



BRANCH 163 WELCOME

FEBRUARY 2025



JANUARY 16TH LUNCHEON AT HODELS.

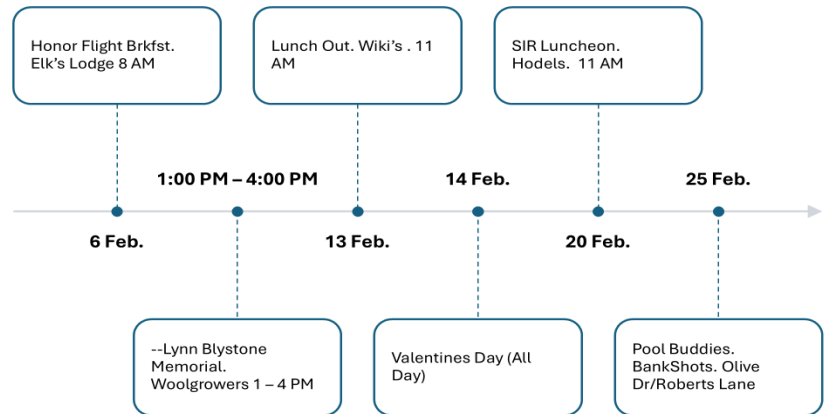
We had Four fewer than expected but still a good solid crowd of the “DEPENDABLES”. Just a note that we have a minimum of 50 meals in order to retain the Kern Room. Hodels used to let us slide but they are holding us to the 50 minimum now. Thanks men for your loyal support and attendance. Let’s all make it a point to be ‘Healthy’ for the next luncheon and bring a guest.

FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES

**Mark your Calendars
now!**

**Don't miss SIR
Activities during
February.**

Bring a Guest!



**SIR Weigelt: Sunshine Committee Reported 3 members passed away:
Sir Lynn Blystone, Sir Tom Holson, Sir Fernando Teglia.**

+++++

DON NORIEL INTRODUCED OUR SPEAKER



**ROMAN GARZA, CRIME PREVENTION SPECIALIST – KERN COUNTY
SHERIFF DEPARTMENT.**

Roman gave a good presentation reminding us of not only what the Sheriff's department can do but also what we as citizens can do in crime prevention. We are being reminded more and more about the role we play in administering our own safety and not just relying on government agencies to protect us. We can make our communities safer by simply being the Eyes and Ears for our neighborhoods, reporting to each other anything that is unusual, and making 'Neighborhood Watch' a reality.

Roman suggested being aware of the Sheriff's internet site, www.kernsheriff.org, and the transparency within it. We can register reports therein as well as pictures. We can be more active without a lot of effort. If you see a potential 'target site' get with the neighbors and help them eliminate the 'Target'. Target

Hardening does prevent crimes. Roman stated the 'Tri-angle' of crime: Target, criminal desire, opportunity. Take one away one of these and the crime usually does not occur.

Roman left a number of Important numbers for Sheriff's functions:

- 1. To report a crime 661-861-3110**
- 2. Secret witness 661-322-4040**

Their website is much more convenient than BPD. But the police department will be our normal agency to call . Their Numbers are:

- 1. Crime reporting non-emergency 661-327-7111**
 - 2. If an emergency , 911**
 - 3. Community Relations Specialist Central zone, Darian Garcia: 661-326-3991**
 - 4. West Side Substation 661-852-7850**
-



BIG SIR JIM SHAPAZIAN DISCUSSES THE NEED TO GROW OUR MEMBERSHIP

Jim's Shout-out for February:

Hello SIR members. Here it is February. What happened to January? Is time going faster these days? It seems like it is for me. Hopefully you all had fun and family

during the holidays. I know that some of you have lost loved ones and are still grieving. There is help for those of you that feel the need. There are groups with a great track record of help. Let me know and I will set you up with that information.

Significant days in February:

Groundhog Day

Super Bowl

Black History Month

Valentines Day

Heart Health Awareness

Shortest Day of the year.

I could go on but you get the idea.

By the way, if any of you were born on February 29th, we will give you a special announcement this month being there is no February 29th this year.

Help us to be a fun, relevant group and bring a guest to either the 2nd Thursday luncheon or our 3rd Thursday luncheon. See you then.

MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Bill Vigil 1 year

Stephen Montgomery 2 years

Robert Barrera 3 years

Todd Mauldin 10 years

Ron Huntington 12 years

Blackie Blackledge 27 years

• TOTAL 55



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- Don Balaban 02-09-1938 87
- Jim Chism 02-08-1954 71
- Michael Hicks 02-09-1948 77
- Robert Himes 02 -09-1929 96
- Herb Hochstatter 02-18-33 92
- Marvin Neabeack 02-29-28 97
- Ron Schilling 02-14-1935 90
- Jerry Vancuren 02-22-1939 86

• **HAPPY BIRTHDAY MEN!!!! KEEP IT UP!**

VERSE FOR THE MONTH: Isaiah 40:31

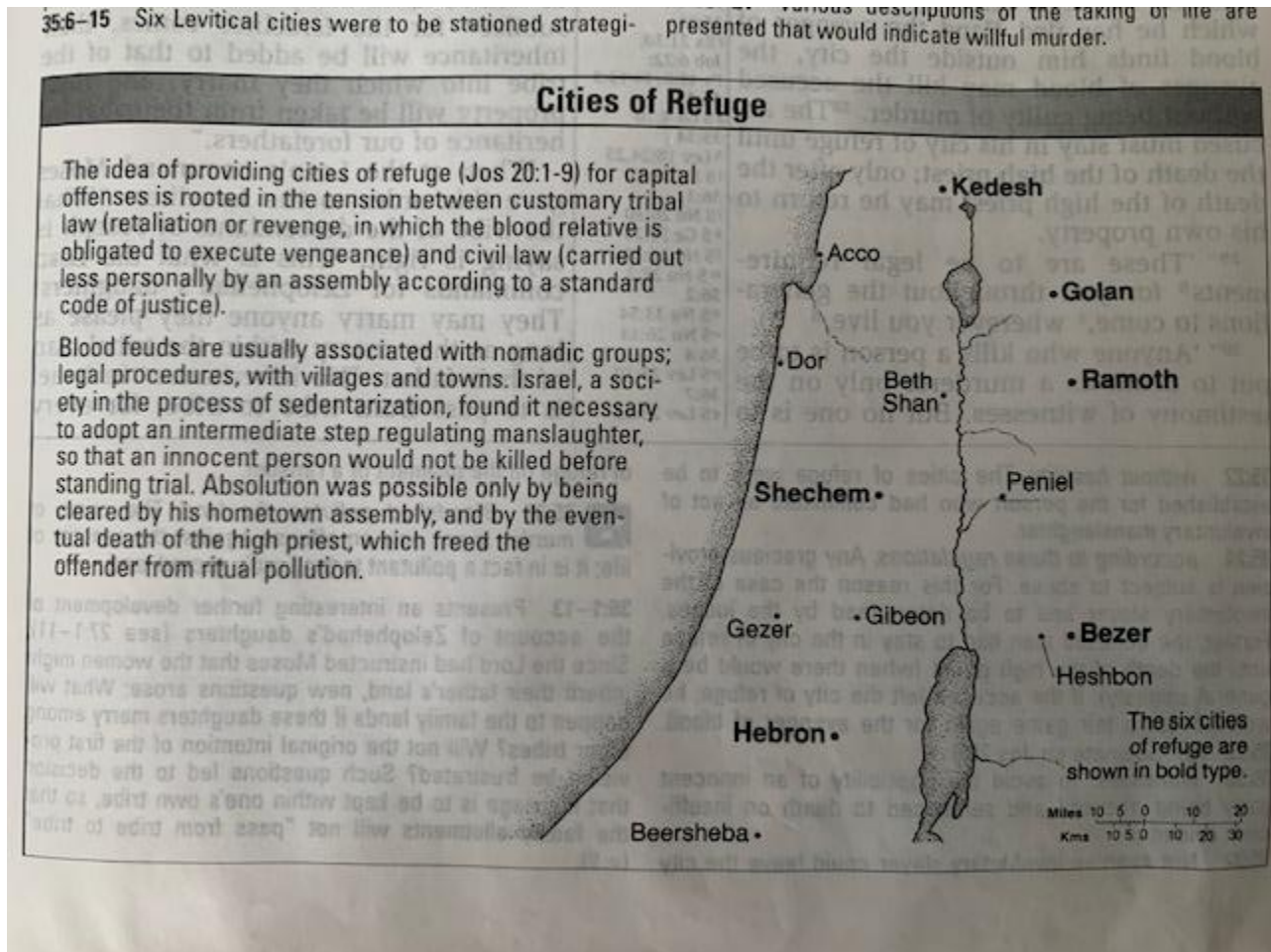
THOSE WHO HOPE IN THE LORD WILL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH.

THEY WILL SOAR ON WINGS LIKE EAGLES; THEY WILL RUN AND NOT GROW WEARY.

THEY WILL WALK AND NOT BE FAINT.

CITIES OF REFUGE

Much has been made of Sanctuary Cities the last few years so I went back in the Bible to see what God had in His Civil code. This is what I found. May be a little dark to read.



“ The Lord said to Moses, six of the towns you give to the Levites will be cities of refuge, to which a person who has killed someone accidentally may flee. They will be places of refuge for the Avenger, so that a person accused of murder may not die before he stands trial before the assembly”. *Numbers 35:6*

Three cities; Golan, Ramoth, and Bezer shall be on the East side of the Jordan. Three cities; Kedesh, Shechem, and Hebron shall be on the Canaan side.

If anyone willfully murders another, the Avenger of Blood shall put the murderer to death. If the murder was accidental the person can flee to one of the cities of refuge to prove his/her case before the Assembly (I am uncertain where the Assembly was located). The Assembly must decide between the murderer’s testimony and the Avenger of Blood. If found innocent, the accused must stay in that city until the High Priest dies. At that time the accused may return to his place of property.

There is a list of rules that describe cause of murder in this chapter which you can read for yourself. It seems that Western thought took the Civil rules and changed them a bit. It is my thinking we need to reconsider the interpretation of the code again.

Larry Sitzman



The Touch of the Masters Hand

The older I get the more I am drawn to classic writings such as this poem written by Myra Brooks Welch and I thought I would share it with you though you undoubtedly know it or have read it along the way.

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But held it up with a smile.

"What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,
"Who'll start the bidding for me?"

"A dollar, a dollar. Then two! Only two?
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?"

"Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice;
Going for three..." But no,
From the room, far back, a grey-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;

Then wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loosened strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet,
As a caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said: "What am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?
Two thousand! And who'll make it three?
Three thousand, once; three thousand, twice,
And going and gone," said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand.
What changed its worth?" Swift came the reply:
"The touch of the Master's hand."
And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd
Much like the old violin.

A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine,
A game — and he travels on.
He is "going" once, and "going" twice,
He's "going" and almost "gone."
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that is wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand.

by Myra Brook Welch

.....

TO OUR FRIEND: RICHARD WEIGELT



Richard (Dick) Weigelt is a proud supporter of our SIR organization and we do appreciate his loyal comradeship of Branch 163 over the years.

Like so many of our members Dick has been active in Branch leadership acting as Big and Little Sir three times through the years. He still holds a position in the Nominating and Sunshine committees. He doesn't complain, just accepts the challenge! Why? Dick finds SIR a life-fulfilling group of Friends whom he enjoys meeting with several times a month. Concern for the benefit of all members? Yes, he brings that to Branch 163 also.

I think Dick is the embodiment of a 'Planned Life fulfilled'; plan it and then make it a reality. I think he would agree except he will add: "there was a lot of luck plus God in his accomplishments".

Dick was born July 24th of 1935 in Oxnard, so his life spans 89+ years of history and learning. I am so impressed with his recall of situations and dates that just humbles me.

His Mom and Dad were both Orphans when they came to the USA. His Mom was from Russia, adopted at the age of 2 by a lady who came over in 1905-6. Dick's Dad was adopted in England and came over in 1902-3. They both met at Boyle Heights, a very poor community on the outskirts of Los Angeles. He would hire on with Union Oil company which took them to Ventura and ultimately to Oildale in 1939.

Dick's earliest memories were riding his bike along the Kern River and seeing the many houses made of cardboard, tar paper, pieces of tin, etc. Homeless families were common then as jobs and money were scarce. Dick got his first bike in 1947 at the age of 12 and he rode Oildale and Chester Avenue frequently. He remembers Trout's as loud but happy.

He would get 17 cents to go to the River Theater on North Chester to see a movie. One time as Dick recalled he was walking down the aisle looking for a seat and some of his friends called to join them. He said something to acknowledge them and then felt the hand of the manager pulling him out of the theater to the street. I guess the manager thought Dick was disturbing the peace! Of course, Dick did not tell his parents!

Dick also recalls the Oildale Boys Club, organized to give something for kids to do. At the age of 12, Dick was enabled to play summer league fastball as a pitcher which he played from '47 to '53.

In high school, Dick majored in Architectural Drafting with two periods per day of learning. In his senior year the class was challenged to design and draw a house. The Ford Motor Company had announced a contest across the country. Two from Bakersfield were judged and Dick won second place; a prestigious award with a Certificate, a pin, and a \$60 check.

In 1953 Dick graduated from high school and went to work for G.H. Slack & Co. delivering and installing windows in new construction houses. He was making \$250 / month! In 1955 he went to work for Greenfare LTD, qualifying as a First year Apprentis carpenter, Union 743. This allowed him to get training so that he could build a vocational trade skill. He and Marianne had their first child and steady work was a definite requirement.

Working during the day and going to night school at Bakersfield College, Dick was able to move up to 4th year Apprentis which paid more and qualified for more jobs. This was during the period 1958-60.

His last job was at the construction of the Montgomery Ward building. They kept Dick employed until the last day when he helped complete the install of the 'Rabbit Ears' (wiring and antennas for the Tv's in the building).

They had purchased a house for \$12,750 and were raising a family. But the work was done and no jobs available; construction was not reliable. They had a house payment of \$97/month and unemployment of \$17/week. Knowing that construction was likely to be "the next job unknown", they decided Dick should further his education.

They sold the house, moved to Fresno where Dick went to college for two years to gain a Bachelors of Industrial Arts degree. They moved back to Bakersfield and Dick got a job at the Panama School on Taft highway where he taught history and an elective class on Mechanical Drawing.

During those early years, Dick wound up with two Master's Degrees: one in Industrial Arts Vocational and one in Educational Administration. In addition, he earned four Teacher's Credentials: General Subject, Teaching, Counseling, and Administration. These qualified Dick to basically do any of the four, anytime, anywhere.

Dick taught at BHS and Foothill High as well as helped develop some vocational courses for the school district. He spent 30 years in the Kern School system and then spent over 13 years as a Credential Advisor at Cal-State Bakersfield. All total of 46 years in the field of Education! Interesting to note: Lon Kellenberger signed Dick's first Contract at Cal-State, talk about a small world!

Dick and Marianne's proudest moments were: 3 children, 4 grand, 5 great-grand, and one great-great-grand children!

Life fulfillment?

-Long successful marriage, soon to be 70 years!

-Long successful family

-Long successful career

-Long successful faith

Anything left undone?

If there is, I want the Lord to tell me what I need to do.

I have only known Dick for a few years but I do admire his determination, professional courtesy, consideration for the needs of others, and his thoughtfulness. He is a 'ray of sunshine' to many of us and we appreciate his encouragement in doing our tasks.

Thankyou Dick for what you do and for who you are.

Larry Sitzman. Branch 163