



The Captain's Log

Newsletter of the Stockton Portsman
May 2021 - Issue #25

President's Message: by Nancy Hennefer

Ahhhhhhh... the world is tilting back... on its own time, but there will be a rose blooming out of that bud.

No point in rehashing the obvious and now tiresome events during these last 12+ months, but I do want to acknowledge the passing of our bass, Nick Adams, the move of Jimmy Carter to Texas, and the news that both Ron Spohn and Derick Sturke will be scaling back their time at Portsman rehearsals. Many of you have gone through trying times, but we are grateful for the fact that we seemed to have, for the most part, weathered the storm.

Thank you to everyone who responded to my email on the future of our chorus. I have a renewed faith due to the positive affirmations some of you shared, and by the return of our rehearsals! And as a bonus, our beautiful tenor Roberta Keith has decided to return, at least for now!

We are gearing up for the Cherokee Memorial Day ceremony, which has been a wonderful event. News is that FWD's own Chuck Roots will be this year's Keynote speaker. We are also on a serious quest to pursue our invite to participate in the 80th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor on board the famous Arizona. News on that will be updated as soon as I hear anything.

The Stockton Portsman Barbershop Chorus is now listed as an Amazon Smile non-profit. This means that with any items purchased on Amazon, our chorus will receive a small profit. Go to Amazon Smile to sign up, which will give you the option of choosing your charity of choice. I will send exact instructions via email, but it's an easy way to add to the kitty, and the ability to partially fund our potential trip to Hawaii! Tell friends and family! Spread the word!

Last of all, comments came up at the last rehearsal regarding our diverse attitudes and thoughts on various issues... but the bottom line is that MUSIC transcends it all, and we are truly brothers and sisters in harmony.

Sending love notes,
Nance, President

Musical Director's Message: by Bill Litz

It has been a while since I've written something for the newsletter!!! March of 2020 to be exact – 14 months. I looked back at that newsletter and thought the message I wrote then was perfectly applicable for today, so just go back and read that article for your inspiration this month (seriously...it was a good read for me). But I won't let you off that easy 😊

I haven't gone that long without a performance or some sort in my whole life. But I did stay busy.

- Learned to cook since going out was impossible – was close to successful in gaining the COVID-19 pounds
- Disc golfed at least a couple times a week – I should be better after all that practice
- Worked on relationships – spending closer moments with family and smaller groups of friends
- Experienced music in a new way by being a beginner ukulele player
- Cherished the times that I did get to sing with my quartet during different stages of lock down
- Created a back yard with a French Café atmosphere (come visit sometime)
- Appreciated the skills of being able to work from home without skipping a beat

I was a little worried that the resilience we have in being able to make the best out of our lives might make me – or you – not have a need to come back to sing with the Portsmen. Every time that we tried to get together, the response of the membership was underwhelming. There was big talk about wanting to get together, but the inconvenience of the masked outdoor environment or the fears of COVID seemed to hold everyone back, each in their own way.

My list of new experiences and accomplishments during the COVID downtime made me realize I am capable of more things than I allow myself to attain. It just takes a vision and the wiliness to get a little uncomfortable. We will never be able to do something new until we risk failing at doing it. I can cook some amazing things, but I've also experiences some "failed it" meals along the way. I can throw a disc sidearm (I can also retrieve it from the water). Each of my accomplishments came by trying something new and failing a little along the way.

Another concern I had and heard voiced from some chorus members would be that getting back together needed to be different – more exciting than it had been. I believe that in our chorus environment we learn from each other and we challenge each other. We need to find joy in exhibiting artistry in the things we already know. We need to risk failure on the things we are not as accomplished at to ultimately be better musicians.

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In our first rehearsals back, I can see how much I've missed the simple act of singing together. As my quartet sang during the lockdown, I appreciated every note I got to sing with them. I challenge each of you to be leaders in getting your voices in shape and being outstanding chorus members by knowing your music better. Enjoy what you've missed about singing together. But also take a step of risk – Identify something you wish you could do better – use me, or various videos or internet training, or a member of the chorus to help achieve your goal. Some ideas might be:

- Improve your range - Identify what that is and do exercises daily to extend it – sing songs or other parts to develop it
- Improve your stamina - Practice daily, if even only for 15 minutes – do other exercise to improve your breathing and strength
- Perform better (be an entertainer) - Record your voice, practice singing while looking into a mirror, video record yourself.
- Learn to read music (understand Barbershop harmony/theory) - If there is interest, I'd love to ZOOM or meet in person to go through BHS Educational Materials

As we restart our barbershop experience, let's use that desire to just sing, as a springboard into being better singers, better performers and better friends as we support each other. And most importantly unleash your joyful smile as you sing.

2021 Board of Directors:

President	Nancy Hennefer
Secretary	Sue Atkins
Treasurer	Al Farnum
VP: Membership / Chapter Development	Al Wolter
VP: Marketing & PR	Dave Harmon
VP: Music & Performance	Chuck Thurman
Member at Large	Michael Buoniconti
Member at Large	Joan Ray
Member at Large	Ron Spohn
Immediate Past President	Harry Williams

Chorus Leadership:

Director	Bill Litz
Assistant Director	Joan Ray
Tenor Section Leader	Stephanie Thurman
Lead Section Leader	Chuck Thurman
Baritone Section Leader	Nancy Hennefer
Bass Section Leader	Bob Yater

Committee Leaders:

Web Master	Bill Litz
Newsletter - Captain's Log	Sue Atkins
YIH Coordinator	Bill Litz & Joan Ray
Singing Valentine Chairman	Al Farnum
Harmony Foundation Chairman	Joan Ray

CH-CH-CH-CHANGES By Al Wolter

In March, with the passing of Glen Mortensen, Sue suggested we put together a new issue of the Captain's Log. One piece would be to recognize those that have passed during the past year, since we have been unable to morn them as a group. The death of members, no matter how active they have been in the Chapter lately is always something that brings change.

A lot has happened over the past 13 months now, but thankfully we have had some stellar folks step up to keep your collective chins up. Harry's daily groaner, I mean jokes, have done a wonderful job of keeping us together. Al and Sue continue to keep the business side functioning. Bill has found ways get us singing (a little in September and now back preparing for a performance for Memorial Day at Cherokee Memorial Park.

But the changes are still around us, some are small and manageable while other are just annoying. Still life goes on and we will adjust to them all, that's what we do.

So before I talk about our dearly departed, I would like to suggest that we take a moment and look at what we can do going forward. First, I hope that everyone starts to get back to singing: at home doing vocal exercises (The Harmonizer had a straw exercise to help with that) and refreshing your part (have you ever tried recording yourself and then play it back alongside the learning track?); join us as you can as we rehearse on Tuesdays at Zion (we are outside on the Sanctuary steps and 80% are vaccinated).

Secondly, as we go forward, we need to find ways to encourage new folks to join us. I know that for some of us, that is a lot easier said than done. If only someone had a simple way to get to High School and College choir members as they graduate and have few places to sing. As Church choirs typically don't rehearse and sing during the summer, and most have not sung since March of last year, we could be a great place for their members to get back into shape for this fall.

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Lastly, as the things that put us on hold for a year diminish, we have a need to get back to being social. One change we have had to endure is in the inability to interact with each other. Zoom and such have proven to be incomplete replacements just being together in the same space. As we have rehearsals and performances, and as restrictions lift, the ability to share with each other socially will help us to get back to “normal.”

One thing this isolation has shown us, we oft have little understanding of who each other are. We gather on Tuesdays to sing, not tell each other our life stories. But what our lives have had in store for us is how we can relate to the songs we sing.

In Memoriam

These are the members of the Portsmen Family we lost during the last year plus:

Glen Mortensen was a gentle and quiet man with a big bass voice. His creativity can be seen in the UOP Bell/Water Tower. As an Architect he became friends with the guys at the Engineers Club and was recruited to the Portsmen. He served as Chapter President as well as other positions on the Board. He was identified as a Barbershopper of the Year (BOTY). He lived at O’Conner Woods for the past couple of years and was always a welcome addition to our row of chairs.

Chris Hickinbotham was the long-time partner of past Treasurer and gentle-giant of the bass section Don ‘Hick’ Hickinbotham. Chris was always by Hick’s side and pitching in to help. Sadly Hick passed away in 2017.

Ray Morris was a long-time member who lived in Murphys, till moving to Nevada to be nearer to family in 2016. Ray served in World War II as a SeaBee. He used that construction experience to find a job here building the State Irrigation Canals. Ray sang in several sections over the course of his membership with the Portsmen but was mostly a bass until the last couple of years.

Karl Nick Adams was the jovial electronics salesman of the bass section. Nick started his Society membership on the East Coast and just loved to sing. He and his wife Jeanne lived in Lodi and he worked selling TVs and computers until his passing. I had the pleasure of singing with him as a stand-in for Bob at a Christmas gig as well as in the Zion Pops Choir.

There are a couple of past members that we continue to remember, that some may have never known.

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Bill Legg WAS the Stockton Portsmen. He wasn't one of the original Charter Members but did join the Chapter in its first year. A Marine that served in the battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, he was an ultimate entertainer. Besides working for the City of Stockton and a member of the Engineer's Club, he sang not only with the Portsmen and several quartets over the years, but as a solo act with his guitar and with a lady as a duo all around town. Bill did just about everything and sang every part. He and Jim Keating, along with Hick, Tom Dosh, and Les Drury were both the **Dispensers of Musical Libation** and the old guard that kept the Portsmen functioning for 20 years.

Jim Keating was the long-time spokesman for the Portsmen. As KOVR's **Cap'n Delta**, he was well spoken in front of the mic and Camera. Jim served as Chapter President and was awarded the BOTY.

David Marshall Woodward came to the Portsmen through contacts in his Church Choir and his neighbor Bill Legg. His smooth voice and engaging smile made him the perfect front man for both the Chorus and the **Fat City Four** Quartet. Marshall was also a past President and BOTY. When he passed away, we were all shocked and takin' a-back. We have held his wife Judie in our hearts ever since.

One last past member is my friend and Joan's husband **Jack Ray**. Jack was a past director of the Portsmen and a consummate quartet bass. He sang in several over the years, most significant for me was **Steamboat Round the Bend** with a young so-to-be District Champ Dwight Holmquist (of the **Great Western Timbre Company** & who also directed the chorus), and **Contingency** with myself and Dave Kester (past Music VP for the Portsmen). Jack served the Stockton community as a Parole Officer, but he was more interested in talking about music than himself.

There are more, but these are the most notable and recent. As now the senior active member of the Chapter, I would love to tell you about all the guys who have gone on to that Chorus in the Heavens. Feel free to ask me about any of these or others.

We know that change is a function of life; sometimes it's not good, other times it is what makes things better. Let's commit to trying to enhance the good changes and minimize the others.

Weekly Chapter Meetings:

We are currently meeting outside in the courtyard with masks.

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

Tuesdays: 7:00 PM – 9:30 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>

Map:



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 Dates****

2021 Events

May 12 Portsmen Quartet performing National Anthem at Stockton Ports Game
May 31 Portsmen Chorus performing at Cherokee Memorial – Memorial Service

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/>