



The Captain's Log

Newsletter of the Stockton Portsmen

July 2025 - Issue #71

Sending Love Notes



Random thinking to kick off July.....July, my favorite month. Hot weather, 4th of July, for 40 years the glorious month of summer vacation from teaching, and my birthday.

We all associate different things with different things. As I just said, I associate July with lots of wonderful events. Funny how, as I get OLDER, the effect of our Portsmen performances have increasingly defined the holidays and specific months for me.

January: a long dreary month but the Installation Dinner to lighten things up a bit.

February: Singing Valentines has defined that day for me rather than thinking about any romantic time spent with another person. March: ah, another long month that seems to quickly shorten when suddenly, it's contest season.

April and May include our Annual Show, with a possible contest performance thrown in. June use to be Anthem singing time, more specifically at a Ports game or two. Then....JULY! Enough said.

August has included our Annual Picnic, which I have been happy to host. Potluck, singing, swimming and hoping for decent weather. September gets us thinking about Fall Contest as we glide into this new and lovely time of year. October equals the Fall Contest and sliding into November. Suddenly it's December: putting up our Portsmen tree and singing at the Festival of Trees, sometimes a Holiday Show, hopefully some caroling, finishing out yet another year. How did that happen? Sigh.....

But wait! It's just now July! MY FAVORITE MONTH! What's yours?? And why???? Does it center on family, work, chores and projects, travel, PORTSMEN?????

Sending Love Notes,

Ciao!

Nance

Musical Director's Message:

By Bill Litz



Take a look at this 1,000 gram bar of iron.

At first glance, it might not seem like much — just raw material. Maybe a bit rusty, maybe a little rough around the edges. On its own? It's worth about \$100. Useful, sure. But nothing that turns heads.

But if you shape that bar into horseshoes — give it some form and function — its value jumps.

That's learning your part, blending your tone, staying in tune. That's a \$250 voice.

Now take it further. Carve it into sewing needles — refined, precise, focused. That's learning nuance. Diction. Dynamics. Emotional connection. That's \$70,000 worth of skill.

Still more? Forge it into tiny watch springs and gears — parts so delicate they drive the world's most intricate machines. That's tight synchronization, pure vowels, ringing chords. That's \$6 million worth of harmony.

But the highest calling? Precision laser parts — refined to absolute perfection. That's when your voice isn't just a sound... it's a tool of artistry. It lifts hearts. It stirs souls. It changes people. That's \$15 million-level singing.

But here's the thing:

None of that happens without heat.

Metal has to be **tempered** — heated, hammered, cooled, and shaped — again and again. That's rehearsal. That's tough coaching. That's showing up when it's hard, singing through the cracks, and leaning into growth. That's where your voice becomes strong. Flexible. Resonant.

The voice you were given? That's just your starting material.

Your value in this chorus doesn't lie in what you're made of — it's in how well you use it. How hard you train it. How deeply you care. How fully you give it.

So Portsmen, let's temper our voices.

Let's sing like we've been forged by fire and tuned by purpose — Sing like you're worth a fortune — because in harmony, we are.



Al Wolter, John Hunt, Nance Hennefer, and Bob Yater Featured on KCRA promoting “Celebrate America”

On Thursday, June 26th, four of our talented Stockton Portsmen—**Al Wolter, John Hunt, Nance Hennefer, and Bob Yater**—were proudly featured on **KCRA** to promote the upcoming **Celebrate America** event in Lodi. Their appearance on live television was not only a wonderful representation of our chorus but also a fantastic opportunity to share our mission, music, and patriotic spirit with a broader audience across the region.

During their segment, they spoke passionately about the importance of the Celebrate America concert, the tradition it represents, and the joy it brings to the community. They also highlighted the Portsmen’s ongoing efforts to preserve and promote barbershop harmony, and the role this performance plays in uniting people through music.

This kind of visibility is invaluable—not only for the event itself but for the Stockton Portsmen as a whole. Al, John, Nance, and Bob did an great job embodying the heart and soul of our chorus. We thank them for their time, enthusiasm, and musical excellence.

Bravo to all four for stepping into the spotlight and sharing the Portsmen spirit with Northern California!



Celebrate
AMERICA
July 2nd at 6pm

HUTCHINS STREET SQUARE - WEST PARK

Pack a picnic and join us
as we Celebrate America with live music from
The Lodi Community Band
Stockton Portsmen Barbershop Chorus &
The United States Air Force Galaxy Rock Band

FREE FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENT
DRESS IN **RED**, WHITE AND **BLUE**
FLAGS FOR THE FIRST 500 GUESTS!





July Birthday Celebrations

Nance Hennefer – 7/13

Nancy Wilson – 7/14

The Ring is the Thing!

Written by John Hunt

People often ask me, “What are you up to these days?” Now that I’m retired, that question usually morphs into, “What do you do with all your free time?” My answer? I fish, collect stamps, tumble rocks, travel with my wife—and I sing barbershop with the Stockton Portsman. These are more than pastimes; they’re passions. And while “free time” is a bit of a misnomer (time always has a cost), I find myself constantly weighing how I spend mine. Barbershop harmony keeps rising to the top.

Let me explain why.

Hooks are fascinating things. In fishing, a hook’s barb ensures it stays in place—it becomes difficult to shake loose. Over time, these hooks evolve from casual interests into deep commitments. Singing with the Portsman is one of those hooks for me. I’m drawn in, not just by the music, but by the people. The camaraderie. The blend of voices that makes harmony possible. I sing because this is part of who I am. A note alone isn’t music—but as part of a chord, it becomes something magical.

The Stockton Portsman are more than a chorus—they’re a family. I’ve never met a more welcoming and genuinely kind group of folks. Under the strong leadership of Bill and Al, and with the spirit of everyone who contributes, our rehearsals often feel like scenes from a well-loved sitcom. Full of personality. Full of heart.

Barbershop isn’t something you can do halfway—not if you want to feel that ring. For me, it’s never been about doing things just “a little.” When I commit, I dive in headfirst. But even with that drive, I still find myself asking: *Why do I do this at all?*

That's where the hook comes in.

Every hobby has its draw. For fishing, "the tug is the drug." For collecting, it's the thrill of discovery. For barbershop? It's the Ring—that magical overtone that happens when voices lock perfectly in tune. That *singing hook* first sank in when I was ten, attending a show with my great-uncle Rudy. It hooked deeper when I sang with my brothers as the Hunt Brothers in high school. Every time we sang again, the line tugged a little harder. The final set? Walking into a Stockton Portsmen rehearsal with my friend Mike Drouin. I felt it again when I matched notes with Tom on a hanger and my heart started racing.

The hook had found its home.

So Why Am I Doing This?

I do it for the ring.

I do it for the rush of perfect harmony.

I do it for the friendships that start with a handshake and grow over laughter and song.

I do it because when we sing together—truly ring a chord—we become something more than ourselves.

This chorus has given me joy, connection, purpose, and that ever-elusive, spine-tingling *ring*. That's why I'm doing this. That's why I'll keep doing this. Because the ring is the thing—and I'm all in.

Yes! Clef Collaboration

Written by Steve Yund

Seth Yund reached out to his father, Steve Yund, with an unconventional request to see if the Portsmen could assist in training Seth's musical comedy improvisation group in the basics of vocal harmony. Well, here's a different challenge! Steve and Seth met a couple of times to narrow down exactly what was needed for the group. Three main areas were determined to be focal: 1) How to warm up for a vocal practices and how to prepare for performances; 2) How to sing well during practice and a vocal performance (what to think about, what to do, etc.); 3) An intro to harmonizing: what harmony is (very basically), examples, and how to harmonize (starting with 2-person harmony, working up to 3 and 4-part harmony if the group can handle it). The above was rested on a bit of proof that we knew what we were talking about. So, a song or two to earn respect was required. All in less than an hour. With the task defined, effort was put forth by Portsmen members to make is so.



Steve reasoned that since it is a comedy troupe of younger people and mixed gender, having a youthful and mixed gender profile of presenters would be important. So, Brad at Bass and Stephanie at Tenor were obvious choices. Nancy filled the Baritone, gender and the youthful energy requirement. Since Steve wasn't about to yield his opportunity to show off for his boy... he became the fourth for the quartet.

We met at the Ooley Theater in midtown Sacramento, a 34-seat delightful theater with decent acoustics for off microphone singing (The owner stopped in and offered the venue to us as she is looking to make a name for the theater as one that attracts quality acts, I reckon we sounded pretty good because she was talking about us)! We began at 7pm and immediately established our vocal "street cred" with Let me Call You Sweetheart and Coney Island Baby. The rest was step-wise instruction of the things we practice every week. Seth wanted his troupe to be able to sing at least two-part harmony. We got through 4- part Sleepy Time as a tag pretty well and then even worked on some woodshedding skills. The goals were met and everyone had a fun experience while being of service to the arts community and building goodwill regarding the skills of barbershoppers. All four of us Portsmen would do it again. One participant made a point of comparing what we did with the workshop she attended the week before. She indicated it was as good as the very talented bay area presenter, took less time, cost less and was much less stressful! A very affirming evening! Way to go Portsmen! We know what we are doing.



Where: COS Music Building
Who: High School Students
When: September 13, 2025

\$10 INCLUDES ALL-DAY COACHING BY TSV, SHEET MUSIC,
 DIGITAL LEARNING TRACKS, LUNCH, DINNER,
 T-SHIRT, & PUBLIC PERFORMANCE
 (SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE)

PRESENTED BY:

Dr. Dan Wessler




ALL DAY WORKSHOP LEARNING THREE SONGS, DIRECTED BY
 DR. DAN WESSLER, THEN PERFORMING IN THE EVENING
 SHOW. THE SEVENTH VARIETY QUARTET WILL TOP OFF THE
 EVENING WITH A COMMAND PERFORMANCE

REGISTER NOW



Tired of Singing Alone?

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

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

Tenor Lead

The old songs, the old songs, good old song for me.

Bari Bass

Middle C

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www.StocktonPortsmen.org

info@StocktonPortsmen.org

209-881-SING (7464)

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!

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:

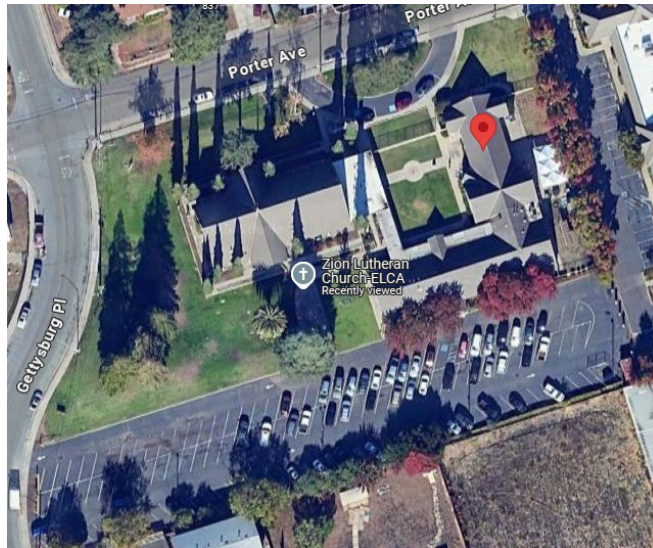
[Click here to access the Stockton Portsmen Calendar](#)

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.

Book the Stockton Portsmen or a Quartet for your Next Event!

Looking to add warmth, charm, and polished vocal harmony to your upcoming event? Whether you're planning a lively celebration or a heartfelt ceremony, the Stockton Portsmen Chorus or one of our talented quartets can provide unforgettable musical entertainment tailored to your occasion. We perform at:

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

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.

Email: Info@StocktonPortsmen.org

Phone: (209) 881-SING (7464)

Let's make your event unforgettable—**reach out today for a personalized proposal!**

****SAVE THE DATE****

- 7/2 Celebrate America (Lodi, CA)
- 9/13 Youth Harmony Explosion (Visalia, 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)
- 4/25/26 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) <http://voicesofcalifornia.org/>