



The Captain's Log

Newsletter of the Stockton Portsmen

October 2025 - Issue #74



As I was once again spending quality time on my riding lawn mower, I got to thinking about our coaching session with Chris Hébert last week and was struck by the power of his encouragement. He tapped into our basic need to feel “seen”, capable and valued. As a chorus, we seemed to grow in sound and confidence throughout the night, all due to his enthusiastic approach to what we were producing. I, for one, left rehearsal feeling ENCOURAGED.

As humans, we tend to seek encouragement from outside sources, spouses, family, friends, teachers, and others. Comments and gestures help us develop confidence, persistence and belief in our potential.

Sometimes, however, we are left to be our own cheerleaders. Sometimes, words of encouragement and praise seem to be directed at others, and we are left wondering why we weren't acknowledged. Sometimes, despite our own best effort, that outside validation doesn't happen.

Thus comes the power of encouragement. If we are not secure in ourselves, our abilities, or our contributions, lack of recognition through encouragement could have a negative effect. Should this happen, our ability to tap into our own self-worth and self-confidence needs to rise up.

Why does encouragement matter? As already stated, encouragement is a type of life source that helps us feel supported, allows us to take risks, work through challenges and believe in ourselves. Encouragement has a direct effect on MOTIVATION, providing us with the desire to focus, persists and see setbacks as opportunities for growth. Motivation = forward motion!

As an educator, I saw the power my encouragement had with my students. A few simple words or comments would often light the fire that kept them learning and improving. They knew I supported them and their efforts, which helped build a trusting and successful learning environment.

With all this said, when was the last time you encouraged someone? As we move closer to our time on the risers in Fresno, let's make a concerted effort to do our best in encouraging others and ourselves to be the best we can be!

Sending Love Notes,
nance

Musical Director's Message:

By Bill Litz

Growing Together in Harmony

One of the joys of singing together is that it keeps us learning, not just about music, but about ourselves and each other. Growth means we embrace the ups and downs of our personal emotions, knowing that some weeks we feel strong and energized, while other times we may feel stretched thin. It also means being flexible enough to recognize when a fellow singer needs encouragement, space, or simply a smile to help them through.

In the chorus, we support one another not only by showing up, but by showing up *with purpose*. Being present at rehearsal is more than filling a chair; it's about committing to perform each time we sing. Every warmup, every run-through is an opportunity to polish (not just to sing the notes) but to *deliver the music*. When we make that commitment, rehearsal becomes a performance, and each performance becomes stronger, richer, and more unified.

There's a balance here: learning to be patient with ourselves when progress feels slow, and at the same time, holding ourselves accountable to grow in small, steady steps. That's how real progress works: steady, intentional, and shared with others who are on the same path.

And now, with only one rehearsal left before contest, it's time to make that final push not with anxiety, but with joy. Treat this last Tuesday as a true performance: sing with confidence, polish the details, and let the music come alive. Our goal of a 70 is within reach, but more important is the satisfaction of knowing we've done the work together. Let's finish strong, savor the music, and walk on stage ready to share our very best.

Tune Struck

Wow, what a difference a month makes! I, the Quartet's Scribe knew that once the performance door was opened, the performances would start to flood in, and boy-howdy have they!

After the Birthday performance in August, we sang at the end of August for the Portsmen Picnic, which was documented in the last **Captain's Log**.



The Month of September started off with a flurry of performances, first an Anthem Sing and Seventh Inning Stretch for the **Stockton Ports**. It is always a good time at the Ballpark, when we sing – even if the Ports fail to win.



Next was a Birthday Party for **Shirley's** 90th Birthday. While we don't currently know a Sinatra song, we provided some era appropriate tunes, with which many sang along. We had yet to get something nicer than previously worn polos, so we opted for white shirts (a new option is now in place).



During the baseball game, we talked about performances of the past and other interests. The races came up and Steve asked if we could sing the Anthem for the races at the New Stockton 99 Speedway. Al gave the folks at the track a note and the answer was "this Saturday is open." Well Bob's youngest and his granddaughter was coming to visit, so we needed a Bass – many Portsmen were understandably busy, so **Seth Yund** stepped in and did a great job.



It was an honor to be featured at the Grape Festival with our first full set. Too bad we don't have a photo from that performance, there were photographers with which we gave contact info, but nothing has been shared.

Afterwards, we ran down to Stockton and visited with our good friend and past **Portsmen, Austin Spurlock**. Austin is recovering from cancer treatment and losing a portion of his leg, so we sang for him to cheer him up a tad. It was a good visit with lots of stories of past times and such, with his quartet **Collaboration**.



Looks like the month of October is going to give us a bit of rest, as we transition to Holiday songs and performing on the Chapter Holiday Show "Unwrap the Harmony," but never fear, there are two November performances already set – one, another 90th Birthday, this for our good friend Howard Barber. We owe Howard a lot, especially since V2 helped break his nose.

Four Heaven's Sake

A Barbershop Quartet

John Hunt

Steve Yund

Dave Harmon

Willys Nitschke

UPDATE: 9-14-25



The Circle of Life is not a song that we have learned as a quartet over the past seven weeks. But it feels like we have come full circle. In the last Captain's Log entry we talked about finding a niche celebrating senior citizens through song. This month we celebrated a new life yet to be born. On the 13th of September Daisy had a Disney-themed baby shower. When her mother-to-be called she was looking for a "Dapper Dans" type of experience for the guests at her baby shower. *Four Heaven's Sake* is qualified as a Super Senior quartet, we'd be better billed as the "Grizzled Grampas", but we agreed that we'd do our best impression.

Since the *Portsmen Chorus* has learned a Disney set list, this gig seemed like a good fit. John, our lead-turned-tenor had the most work to do learning a new part to many songs. Each of us had vacation time or family requirements that caused missed rehearsals, but we polished and/or rearranged many of the songs for the Disney baby shower. John even listened to learning tracks while riding a horse. Incredible dedication!

To start, we sang a four-song opening set which included: *When You Wish Upon a Star* (When a star is born), *Be Our Guest*, *A Bicycle Built for Two* (Daisy) and *Zip A Dee Doo Dah*. Then, we sang in two or three-song sets in between baby shower games or while guests ate their catered banquet. We ended up singing 14 of the 16 songs we prepared, plus one for Daisy's older brother.

Samantha, Daisy's mother, sent the following in an email: "Can't thank you enough for the wonderful event today, you guys truly made my day and made all my Disneyland dreams come true! I've already had a few inquiries from friends and family members, I hope you don't mind if I pass along the contact information :)" She gave us a costume contribution that more than covers the cost of our outfits. For at least Steve the lead, this was the largest single quartet gig he has ever done. All in all, a remarkably pleasant experience!



October Birthday Celebrations

Megan Litz-Kelstrom – 10/9

Renee Beers – 10/10

Kitty Harmon – 10/11

Ron Spohn – 10/15



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)**

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:

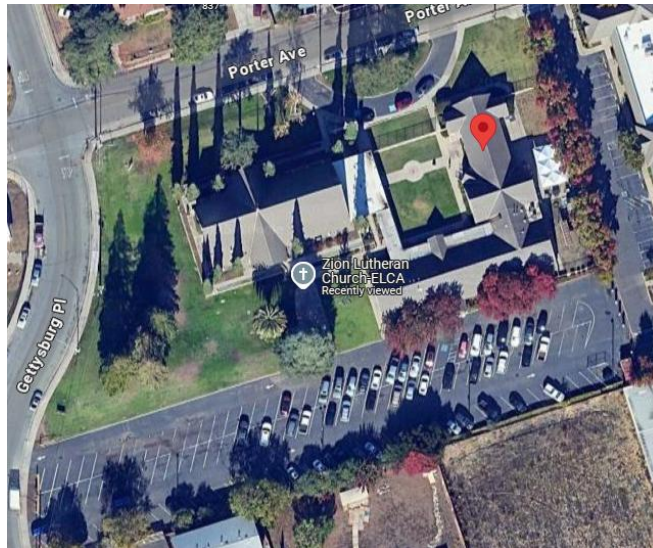
[Click here to access the Stockton Portsmen Calendar](#)

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****

2025

- **10/9-10/12** 2025 FWD Fall Convention (Fresno, CA) [Link to Registration](#)
- **10/24-10/26** [A Cappella Harmony Camp \(Pollock Pines, CA\) \(weekend retreat designed for high school and college-aged young men who love to sing\) Link for more details](#)
- **11/2** Marin Chapter 70th Anniversary Fall Show (San Rafael, CA)
- **11/15** Gold Rush Chorus Cabaret (Placerville, CA)
- **12/13** Stockton Portsmen Holiday Show (Stockton, CA)

2026

- **1/13-1/18** [BHS Midwinter Convention \(Pasadena, CA\)](#)
- **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/>