



The Captain's Log

Newsletter of the Stockton Portsmen

March 2022 - Issue #32

President's Message:

By Al Wolter



THE VIEW FROM THE HELM

STEERING THROUGH TROUBLED WATER – ISSUE 3

Steerageway is the term for having enough forward motion to be able to maneuver your vessel as you desire. With everything that has occurred over the past couple of years, while we have not really been adrift, we have been closer to floundering (struggling to move and proceeding clumsily).

As I write this, I have a heavy heart - as we are getting ready to formally say goodbye to one of our own. John Eilers was more than just a member of the Baritone Section and a past Chapter Office holder. He was a source of humor and good will, and our host for the Chapter Picnic over the past decade. His passing shows me the dangerous waters we still navigate, not that he succumbed to the virus, but his treatment and recovery were impacted by the isolation the restrictions we have been forced to deal with.

As the days go forward, it is my wish that those that have found their way back to us to remember John will continue to find their way to sing with us more. The fact that we have been able to get together at Bill & Sue's has been helpful in keeping enough forward momentum to dodge the rocks that fill our path.

And while there are some disappointing things, like having to offload selling Valentines and the Ice Cream Social, the fact that we had two requests for a Valentine and a foursome was able to deliver them was good news.

The Far Western District and our brethren up the road will be hosting the Spring Prelim Contests here at McNair High School. The Music Team has seriously considered having us sing, and some of us will be asked to help put it on with setting up risers, manning doors, and the like. Our friend Richard Lund is the Chairman and he plans to spilt any proceeds between VoCal, GVC, and us – could be a very good thing for our pocketbook.

I want to thank all of you who have continued to keep the ship moving with enough momentum to steer through these troubled waters. I look forward to when we are once again in open waters with the steerageway of strong breeze blowing us on to new and beautiful shores.

Musical Director's Message: **By Bill Litz**

What a shock....all of a sudden the Stockton Portsmen are considering going to contest!!!! That is a game changer in respect to how we need to practice. Time is an extremely limited resource that we need to manage. Both you as chorus members and I as a director need to have a better understanding of that.

Your VP of Music and Performance found a short video that inspired me to look more closely at our rehearsals. Take a few minutes to watch [Deke Sharon – Maximizing Rehearsal Time](#).

Being a social organization that houses a chorus, puts us in a position that sometimes lets us socialize and not focus on the musical aspect of the Portsmen. Our weekly meeting used to run from 7:00 to 9:30 followed by some tag singing or a trip to a restaurant. During our COVID lockdown, singing outdoors limited our time from 6 to 7:30. It seems most people are happier with that shorter, earlier time frame (let your board know if that is not your desire). For the last year when we didn't have much performance opportunity, that worked fine since we weren't as worried about having music ready to perform. To create more social time, we are planning quarterly get togethers/parties so that should allow us to have more focus on the music on Tuesday nights.

As we work toward contest and performing more this summer and a fall show let's try to implement better chorus rehearsal habits.

- Individual practice between rehearsal not only helps you develop your singing skills and resilience; it helps us make better music with less group rehearsal time
- Start on time...which means be early if you want to chit-chat and say hello
- Warm up on the way – most of us have been talking all day so the warming up of the voice isn't a necessity. But the warming up of the brain and being ready to sing and perform is important
- Things that we used to try to do in warm up should get worked into times when we are working on songs...tying the craft to the music and performance
- Craft like vowels, rhythm, intervals, pitch match and sight reading need to be a part of our weekly strategy so we can be better musicians and learn faster and be less frustrated
- Lots of singing and less talking – I'm happy about the fact that the Portsmen do a lot of singing during rehearsals rather than talking about singing (and everything else). But it is important to make comments short and about the music. Save the socialization for after the rehearsal. Learn the music as written or planned and save the tweaks and discussion of that until between rehearsals
- Announcements and business should be at the end of the meeting – after the rehearsal is done. Anything that can be handled or discussed using eMail should.
- End on time – it's only fair that everyone should be able to manage their schedule
- Make opportunities to stay and sing tags and songs after the meeting or during the week
- Have a TODO list to help you practice during the week. I'll work on getting the next agenda out sooner and I would encourage you to work on things that you know are problems for you

- Reflect on the rehearsal. Let me know what things you liked...and what you didn't like. We can adjust to make rehearsals a fun learning experience for all

I hope that we can find the balance of work and fun. But I also hope that we can complete our work on songs; that we can polish them to the best that our skills allow so we can deliver performances that we are proud of and that our audiences appreciate.

Stockton Portsmen Show (approximately 1990)

Can you name every member of the chorus?



Weekly Chapter Meetings:

Location: Zion Lutheran Church – 808 W. Porter Avenue – Stockton – CA

Tuesdays: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

See calendar for up-to-date information:

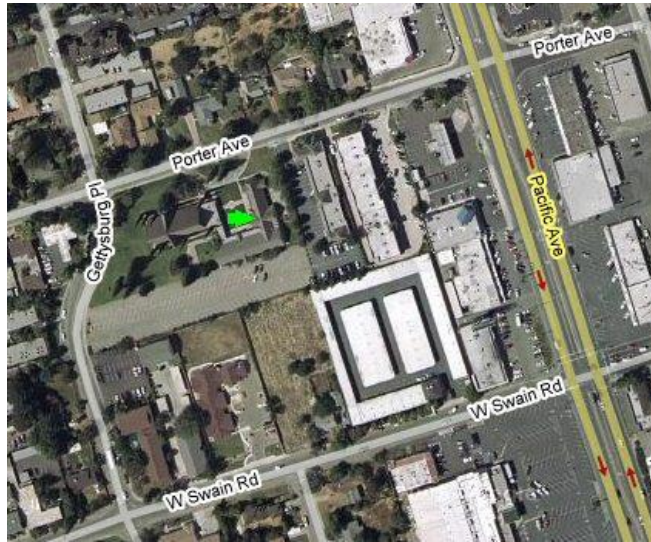
[Click here to access the Stockton Portsmen Calendar](#)

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 Rd turn north on Gettysburg Pl then turn east into Zion Lutheran Church parking lot.

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.

Hire Us:

Book us for your next event:

- Community Concerts
- Fairs
- Festivals
- Grand Openings
- Holiday Tree Lightings
- Memorial Services
- National Anthem
- Singing Valentines
- Summer Concerts

Performance times usually range from 20 to 40 minutes but can be adjusted up or down to fit your specific program. Contact us by email or phone below for a proposal:

- Info@StocktonPortsmen.org
- Phone (209) 881-SING (7464)

****SAVE THE DATE****

- 5/13 – 5/14 FWD Spring Prelims, Chorus & Quartet Festival
- 5/30 Veterans Memorial Day Service at Cherokee Memorial Park
- 7/3 – 7/10 International Convention (Charlotte, NC) [Link to see jam-packed schedule](#)
- 10/12 FWD Fall Convention (Fresno, CA)

Barbershop Links

- Barbershop Harmony Society <http://www.barbershop.org/>
- Far Western District <https://www.farwesterndistrict.org/>
- Mixed Barbershop Harmony Association <https://www.mixedbarbershop.org/>
- VoCal Voices of California <http://voicesofcalifornia.org/>