



The Captain's Log

Newsletter of the Stockton Portsman

June 2025 - Issue #70



2025 Memorial Day at Cherokee Memorial Park & Funeral Home

Sending Love Notes



Ciao! I am writing this from beautiful Firenze (Florence) Italy. I am taking Italian language classes and am realizing the importance of learning the basics before having the ability to form a sentence. These sentences will, hopefully, lead to conversation. What does this have to do with being a Portsman, you ask. Well, even if you didn't ask..here it is. As a group of singers, we all have to learn, memorize and practice, practice and practice our parts until our "words" can be strung together to form a "sentence". We then take these sentences and combine them with each other to form our "conversation".

The nuances and intricacies of this beautiful Italian language are almost overwhelming (OK, it IS overwhelming!) but I trust that it will all come together! As we Portsmen pick up new music, choreography, suggestions for body language and facial expressions, we have to trust the process, practice, practice, practice and be bold about “speaking” to each other.

Invio di note d'amore!

Nance



June Birthday Celebrations

Chuck Kenny – 6/8

Paul Grant – 6/9

Bill Litz – 6/22

Musical Director's Message:

By Bill Litz

In case I haven't said it enough this month—thank you. Thank you for your time, your energy, your voices, and your dedication to making beautiful music together. Our Magic of Disney show was such a joy to be part of—a vibrant celebration of songs, styles, and textures, shared through quartets, small ensembles, and an amazing, unified chorus. And then, almost without missing a beat, you pivoted into patriotic mode and brought our Memorial Day music to life. That kind of flexibility, focus, and heart doesn't happen by accident—it comes from a group that cares deeply about the music and about each other.

Each time we learn a new set, it can feel like we barely get to enjoy it before we're already onto the next thing. But I'm looking forward to calmer waters in the weeks ahead—an opportunity to revisit and polish what we've built, and to perform these songs a few more times. Events like Celebrate America in July and visits to local retirement communities will let us share our music more deeply, and more often.

Still, this kind of momentum only lasts if we all keep choosing to move forward.

In 1519, legend tells us that Hernán Cortés landed on the shores of the New World and gave his men a radical command: burn the boats. With no way to turn back, there was only one path left—forward, together, with total commitment. While our journey is musical rather than military, there's a powerful truth in that image.

Here in the Stockton Portsmen, we're not just building chords—we're building a culture. A shared voice. A place where we don't wait to be told we belong—we show up, we step up, and we make it our own.

Our success depends on each of us seeing ourselves not just as members, but as contributors and creators. Don't wait for someone else to have the vision. Don't wait to be asked. If you see an opportunity to jump in, take it. Whether you have a gift for organizing, a passion for marketing, an idea for a theme show, or just a desire to serve—we need you.

You don't have to be on the board to lead. You don't need permission to care. And if you've been sitting on the sidelines, wondering whether your ideas or talents are needed—the answer is yes. They are.

I admit, I don't always say thank you as often or as directly as I should. And I don't always ask for help—not because I don't want it, but because I assume you're already juggling enough, or because I forget that many of you are just waiting to be invited. So let me be clear: you are invited. You are appreciated. And you are vital to what we do.

This chorus only works when everyone feels they belong. And you do. So, let's burn the boats that lead back to hesitation, second-guessing, or waiting on someone else. Let's leave behind old habits of “that's not my role” or “someone else will take care of it.” Let's move forward—together in harmony.

Notes from the Field



Greetings from Tom and Kitty Harmon, Portsmen in exile! We are so proud of your wonderful performance in Davis. Hope to join you this October in Fresno! Yesterday we were excited to attend the Arizona Division contest at the Madison Center for the Arts in downtown Phoenix. It's a lovely venue but on the smaller side. That isn't a problem, because the Arizona Division isn't very big! They had six choruses in the contest, and sixteen quartets. Everything, including the Show of Champions, was over by 6 o'clock!

Before the contest started, Tom and I sang in the mic tester Everyone Welcome Chorus, led by Justin Miller, acclaimed former director of the Westminster Chorus. At the time the chorus was supposed to meet (35 minutes before the start of the contest), Tom and I were the only ones there! Justin wandered in, and a few others. For a while it looked like we were going with a quintet! Finally, the word was put out and a few more people joined us. I think there were maybe 12 of us on the risers. I was the only singer of the female persuasion. The ages ranged from a high school senior to someone who was most likely in their 90s. We sang "Sweet Roses of Morn" and "Honey/Little Lize" to a small but appreciative audience.

The choruses consisted of three awesome AAA groups, two AAs, and one A. We missed hearing the first AA, the male group Tom might be interested in joining, because they were first to perform and we didn't get back in the audience from mic testing in time. Of the AAA groups, the Phoenicians and A Cappella Syndicate are male while Southwest Vocal Alliance is mixed. We went to a couple of SWA rehearsals and really liked them. They were very focused on the music, but had a friendly, welcoming vibe similar to the Portsmen. We seriously considered trying to join but decided against it for a couple of reasons—the main one being we didn't want to have to work that hard! 😊 Anyway, the Phoenicians were international champions several times quite a few years ago and I think they have been Arizona division champs forever. BUT... they were dethroned this year by the Southwest Vocal Alliance!

A special guest performed at the end of the chorus contest, six-time Sweet Adelines international champion the Scottsdale Chorus. They completely filled the risers and spilled out onto the floor. My bias against all-female barbershop singing is well known, but these guys had a wonderful, deep, full sound, and impressive choreography. I humbly bow to their artistry. In fact, if they were a little closer, I might be tempted to audition! But no...

There were some really impressive quartets, including one with Justin Miller, Shaklaky!, that came in first. It was wonderful to see so many young people singing. The novice quartet winner, Los Bordershop, blew everyone away. One of the members is from Arizona and the other three are from Mexico. They sang in a combination of English and Spanish (most of which I could understand—shoutout to my Duolingo friends Stephanie and Nance!) and their first song was a parody of L-O-V-E, poking fun at themselves. For a novice quartet to come in less than four points behind the winner is astonishing.

It was a fun day that made us miss you guys even more. Hope you appreciate what you have—a great director, an amazing president, a dedicated board, and the nicest bunch of singing comrades you'll ever find. Til we meet again—Tom and Kitty Harmon

Tune Struck



Finally, after five months we have something to report, other than we are working on our repertoire.

First up was our performance on the Portsmen Show, with the first public performance of “You’ve Got a Friend in Me” that version three started working on four years or so ago. We added our version of “Grim Grinning Ghosts,” with Bob providing the humorous introduction.

We sang a couple of songs at the Afterglow, always having fun to share what we have been working on with everyone in such a relaxed atmosphere.

The following weekend, we attended the Central California (VoCal) show, partly as a request from the Lund’s to sing at the afterglow. We only sang one song, but it perked up the ears and faces of the members of both Artistic License and After Hours.

Unusually, your scribe has no photographic evidence for any of this, but hopefully the Editor took one at the VoCal Afterglow.

Four Heaven's Sake

A Barbershop Quartet

John Hunt

Steve Fund

Dave Harmon

Willy's Nitschke



Four Heaven's Sake had our first opportunity to sing in a performance at the Stockton Portsmen Show on 5-10-25. *Can You Feel the Love Tonight* was well received, and we are looking forward to other opportunities to sing for others. Still building a repertoire and enjoying the times we are able to get together for practice. As of May 20th, the cumulative age of our quartet members reached 280 years. That puts us in the category of a Super Senior Quartet. Not sure how that affects us personally, but we can compete at an additional level now. Thanks to Dave for pulling most of the weight! We are always encouraging others to find a few folks and sing – *Four Heaven's Sake*!

Tired of Singing Alone?

Great! Come sing 4-Part Harmony with the **Stockton Portsman**!

Are You a **Bass**, **Baritone**, **Lead**, or **Tenor**?



Discover **your** voice part and make some friends!

🎵 Join Our Mixed Chorus – All Voices Welcome! 🎵

Whether you're a seasoned vocalist or just love to sing, we invite you to join our local chorus!
No prior experience required—we welcome singers of all skill levels.

This year, we're learning exciting new songs and preparing for our Disney-themed show in May 2025. Rehearsals take place every Tuesday night from 6 pm to 8 pm at Zion Lutheran Church, 808 W. Porter Ave, Stockton.

Come visit us on a Tuesday night for a free trial—no obligation to commit!
If you enjoy singing but haven't found a place to do so confidently and safely, you're not alone. We'll sing alongside you, supporting each other every step of the way.

We'd love to welcome you to our chorus family!



*Presents The Annual Bean Feed
A Somewhat Serious Quartet Contest*



Wednesday, June, 11th 6pm

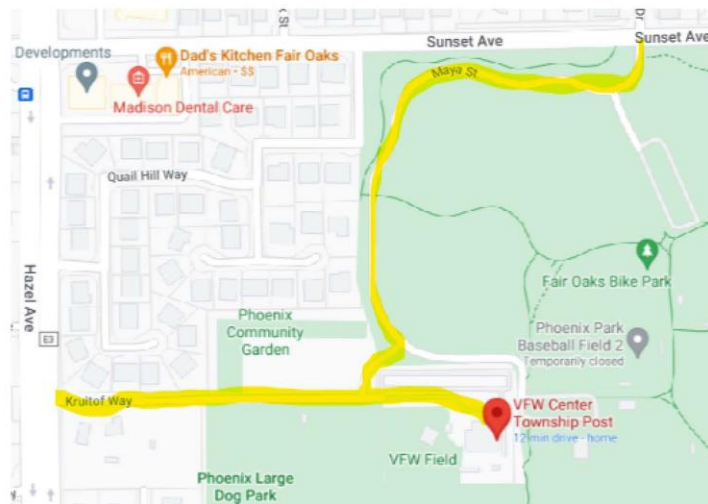
At The VFW in Fair Oaks

8990 Kruitof Way, Fair Oaks, CA 95628

Celebrating Over 30 Years of

Bean Feeds and Barbershop Quartet Contests

Tickets are \$10.00 at the door



Folsom Harmony Express
Non-profit Organization



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)

(Please verify for location of rehearsal as it may change)

See calendar for up-to-date information:

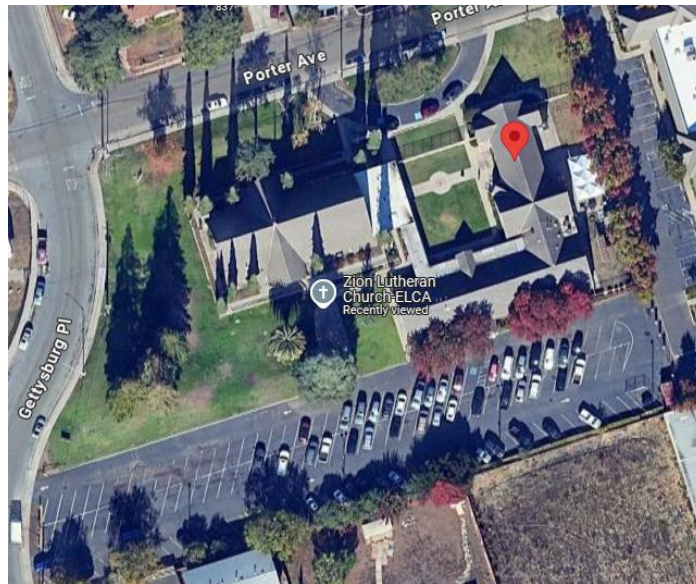
[Click here to access the Stockton Portsmen Calendar](#)

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.

Hire Us:

Book us for your next event:

Contact us by email or phone below for a proposal:

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

- Community Concerts
- Fairs
- Festivals
- Grand Openings
- Holiday Tree Lightings/Carols
- Memorial Services
- National Anthems
- 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.

****SAVE THE DATE****

- 6/11 Folsom Harmony Express Presents The Annual Bean Feed A Somewhat Serious Quartet Contest (Fair Oaks, CA)
- 6/29-7/6 2025 BHS International Convention (Denver, CO)
- 7/2 **Celebrate America (Lodi, CA)**
- 10/9-10/12 **2025 FWD Fall Convention (Fresno, CA)**
- 10/24-10/26 FWD Youth Harmony Camp
- 12/13 **Stockton Portsmen Holiday Show (Stockton, 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/>
- Voices of California (VoCal) <http://voicesofcalifornia.org/>