



The Captain's Log

Newsletter of the Stockton Portsmen

Connecting members, supporters, and friends of the Stockton Portsmen

August 2026 - Issue #84



Royal Flush – National Anthem – Stockton Ports (7/9/2026)

Charting Our Course → The Joy of Summer Rehearsals

There's something different about summer rehearsals.

The pace of life seems to slow just a bit. Vacations come and go. The days are longer, and the evenings are warm. Yet every Tuesday, we gather for something familiar, a chance to sing, laugh, and spend time with friends.

Summer reminds us that chorus isn't just about preparing for the next performance. It's about enjoying the journey. There's a special kind of joy in hearing a chord lock, learning a new song, sharing stories during the break, or simply welcoming someone back after they've been away. Those moments may seem small, but they're often the ones we remember.

These rehearsals also give us an opportunity to reconnect. With members traveling throughout the summer, each week brings a slightly different mix of voices and personalities. It's a reminder of how much each person contributes to the spirit of our chorus and how good it feels when we're all together again.

As our chorus continues to grow and evolve, we're reminded that every member leaves a lasting mark on our chapter. This summer, we said goodbye to Brad, Tobias, and Charlotte as they began new adventures. While we'll certainly miss seeing them on Tuesday evenings, we wish them nothing but the best and thank them for the contributions they made to our chorus. At the same time, I'm pleased to share that the Board has elected Nancy Wilson as our new Vice President of Music & Performance. Nancy's enthusiasm, dedication, and love of singing make her a wonderful addition to our leadership team. Please join me in congratulating Nancy and thanking Brad, Tobias, and Charlotte for being part of the Stockton Portsmen family.

Before long, summer will give way to fall, our schedules will fill, and a new season of music and performances will be upon us. Until then, let's savor these summer evenings, appreciate the friendships we've built, celebrate the music we create together, and enjoy the simple pleasure of gathering each week to do something we love.

Thank you for making Tuesday nights a highlight of my week. Whether you've been a member for years or you've only recently joined us, you help make the Stockton Portsmen a place where harmony is found not only in our music, but in our friendships.

In Harmony,

Sue Atkins, President

Musical Director's Message:

by Bill Litz

Continuous Improvement: Be Present. Be Purposeful. Be Better.

As we move into the second half of the year, I find myself reflecting on something that has become part of our chorus culture: **continuous improvement**.

We've made tremendous progress together. Our performances have grown more confident, our sound more unified, and our musicality more expressive. Those successes didn't happen by accident—they came from dozens of rehearsals where people showed up ready to learn, to listen, and to improve.

But here's the challenge: **it's easy to let familiarity become routine**.

Once we know the notes and words, there's a temptation to simply sing through the music. Before we know it, rehearsal becomes repetition instead of refinement. That's when growth begins to slow.

Instead, I encourage each of us to come to rehearsal with a specific purpose.

Maybe tonight your focus is maintaining a consistent, resonant tone from your lowest note to your highest. Perhaps you're determined to finally lock in that one interval that occasionally slips away. Maybe your goal is cleaner consonants, better breath support, or watching the director just a little more consistently.

Small improvements, repeated week after week, create remarkable results.

One thing I've been especially encouraged by is how much more consistent our chorus sound has become. We're developing a richer, more unified tone across every voice part. Those "almost right" notes are becoming solidly in tune. Entrances are cleaner. Words are more together. These aren't dramatic breakthroughs that happen overnight, they're the result of hundreds of small decisions made by every singer in the room.

And remember, your best effort isn't just for you.

When you sing with focus, accuracy, and confidence, you make it easier for the singers around you to do the same. Great ensembles aren't built by a handful of outstanding singers they're built by individuals who consistently give their very best in support of one another. Your preparation, concentration, and commitment become an encouragement to everyone standing beside you.

Let's also remember to celebrate our successes. Sometimes we're so focused on what still needs work that we forget to appreciate how far we've come. We should absolutely keep striving for excellence, but we should also take pride in the progress we've already made. Every rehearsal that ends with a cleaner chord, a more expressive phrase, or a stronger performance is another step forward.

As we continue our journey together, let's approach each rehearsal with intention. Don't simply go through the motions. Come ready to listen, to learn, to stretch yourself, and to help the chorus become even better than it was last week.

Continuous improvement isn't about perfection.

It's about making today's performance just a little better than yesterday's and helping each other enjoy the journey along the way.

I'm excited to see what we'll accomplish together in the months ahead.

See you at rehearsal!



August Birthday Celebrations

Derick Sturke – 8/5

Joe Hunt – 8/21

Investing in the Future: Youth Harmony Explosion 2026

The future of barbershop depends on inspiring the next generation, and **Youth Harmony Explosion (YHE) 2026** is a wonderful way to do just that.

Hosted by the **Mighty Oak Chorus (Visalia Chapter)**, YHE introduces young singers to the excitement of four-part harmony through a fun day of learning, singing, and performing with experienced clinicians and fellow students.

If you know a young person who enjoys singing whether in choir, church, theater, or just for fun please encourage them to attend. Better yet, share this opportunity with music educators, choir directors, and families in your community. One invitation could spark a lifelong love of barbershop harmony.

Together, we can help ensure a bright future for our hobby by supporting programs like Youth Harmony Explosion.

For event details and registration information, visit the [Youth Harmony Explosion 2026 registration page](#).

Bring Harmony to Your Next Event

Book the Stockton Portsmen or One of Our Quartets!

A mixed-voice a cappella chorus celebrating 70+ years of harmony in the Central Valley.

Looking to add warmth, charm, and polished harmony to your next event? Whether you're planning a lively celebration or a heartfelt ceremony, the Stockton Portsmen Chorus or one of our talented quartets will bring unforgettable music tailored to your occasion.

Perfect for:

- Community Concerts and Festivals
- Grand Openings and Ribbon Cuttings
- Memorial Services and Celebrations of Life
- Holiday Tree Lightings and Caroling Events
- Weddings, Anniversaries and Private Celebrations
- Corporate Gatherings and Award Ceremonies
- Patriotic and Civic Events (National Anthems, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, etc.)
- Senior Living Communities and Community Outreach Programs
- Singing Valentines and Special Deliveries (Birthdays, Anniversaries, etc.)

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.

Now booking Holiday 2026 performances!

Whether you're planning a holiday party, tree lighting, community celebration, or seasonal gathering, reserve your date early while openings are still available.

Contact Us:

Email: Info@StocktonPortsmen.org

Phone: (209) 881-SING (7464)

Website: <http://www.stocktonportsmen.org/>

**We'd love to bring harmony to your special event.
Reach out today and let's create something memorable together.**

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:

Curious what it's like?

Come visit a rehearsal no pressure, just great music and great people. Come experience harmony with us. Visitors are always welcome on Tuesday evenings. No audition is required, just a love of singing and community.

Location: Zion Lutheran Church, Grace Hall - 808 W. Porter Avenue, Stockton, CA

Tuesday Rehearsals:

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM Chorus Rehearsal

7:30 PM – 8:30 PM VLQ, except board meeting nights (3rd Tuesday of each month)

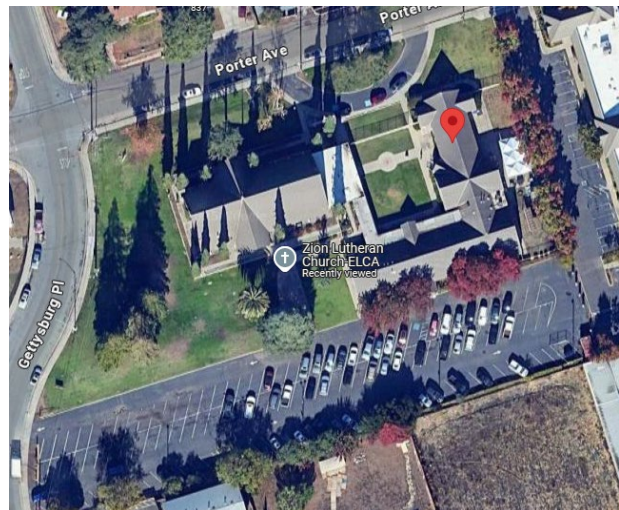
Rehearsals may occasionally be held at an alternate location, so please check the calendar for the most up-to-date information. [Click here to access the Stockton Portsmen Calendar](#)

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.



****SAVE THE DATE****

Upcoming Events

- **8/29** **Play Music on the Porch Day (Bill & Sue's) (5pm - 8pm)**
- **9/12** **Youth Harmony Explosion (Visalia, CA)**
- **10/6-11** **2026 Pan Pacific and FWD Fall Convention (Honolulu, Hawaii)**
[Click Link for details & registration](#)
- **10/18** **Stockton Portsmen 72nd Charter Anniversary**
- **12/5** **Festival of Trees (Chorus)**
- **12/6** **Festival of Trees (VLQ)**
- **12/12** **Stockton Portsmen Holiday Show**
- **12/18** **Philomathean Club Performance**
- **TBD** **Stockton Portsmen Holiday Roadshow & Remote Rehearsals**

Tuesday Rehearsals – Visitors always welcome!

Barbershop Links:

Barbershop Harmony Society <https://www.barbershop.org/>

Far Western District <https://www.farwesterndistrict.org/>

Mixed Barbershop Harmony Association <https://www.mixedbarbershop.org/>

Stay Tuned a Cappella Chorus Sacramento: <https://www.facebook.com/StayTunedChorus>

Voices of California (VoCal) <https://www.voicesofcalifornia.org/>

Westunes Magazine <https://www.farwesterndistrict.org/news/westunes/>