



The Captain's Log

Newsletter of the Stockton Portsman

November 2025 - Issue #75



Unwrap the Harmony.....Unwrap the Holidays.....

Suddenly the days are shorter, the nights are longer, the air turns chilly and it's time to make soup instead of salad. This time of year, can be magical for most, but tricky to navigate for others. Some traditions are no more, where and with whom you will share the days with may change. The picture of friends and family together around the table with the big turkey on the platter and happy faces all around can bring smiles or tears. There is one thing that remains constant during these weeks, and that is the songs of the season. No matter how YOU anticipate the Holidays, the value of music can help in many ways.

Music can warm our hearts and lift our spirits, yet at the same time invokes strong memories of our past experiences. Music MOVES us at a time we may become numb to all the hype. When music fills your space, things change. Feelings of joy and comfort, releasing endorphins, can lift our mood. Childhood memories and thoughts of people and moments link us back to what we cherish most.

Singing connects us to each other.... Tuesday night rehearsals, sing outs, community events, bring us together for a common purpose. Not only are our voices blended, but our sense of belonging also reminds us that, as a Portsman, we do have our "people". Sometimes we just have to look beyond the dining room table to find each other. Songs can help ground us, help us find a bit of peace amid the hustle and craziness that the days can bring, sometimes feeling like a runaway train. Singing will literally force us to breath, physically hold us in our own personal space and quiet our minds of the long to do list, if even only for the length of one song.

We will Unwrap the Harmony at our show on December 13th. We will Unwrap the Holidays with our Portsmen Tree at the Festival of Trees, performances for various community events and our Tuesday night rehearsals.

As I write this, the day before Halloween, I'm looking at the weeks ahead with a bit of dread, a bit of hope. As the "Holidays" approach, I become nostalgic for the holidays of my past and being reminded of the significant losses in my life that all occurred during this time of year. Although I will not be part of a Norman Rockwell painting, I am grateful for the Gift of Music that I share with each of you. May we all be carried gently through the weeks ahead and give thanks for the wonderful opportunities' music brings us.

Sending Love Notes,
nance

Musical Director's Message:

By Bill Litz

On my way to a ballroom dance lesson recently, I found myself driving up I-5 and spinning down one of those deep thought rabbit holes, thinking about what we humans do and maybe what we're meant to do.

Once we figure out how to survive, to find food, build shelter, and reproduce, we naturally turn our attention to something deeper: we create.

We learn to work with nature. We move faster from place to place. We build structures, make art, and play sports. We bend light to make color that stirs emotion. We shape sound waves to grab attention or move the heart. And in the process, we strengthen our bodies and voices, becoming better instruments of creation.

Some of what we create lasts: buildings, roads, sculptures, paintings, things that can stand for generations. Those take skill, control, and patience to craft something that time itself will judge.

Other creations are more fleeting. Their success exists only in the moment. So we practice recreating those moments, dancing with rhythm and grace, or shaping sound into music that lives only while we're making it.

Why do we do that? Why this drive to create, especially something as temporary as music? Is it to attract others? To communicate? To prove we can master the uncontrollable? Or maybe it's just what being alive is all about.

As singers, we take something completely invisible, air, and turn it into connection. With just pitch, rhythm, and words, we can stir hearts and tell stories. The more we develop our skills, the more often we can recreate those magical moments and share them with others.

Our rehearsals mirror that same journey. We start with raw materials (notes, words, breath) and through practice and intention, we shape them into beauty together. Singing in unison builds trust and connection. And when all the parts come together, every chord we ring becomes proof of what can happen when individual effort blends into something far greater than the sum of its parts.

As we head into the season ahead, remember that every time you show up and sing, your part of this timeless story of creation. You're taking what's ordinary, air and time, and turning it into something extraordinary: harmony that lifts others, heals hearts, and celebrates what's best about being human.

Because art, in the end, is how we remind the world, and ourselves, that we're alive. Let's keep creating, keep connecting, and keep breathing life into every song we share.



October Birthday Celebrations

Al Wolter – 11/7

Bob Yater – 11/23

Tune Struck

As expected, the month of October has been quiet for Tune Struck, the thing is – it's been quieter than desired. Bob and Melinda finally made it to Europe, which was a good thing, but getting home he has suffered some health issues that prevented him from singing with the Portsmen in Fresno.

There was some understandable lack of communication, since we hadn't met together, about singing Saturday night at Hospitality Suites, but with Bob's absence, it was moot (plus the Suites were not that well known).

Still the month of November has a number of performance opportunities and depending on Bob's availability, we will be sharing our striking tunes with many.

On a very sad note, we were informed that our good friend Austin Spurlock passed. Our hearts go out to his wife Crystal and all those that will miss him.

In Memory of Our Friend, Austin Spurlock (June 25, 1956 – October 16, 2025)

The Stockton Portsmen remember with gratitude and affection our friend Austin Spurlock, whose warm spirit and love of music touched many in our community. Though not a current member of the chorus, Austin generously stepped in to sing with us on several occasions, sharing his voice and enthusiasm whenever the need arose.

His easy smile, willingness to help, and genuine kindness made him a joy to sing beside and a friend to all who met him. We are thankful for the harmony he added both musically and personally during his time with us.

As we move into this season of gratitude and song, we hold Austin and his family close in our hearts. His presence reminded us that harmony isn't just what we sing it's how we care for one another.

Rest in peace, Austin. Your kindness and music will be remembered.

Pictures of Austin Spurlock



Bring Harmony to Your Next Event

Book the Stockton Portsmen or One of Our Quartets!

A mixed-voice a cappella chorus celebrating 70 years of harmony in the Central Valley.

Looking to add warmth, charm, and polished harmony to your next event? Whether you're planning a lively celebration or a heartfelt ceremony, the Stockton Portsmen Chorus or one of our talented quartets will bring unforgettable music tailored to your occasion.

We perform at:

- Community Concerts & Festivals
- Grand Openings & Ribbon Cuttings
- Memorial Services & Celebrations of Life
- **Holiday Tree Lightings & Caroling Events**
- Weddings, Anniversaries & Private Celebrations
- Corporate Gatherings & Award Ceremonies
- Patriotic & Civic Events (**National Anthems**, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, etc.)
- Senior Living Communities & Community Outreach Programs
- **Singing Valentines & Special Deliveries (Birthdays, Anniversaries, etc.)**

Flexible Performance Lengths:

Our typical sets range from 20 to 40 minutes, but we're happy to tailor the timing to suit your specific program or audience needs.

Contact Us:

Email: Info@StocktonPortsmen.org

Phone: (209) 881-SING (7464)

**We'd love to bring harmony to your special event.
Reach out today and let's create something memorable together.**



The Stockton Portsmen
Barbershop Chorus

PROUDLY PRESENTS:

Unwrap the Harmony

December 13, 2025
Saturday @ 2:30PM

Free Admission!

Donations Welcome

Your support helps us share harmony
throughout Stockton and beyond!

Zion Lutheran Church,
808 W. Porter Ave,
Stockton, CA

www.stocktonportsmen.org
(209) 881-SING (7464)

THE HOMETOWN Heart & Beat

the annual Cabaret Show presented by



Saturday November 15
6:00 p.m. (doors open at 5:30)

American Legion Hall Post 119
4561 Greenstone Road / Placerville, Ca 95667

TICKETS \$15 Adults \$5 Students

Contact Howard

president@goldrushchorus.org or call: (530) 647-6513 to Venmo

Tickets purchased in advance can be picked up at Will Call.



JOIN US for camaraderie and singing at the **AFTERGLOW**

Denny's • 3446 Coach Lane, Cameron Park

Mission Statement:

Provide the greater Stockton area with quality Barbershop chorus and quartet music and wholesome family entertainment, while encouraging every individual of good character who loves to sing the opportunity to find their place with us.

Weekly Chapter Meetings:

Location: **Zion Lutheran Church** – 808 W Porter Avenue (Stockton, CA)

Tuesdays: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM (**Grace Hall**)

VLQ: 8:00 PM – 8:30 PM (except board meeting nights)

***Rehearsals may be held at an alternate location from time to time
please double-check the details.***

See calendar for up-to-date information:

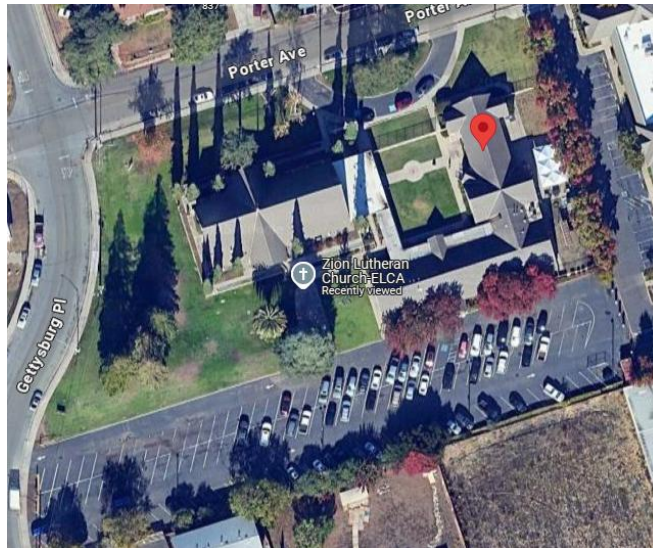
[Click here to access the Stockton Portsmen Calendar](#)

Website:

<http://www.stocktonportsmen.org/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/194542747456>



Directions:

- From Pacific Avenue go west on Porter Way, turn south on Gettysburg Pl then turn east into the Zion Lutheran Church parking lot.
- From Pershing Avenue go east on W. Swain Road, turn north on Gettysburg Pl then turn east into Zion Lutheran Church parking lot.

****SAVE THE DATE****

2025

- 11/2 Marin Chapter 70th Anniversary Fall Show (San Rafael, CA)
- 11/11 Veterans Day Ceremony (10:30 AM–11:30 AM, Civic Auditorium)
- 11/15 Gold Rush Chorus Cabaret (Placerville, CA)
- 12/6 Festival of Trees (10:00 AM–12:00 PM, Micke Grove) – Chorus
- 12/6 Festival of Trees (10:00 AM–12:00 PM, Micke Grove) – VLQ
- 12/13 Stockton Portsmen “Unwrap the Harmony” Holiday Show (2:30 PM, Zion Lutheran Church)
- 12/14 Friends of the Fox Performance
- 12/19 Philomathean Christmas - 11:30 AM

2026

- 1/13-18 BHS Midwinter Convention (Pasadena, CA)
- 2/14 Singing Valentine’s
- TBD 2026 Coaching Session
- TBD 2026 Late February – Novice Contest
- 4/25 Stockton Portsmen Spring Show (TBD)

Barbershop Links:

Barbershop Harmony Society <http://www.barbershop.org/>

Far Western District <https://www.farwesterndistrict.org/>

Mixed Barbershop Harmony Association <https://www.mixedbarbershop.org/>

Voices of California (VoCal) <https://www.voicesofcalifornia.org/>