Editor of a book company, an artist, and a couple other professional musicians. What a diverse group!!! Each week we have discussions of books, movies, obscure news events, and much more. The only thing we don't get into is politics. I got to know these people better than ever, and my admiration and respect for each one has grown greatly.

And then there was Zoom family events. My family lives in the Cleveland area, Youngstown area, Columbus area, SW Ohio area, South Florida area, Texas, and some members are off to various colleges. So we rarely get to see one another. In non-virus years we have a picnic in the summer and Christmas party but it's never the whole group and you never really get a chance to talk to anyone. We have been having regular family Zooms and I have never felt closer to my family. I learned so much about each person, especially the younger members, and was able to keep up with all the grand nephews and nieces, etc. My family ranges in age from 9 to 86 and each person is interesting. This was a definite positive result of the pandemic. We had time.

And that led me to a renewed interest in genealogy. I started a family tree and research years ago but sort of just left it hang. Now I'm digging deeper, adding more and more names to the "tree" and encountering people I never even knew existed. I have the time.

The pandemic has also sparked an interest in learning of to cook. When I was single (long, long ago) I sort of knew how to put some homemade things on the table. But now, with the numerous cooking shows on TV and YouTube and the TIME to do it, I've really renewed an interest. This will be ongoing long after the pandemic ends.

The interest in food meant that I actually invited guests (safely) and when it was nice weather I met many friends outside for socially distanced lunches a variety of restaurants, trying to do my part to help keep that industry going.

Speaking of friends, the extra time made it possible to email and Zoom various friends that I haven't seen or heard from in a long time. Many students who are out there doing wonderful things and even classmates from high school and college. I've also had the time to read more books than I usually do in a year, watch many more movies, start practicing the piano again, get the West Shore Chorale orchestra library more organized with Ray's help, start learning Spanish (I've not done well with this,) get closets organized, get the freezer organized, and really good news for me is that I went from a walker to a cane and now to just my feet, now able to drive again, go swimming again, have lots of excellent take out food, get some better hearing aids, enjoyed having groceries delivered, and reliving the great flash mob of 2010. (Can you imagine over 137,000 views.)

My immediate family is healthy and doing well. Judy enjoys the computer which allows her to read, keep up with current events, and correspond with friends. Misty has a new job at Hastings Montessori school, and loves it. Being involved in a theatrical organization it was obvious that Stefan has been off and on again at Playhouse Square but in his off times has done many home projects, plus he will be going back to work full time again soon, which means Playhouse Square must be optimistic about the spring/summer/fall seasons... and Max has been able to go to school in person this fall with no major health problems. And he is a teen. How fortunate to have a safe and healthy family.

In many ways I think we were "sent" the pandemic to realign our lives, make us slow down, make us do more with our families, make us read more, learn more, communicate more with old and new friends. For me 2020 was a good year. I feel blessed. How about you? What good things happened to you this year? Let me know.

I hope this brought a little cheer and optimism to you on the last day of the year. Let's have hope for next year.

My best wishes to you all for a singing new year.

JD

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