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The Placerville Gold Rush Chorus quartets are offering Singing Valentines to El Dorado County residents. Photo courtesy Jesi Eckhardt

Prospecting

What is it like to deliver love?

By **Gold Rush Chorus**

Every Valentine's Day, Placerville Gold Rush Chorus quartets experience the excitement of delivering an expression of love with a Singing Valentine in four-part barbershop harmony. This year they are ready for more loving deliveries.

"The group considers it the best singing day of the whole year because there is no better job on planet earth," said Keith Eckhardt, Placerville Gold Rush Chorus

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member. “We get to see eyes light up and sometimes tears of joy as we sing heartfelt songs to the recipients.”

Not only are two songs included with the Singing Valentine, recipients also receive a personalized greeting card with the sender’s personal message and a long stemmed red rose arrangement.

“Over the years we have delivered Singing Valentines to sweethearts, children, parents, school teachers, friends and co-workers,” Eckhardt said. “We deliver them in homes, schools, businesses and restaurants. One time we even sang to a carpenter sitting in the rafters of a garage.”

Eckhardt said deliveries to locations with several people are especially fun.

“People come running the moment they hear singing,” he said. “In restaurants the patrons go pin-drop quiet and then the whole place erupts in applause at the end.”

Eckhardt said one year a group of high school students hired a quartet to deliver a Singing Valentine to their teacher.

“As we were driving there, our tenor, on his way to his first ever delivery, volunteered that he really did not get what Singing Valentines was all about. We said nothing,” he explained. “When four men dressed alike walked into the classroom the teacher was surprised, of course, and sternly said ‘What’s going on here?’ We explained his students think he is a sweetheart as we handed him his card and long stemmed red rose bouquet. Of course we sang ‘Let Me Call You Sweetheart’ and he was soon blushing. Next we sang ‘Irish Blessing’ and then his eyes were tearing. As we were walking away from the classroom our tenor spoke up and said, ‘I get it!’”

Another heartfelt Singing Valentine experience happened at the Placerville Hospital.

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“When we finished our song at a nursing station, a young woman asked us to sing for a friend who needed to be cheered up,” Eckhardt said. “We went and sang to her friend who cried and smiled at the same time. As we left, the young woman thanked us and noted that it was the first time her friend had smiled in two weeks.”

This year the quartets will make deliveries from El Dorado Hills to Pollock Pines, within 8 miles of Highway 50. The fee is \$40 for the standard delivery within a 2 hour time window. There are add-on options for extra roses, chocolate truffles or an exact time delivery.

For more information and to place an order, call the Singing Valentine’s hotline at (530) 748-3958 or visit GoldRushChorus.org.

About the chorus

The Gold Rush Chorus is strongly committed to serving Placerville. In 2018 they performed for the Amgen Race, the El Dorado Rose ceremony, Hangtown Days, the Antique Street Fair, the Veterans Day ceremony and the Christmas Tree Lighting event.

Men in the Placerville area who like to sing are welcome to sing along with the Gold Rush Chorus during weekly practices at 7 p.m., every Tuesday, at the Church of the Nazarene, 6040 Mother Load Drive, Placerville.