

**Mission Statement:** Our Mission is to improve the lives of our members through fun activities and events while making Friends for Life.  
SiR (Sons in Retirement) is a non-profit, public benefit corporation formed for men.

**IT'S TIME FOR OUR ANNUAL  
CHRISTMAS LADIES DAY & FRIENDS LUNCHEON**

**WHEN?** TUESDAY DEC.9TH ... ..HAPPY HOUR 11:15 LUNCHEON 12:00  
Entertainment @ 12:30ish

**WHAT'S FOR LUNCH?** A TWO MAIN DISH BUFFET !!!

**FEATURING...** Poached Salmon and Roast Turkey, rice & mashed potatoes,  
gravy, salad+ dessert

**HOW MUCH?** \$36

**ENTERTAINMENT...**  
**THE SIR ORCHESTRAL BAND**  
with new sing-a-long songs and carols

**TICKETS ON SALE ... 3 ways to order!!!**

Mail checks to Marc Longoria; 2628 W. Pueblo Ave. Napa, Ca. 94558  
or Zelle me at: 707-363-4551 or Venmo me. My name, phone number and/or  
email address are above to use.or call me to order them. You will then pay at the  
door.  
(You will be responsible for the cost of any tickets not canceled by December 4th.

## Big Sir Report

It's December and I am ending another great year as Big Sir! I am grateful to all the members who help run the Branch and advise me as well as keep me on track!

I am not going to list them by name because I know I'll forget someone essential!! Take a look at our officers and Board Executive Committee (BEC) at the end of this newsletter and you'll see who the movers and shakers!

Thanks go to three members who volunteered to help out this year... Our new Newsletter editor Simeon Chavarria Jr, and two new BEC Directors Roger Wilson and Ken Merritt.

As many of you know I wasn't thinking I would be here the whole year for 2 reasons!

- The first being that my wife and I were planning on moving to Folsom to be closer to our sons and their families. Well, economics put an end to that! So we happily took our house off the market and have been enjoying Napa and all our friends, and continue to commute to see our kids!
- I almost died during an outpatient procedure in July but luckily after 7-8 days in ICU I survived!

We have a great branch with many members involved in activities both physical (golf, bowling, bocce and biking) and social (luncheons, Coffee Talk, SiR Orchestral Band and poker). If any of you have new ideas let us know! Anybody up for a walking group????

We also had almost one new member each month... If you are new this year, I hope you are active in our activities, if not let us know how to get you into something!

Happy holidays and Happy new year!!!!

jerry stabile | [j\\_stabile@yahoo.com](mailto:j_stabile@yahoo.com) | 408.828.3486

## SPOTLIGHT: November Luncheon

Little Sir Sandy Harris recognized and honored his fellow veterans during the November Luncheon on Veterans Day! There was a good turnout which resulted in five drawings! Margis took over the Birthday and Anniversary celebrations as part of the fun! Big Sir Jerry Stabile was on a vacation from retirement in Santa Barbara and Palm springs and missed the fun! See you at the Christmas luncheon/party, invite your family and friends and sing along with our in house band!

jerry stabile | [j\\_stabile@yahoo.com](mailto:j_stabile@yahoo.com) | 408.828.3486



## Little SiR Message

Wow, time has slipped away this month. It feels like just yesterday that I was writing my note for the last newsletter. I had a great Thanksgiving with my family located around the Bay Area. Hope you did too. As we thought of all the things to be thankful for I realized that one that made a big impact on me was that I have the network of friends that I get with all of you. It is important to me and I hope to be able to help keep our group strong and beneficial to every member in the years to come. I hope to see everyone at the December luncheon and at all of your activities in the new year.

### LUNCHEON MENU

The luncheon menu for our December luncheon will be a Buffet featuring Roast Turkey and Baked Salmon, mashed potatoes and gravy, Vegetables, and the standard salad and fruit bar. Dessert will also be served.

### GUEST SPEAKER, ah no....

The December Luncheon is a celebration of the Holiday Season and so the Entertainment will be the SiR Orchestral Band rather than a guest speaker. I truly enjoy seeing some of our members performing for us all, and though I can't carry a tune in a bucket, I will endeavor to join on favorite holiday songs.

See you at the luncheon. 9 December 2025.

Be safe and enjoy life!

Sandy harris | [avharris@gmail.com](mailto:avharris@gmail.com) | 360.440.4259

## Sunshine Report

We hope that all of you had a Happy Thanksgiving and a good visit with family and friends. We have learned from personal experience that there are many things that can split up a family on a holiday that traditionally is spent with family and friends. It seems that the split comes in greater numbers as we age. But enough of that.

I am happy to report that the last word that I have concerning Lance Houser is that he has come through surgery, radiation and into chemotherapy, weakened but still looking forward to recovery. He accepts that it is going to take awhile but his spirit is good and he is staying in the fight. God be with you Lance and family.

Please continue to hold those you know of who are struggling with illness or other problems in your prayers and good thoughts. A card with a note of encouragement is also a welcome activity. Also, please remember to include care givers in your thoughts and prayers. Theirs is often a lonely and demanding job given out of love.

As always, I am only a phone call or text away for including these folks in our thoughts and prayers. I can be reached at 707-363-2421 or [ikindigit@aol.com](mailto:ikindigit@aol.com).

Wishing you a Happy Holiday Season,

**russ kindig | [ikindigit@aol.com](mailto:ikindigit@aol.com) | 707-363-2421**

## Coffee Talk

Join your fellow members for **Coffee Talk**, pastries or breakfast sandwiches every

Monday at Panera Bakery at 9:30ish for fun and casual conversation. You never know what pops up to talk about but it is always interesting and sometimes informational!

**jerry stabile | [j\\_stabile@yahoo.com](mailto:j_stabile@yahoo.com) | 408.828.3486**



## Golf News

Golf has been going well. We have been filling up our tee time allotments, and everyone seems to be having a good time. We had just one cancelation, November 19 due to potential bad weather, but other than that it has been dry, but cold. It looks like fall is turning into winter very quickly. So make sure you're staying warm. Sorry, I don't have closest to the pin results to report.

Coming up in December, we have a short schedule of four golf dates.

Monday Dec 1st: Blue Rock East\*\*, Wednesday Dec 3rd: Eagle Vines\*, Wednesday Dec 10th: Napa Kennedy\*, and Wednesday Dec 17th: TBD\*\*.

As always, Jim Keller and Gary Garver are your local tournament chairmen. Jim Keller's contact number is 415-827-4904, and Gary Garver's is 707-251-9122.

Our SIRS double elimination match play competition has finally come to an end. As announced by Jim Keller November 3<sup>rd</sup>: Today we wrapped up the Match Play tournament. The last matches were:

Keller vs Onstad (we had tied on the first 18 holes). Onstad won on the 18<sup>th</sup> hole, 1 up.

Next was Onstad vs Gary Toczykowski. Onstad won 2 and 1.

Next was Timmer vs Onstad and Onstad won 2 and 1.

So Onstad and Timmer were tied, at one match each.

A coin was tossed and Timmer was the winner.

## STATE GOLFING NEWS

No new state golfing news to announce at this time.

Finally, 2026 SIR golfing payments are now due. \$58.00. Payment info went out to the Branch 65 golfers in an email directly to them. If you didn't receive one, please contact Marc.

Branch 65 SIRS, if you are interested in playing golf with your fellow SIRS, please give me a call, Marc Longoria, at 707-363-4551, or contact a Branch 65 SIR golfer and ask.

Thank you very much, and great golfing everyone.

**marc longoria | [icu2yru@sbcglobal.net](mailto:icu2yru@sbcglobal.net) | 707.363.4451**

## Poker Corner

Well after a modest table of five players in October, SiR Branch 65 & 149 poker players filled up the table with ten players in our November game on Monday the 10<sup>th</sup>. We had two lively poker sessions and were able to pay the top five winners in each session. In session one, Paul Pyle came out on top followed by Tom Short and Rich Hanf. In fourth place was Ken Merritt with our monthly luncheon ticket drawing ticket separator, Roger Wilson, taking fifth place.

At this time I would like to welcome our newest poker player to our SiR's poker group, Keith Gray. Keith had zero experience playing Texas Hold'em poker. But he likes cards. We gave Keith a hand ranking chart, showing the rank of poker hands from a royal flush at the top all the way down to just high card. We also gave him a little poker chip cheat sheet showing the values of our three different color chips so he could try to keep them straight. We were very nice and told Keith we would help him with the hands and the chips. Then we threw Keith into the pond with nine sharks circling around like there was chum in the water. So guess what, wait for it, wait for it.....Keith won the second session! Congratulations Keith! Willie Joshua took second place, and Richard Bennett third. Tom won again taking fourth, and Roger won fifth for the second time. Congratulations to everyone finishing in the money.



Everyone had a good time playing and thanks to Bill Parks for hosting and putting out a nice spread for us. Now on with Ten Golden Rules of Poker, here's # six

### The Sixth Golden Rule of Poker: Manage Your Bankroll

Since we are doing the 10 golden rules of poker, I'm including number six although it does not really apply to us. It is for people who regularly play poker and the loss of money may affect their family and household budget. But if you catch the bug and start playing regularly at a public poker room or casino, it is something to keep in mind. Bankroll management is important in Texas Hold'em as it helps you avoid going broke and helps you to play within your limits. It involves setting a budget, choosing the right stakes, and avoiding chasing losses. But as I said, it shouldn't apply to us so we'll move on to number seven next month.

If you would like to play Texas Hold'em with us, please give me or one of our players a call. Come on down and take our money just like Keith did! Actually, we do it to have a fun afternoon with fellow SiR's. We play monthly, and the stakes to play are very small, just \$10 a session. But you get a lot of entertainment for your buck!

THANKS!

## Membership Report

With the recent influx of new members over the past few months, Jim Cheney's transfer from Branch 149 to Branch 65 (welcome Jim!), and the move to inactive status of several members, we stand at 78 active members as of now. Nearly half of those (37) attended the November lunch meeting.

Please keep participating and please keep recruiting new members! Thanks!

Note: Jim Cheney's membership transfer to Branch 65 was unanimously approved by those members of the BEC who voted. This gives us 78 members as of now.

Jeff Richard | [jeff.richard@att.net](mailto:jeff.richard@att.net) | 707.628.3750

## Bocce Ball

Our last Match in October, on the 28th was pretty much our usual. The weather had turned cold and so we started, losing game 1, 8-12. We switched up players and were still rolling cold and lost Game 2, 9-12. But we brought back the big guns for Game 3 and were unstoppable, winning 12-9. Overall things could be better but at least we weren't being skunked. On November 6<sup>th</sup> we came back to starting the match in the dark and cold, and voila, a Casino in Game 1 by Ken and me, and we won 12-5. Game 2 kept the momentum and Paul, Carl, Bruce and Mike won a nail biter 12-11. And in Game 3 we finally closed it out with a win, 12-4. After a Bye week allowed our injuries to heal we headed into the next match on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November. But....The A team lost Game 1, 5-12. Next crew saved face and clawed to a 12-7 win, before the euphoria of winning caused overconfidence and we lost the 3<sup>rd</sup> game 3-12. There were no games played on the week of Thanksgiving. We have been flirting with the top 3 positions in our division for the last couple of weeks, and the season has 2 more weeks of play with us having Matches on the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> of December. Then we should have a couple of months until the Winter/ Spring season starts. There has been some discussion of fielding a second SiR team in the future so if you might be interested talk to me or Marc Longoria or any other team member, and who knows.

Have fun and keep it in front of the Pallino.

**Sandy harris | avharris@gmail.com | 360.440.4259**

## The SOBs



Pictured in their favorite practice space at the Bennett studio are the "Sir Orchestrated Band members (L-R) Jim, Jerry, Allan, Richard Margis and Randy...our shy keyboardist Jeff volunteered to take the picture!!!

They have spent November working up some great popular and seasonal tunes for your listening and sing-along pleasure for our Br. 65 annual Christmas luncheon. We hope all branch members will be there!

## December Birthdays

Dec 01	John Potrebic
Dec 05	Peter George
Dec 14	Roger Wilson
Dec 21	Jake Wilson
Dec 29	Gary Garver
Dec 30	Carliss Such

## December Wedding Anniversaries

Dec 19, 1981	Allan and Peah Armstrong	44 years
Dec 29, 1990	Lance and Frances Houser	35 years
Dec 30, 1966	Tom and Bente Shoar	59 years
Dec 31, 1976	Richard and Linda Bennett	49 years

Special celebration for December Birthdays and Anniversaries at December luncheon.

## Editor's Pick

Rosie, My Sister

It was the crack of dawn when I first heard my mother's cry. She was wailing and calling for my sister, Rosie. The sound of her voice was haunting, yearning, full of grief, sorrow and pain. This was one of many occasions that eventually triggered my thoughts of rebellion, of running away, of counting the years until it would become my turn to leave home for college. I was fourteen, and I would have at least two more years before I was to graduate from high school.

My mother, Gloria, was a loving and pious woman. She started her day going to church early morning then did chores around the house. She loved travelling, nature, was adventurous, generous, caring and kind. She cooked, baked, had a buy and sell business to augment my father's school teacher's income.

As a child in her house, you were used to her cooking and baking, and that everything she made was tasty and excellent. She made homemade artisan tableya and perfected the process, which made her famous. It was 100% cacao, a traditional drink for breakfast often paired with "puto" a sticky rice in coconut milk, and ginger.

My father, Simeon, was a disciplinarian, a breadwinner, organized, a dignified school teacher with excellent handwriting. He hiked about 3 kilometers every day to school before bicycles and motorcycles were common where we lived. He was a great tennis player, a popular pool player, and refereed basketball tournaments.

It all started on November 22, 1971. I was a sophomore in high school. The night before, two of my older sisters, Corazon and Rosie, and her fiancée, Eddie, boarded a small ferry boat from Palompon to Bogo. They left for Bogo, Cebu, to make arrangements for Rosie and Eddie's wedding, planned the following week. The rest of the family were planning to follow days before the wedding.

On that fateful night, the Beethoven, a small ferry boat carrying passengers and overloaded cargo, sank in the deep waters of Bogo. My sister Corazon, Eddie, and a few other passengers were rescued.

My other sister Rosie was lost at sea. Neighbors and friends volunteered to search during the day, but the search was aborted after a few days. Her disappearance was reported in the local news and a drama based on her story aired on the radio. Her body was never recovered.

Rosie was a school teacher in one of the barrios in Palompon. At 23, she was young, beautiful, with signature dimples when she smiled. At the early age of 4, she taught me songs, brought me to choir practices, exposed to amateur singing competitions. At 8, I represented our school in Literary Musical Contests and won each year until I finished grammar school.

Corazon was 21 and a college student in Cebu studying to become a school teacher. To this day, she developed a fear, and is traumatized whenever she boards a vessel.

After the incident, we were three siblings remaining in the household. Myself, my younger sister Socorro, and Bartolome, the youngest in the family.

Loreta, the oldest sibling, was married, Corazon and Jose were in Cebu studying in college. Vicente was in the army.

Every night after the tragedy, we prayed the three mysteries of the holy rosary; joyful, sorrowful and glorious. At such a young age, it became my mission to make my mother laugh and be happy again.

At 16, I finished high school. My mother and I took a ferry boat to Cebu, where I registered at a University to pursue a major in chemical engineering. A week after I enrolled, she went home. At last, I thought, I won't hear my mother's cry again.

That night I stayed up in bed crying so hard until my tears ran dry. It was my first time in a strange city without my mother. This sadness went on for many months.

Every now and then, she came for a surprise visit, and I felt relieved. Eventually, the yearning subsided and somehow I learned how to manage my homesickness. I realized it was her way of preparing me for my future.

At 21, I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering. I traveled to Manila on my own, found a job, and settled. Once a year, I visited Palompon and stayed at my parent's house. I also helped my parents with tuition and expenses for my other siblings while in college. I planned to save enough to pay for my parents' airfare to come to visit me.

At 30, I got married to my wife, Connie, and immigrated to the US. I was fortunate to land a job in pharmaceutical and medical device industries. We first settled in Pittsburgh, then Pleasant Hill, and finally Napa.

In November 1989, we returned to the Philippines for the first time. Our son, EJ was 11 months old, born on same day as my mother's birthday. I was very excited and proud to finally show him to my mother, father, and siblings.

We arrived at the airport and my mother was waiting to welcome us. She was smiling, glowing, and happy. But somehow, I felt a void behind that happy face. That feeling when she left me in college came back all over again. While in Palompon, we received a lot of invitations from friends, relatives and school, since it was our town fiesta in honor of our Patron Saint St. Francis Xavier. My mother was taking care of EJ while we were out enjoying the fiesta celebration.

On the 6th of December 1989, a few days after the fiesta, we stayed home, playing mahjong, exchanging stories, as my mother prepared special treats for everyone. At the end of the day, we swapped our necklaces upon her request. She put her arms around my neck while I gave her mine.

We woke up late the following day, ate breakfast, when someone knocked at the door. My mother suffered a heart attack and was rushed to the hospital. I arrived in time to witness her lifeless body on the gurney, yet I whispered; "wake up and open your eyes, I am here Mama". She was gone and I was in denial.

Later that day, my father recounted what happened that morning on the beach. My mother was roasting her cacao beans when she decided to cool down by the water. She removed the necklace that I gave her the night before and said "guniti na", meaning "hold it". She suffered a massive heart attack while wading in the shallow water. She finally succumbed and reunited with my sister Rosie who lost her life in the same body of water. She was 68 years old.

During her wake, my older sister asked if Connie and I were expecting. In our culture, there is a belief that death is sacrificed in order to give a new life. Weeks later, back in the USA, we found out that Connie was pregnant with our 2nd son, Sam Joseph.

Now at 68, retired with my cancer-survivor wife, blessed with children, a grandson, and a granddaughter on the way, I still wake up at the crack of dawn with fond memories, the necklace and my mother's warm embrace.

**simeon chavarria jr**



# The Grapevine

## SIR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

**SiR Branch 65**  
Volume 52 10  
**December 2025**

### Branch Executive Committee (BEC)

Officers		Directors
Big SiR	Jerry Stabile	Gene Young
Little SiR	Sandy Harris	Chuck Morse
Secretary	Ron Critchley	Frank Sanchez
Treasurer	Sam Jones	Keith Knox
Assistant Treasurer	Marc Longoria	Lance Houser
		Roger Wilson
		Ken Merritt

### Committee Chairs

Sunshine	Russ Kindig
House Officer & Special Events	Frank Sanchez
Bocce, Golf, Poker	Marc Longoria
Bowling	Dave Ellingson
Coffee Talk	Jerry Stabile
Birthdays, Anniversaries, Newsletter	Simeon Chavarria Jr.



Responsibility declaration: All activities arranged for or sponsored by Sons in Retirement, Inc., or its Branches, or for the convenience and pleasure of the members and their guests who desire to participate. Sons In Retirement, Inc., and its Branches, do not assume any responsibility for the well-being or safety of the participants or passengers or their property or any damage whatsoever, in any matter pertaining to stand activities.