



Jan. 17, 2022

From: Rick Kindle, State SIR President, 2022

### The Year of the Branch

The last 6 months have been very busy since being elected in August. We have been working to fill all of our key Positions on our State Roster. Our Regional Directors continue to find very capable members to fill our Area Governor Positions. Our AGs are the backbone of the SIR organization and are very much appreciated.



We continue to monitor the Pandemic to ensure our members remain safe. The Branches are staying on top of their local conditions and are making those hard decisions regarding holding face-to-face luncheon meetings. In late Summer and Fall, many Branches were again holding their meetings and the future was looking vastly improved. Then the Omicron Variant appeared and it has already taken its toll. Many Branches have again canceled their face-to-face meetings and are again having ZOOM meetings.

On January 15, I hosted a Fireside Chat to review where we are with SIR and to provide you with the latest information available. This was video recorded and is available via the Home page of our SIR website, or directly from Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRflqzDgkpo>. There is also a link (on the Home page) to the text messages from the Chat Room that you will find informative and interesting.

### Publication Deadline for Future Issues

*SIR Happenings will be published Quarterly*

- Deadline for future issues will be:*
- January 15 for the February Issue
  - April 15 for the May Issue
  - July 15 for the August Issue
  - October 15 for the November Issue

**SIR Happenings is published by the Information Systems Committee.**

Send news and questions to:  
Jerry Sabo, Executive Editor  
Email: [jlsabo3@comcast.net](mailto:jlsabo3@comcast.net)

Sammy Lum,  
Assistant Editor Email:  
[lumsam@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lumsam@sbcglobal.net)

### SIR Publicity

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**2022 STATE OFFICERS**  
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We held our first 2022 Board meeting on January 12. This was also video recorded and there is a link on the State website at: <https://sirinc.org/>. You will find that your Board has been busy attempting to provide tools for the Branch Leaders.

1. **Securing Branch Leaders.** This is like the movie, Ground Hog Day! It just keeps repeating itself. If members believe SIR offers them value, and if they are having fun and believe new members would also enjoy SIR, **they need to engage!!** Branches with large memberships are folding because no leaders will step forward. This is almost a crime. SIR provides so many benefits to its members. It is very low cost, all-volunteer, and continues to provide great social and physical benefits. Those that benefit the most, participants in Golf, Bowling, Hiking, Biking, Wine Tasting, etc. need to realize that if they are not already involved, they should become involved in their Branch leadership. It does not take that much time to help in the tasks that need to be done. Bottom Line: **if you want SIR to survive, step up.** Otherwise, the continuing downward trend in leadership and membership will eventually be our demise!
2. **COVID-19 Vaccination.** SIR highly recommends you receive the Booster vaccination and it appears for many members that this is in process or completed.
3. **COVID-19 Testing at Home.** SIR Branch Covid Protocol #3 states “Unvaccinated Attendees can attend such (indoor) activities if they provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test administered within 3 days prior to an event they want to attend. For this option to be provided at the Branch level, it must be approved by the Branch BEC. Furthermore, due to difficulties with obtaining these tests at normal testing facilities, we received inquiries as to whether testing at home was acceptable. The State Board will provide an answer within the near future.
4. **Revision of Policy 31.** The SIR Board recently approved for smaller Branches, that it allows for a new BEC with a minimum of three Officers and 2 Directors. One member can be both Secretary and Treasurer. This is an action to assist smaller branches by providing an avenue to survival and staying active.
5. **Leadership Summit I & II.** These Summits (or training sessions) were provided by the State to ensure the latest training and information is available to existing and new Branch leaders. All the presentations are available on our State website <https://sirinc.org/>
6. **Community Involvement.** The State Board has approved a pilot program to allow for adoption of Community Involvement by Branches. Branch 8 has started the program and is reporting success. If your Branch is interested in starting such a program, please contact Tony de Losada, Chairman of the State Growth and Membership at [tonydelosada@gmail.com](mailto:tonydelosada@gmail.com)
7. **Press Release Templates.** To promote your Branch’s new Big Sir and also your Branch, we have posted a template for your use. The template is on the first page of our website: <https://sirinc.org/> So far 10 Branches have used the template and have posted Press Releases and more are in process. 90 to go!



8. **I’m Doing My Part.** This program has been in the works for over two years. It was the brainchild of our Past State President Ed Benson, but was delayed due to the COVID outbreak. We have put this in play to encourage more volunteering and to reward members who are recruiting new members. Big Sirs please contact your Area Governors to start this program and obtain your pins. Details of the program are posted on our State Website.
9. **New Branch Brochure and Invites Cards.** The templates for these new Brochures, Invite Cards, and Business Cards that follow our Branding program are posted on our website and I encourage you to use them. Here is the link: <https://sirinc.org/sir-branded-marketing-materials/>. Any questions on how to use them, call or email me.

10. **New Banners for Web pages and Newsletters.** These are on our website and also available from Tony [tonydelosada@gmail.com](mailto:tonydelosada@gmail.com) who has the most recent update. They are attractive and eye-catching. Please use them instead of the OLD Rooster!
11. **Finding a Speaker.** With more Branches going back to ZOOM luncheon meetings, Speakers or programs are in demand. We have posted 27 programs to our website. Go to **Branch info**, then **Branch Resources** then **Find a Speaker**. These are videos that can be shown at your meeting. We are working on finding more programs that your members will find entertaining and informative.
12. **Honoring Veterans.** I provided details of this on my Fireside Chat. If you have further interest, I suggest you watch the Chat and then give me a call.
13. **Facebook and Next Door.** We are encouraging the use of both of these programs to promote SIR. If you are using either of these programs, we could use your help to promote their use. I know many of you do not use these programs but younger people do and our wives do. We need content to post on Facebook. The best content would be pictures or short videos of your SIR events. We are looking for Administrators so please contact Alan Baker or myself to start building this program. [baker@alanbaker.net](mailto:baker@alanbaker.net)
14. **SIR Foundation.** There is a non-profit SIR Foundation that we can use for tax-deductible donations. If you are interested in making donations, please contact our Foundation President, Derek Southern, [Derek.Southern@gmail.com](mailto:Derek.Southern@gmail.com). The Foundation has purchased 10 licenses to make ZOOM available for use by all branches with no meeting length restrictions at a cost of over \$1000 annually. Donations towards this expense are welcomed as the Foundation has no source of income other than donations.

I have taken up enough of your time but hopefully have provided some meaningful information. If you wish to contact me directly, my telephone number is 209-652-8608, my email is [rick@kindlean-dassoc.com](mailto:rick@kindlean-dassoc.com)

Stay Safe

Rick Kindle

SIR State President 2022



Lee Moy

San Mateo

# Sons in Retirement

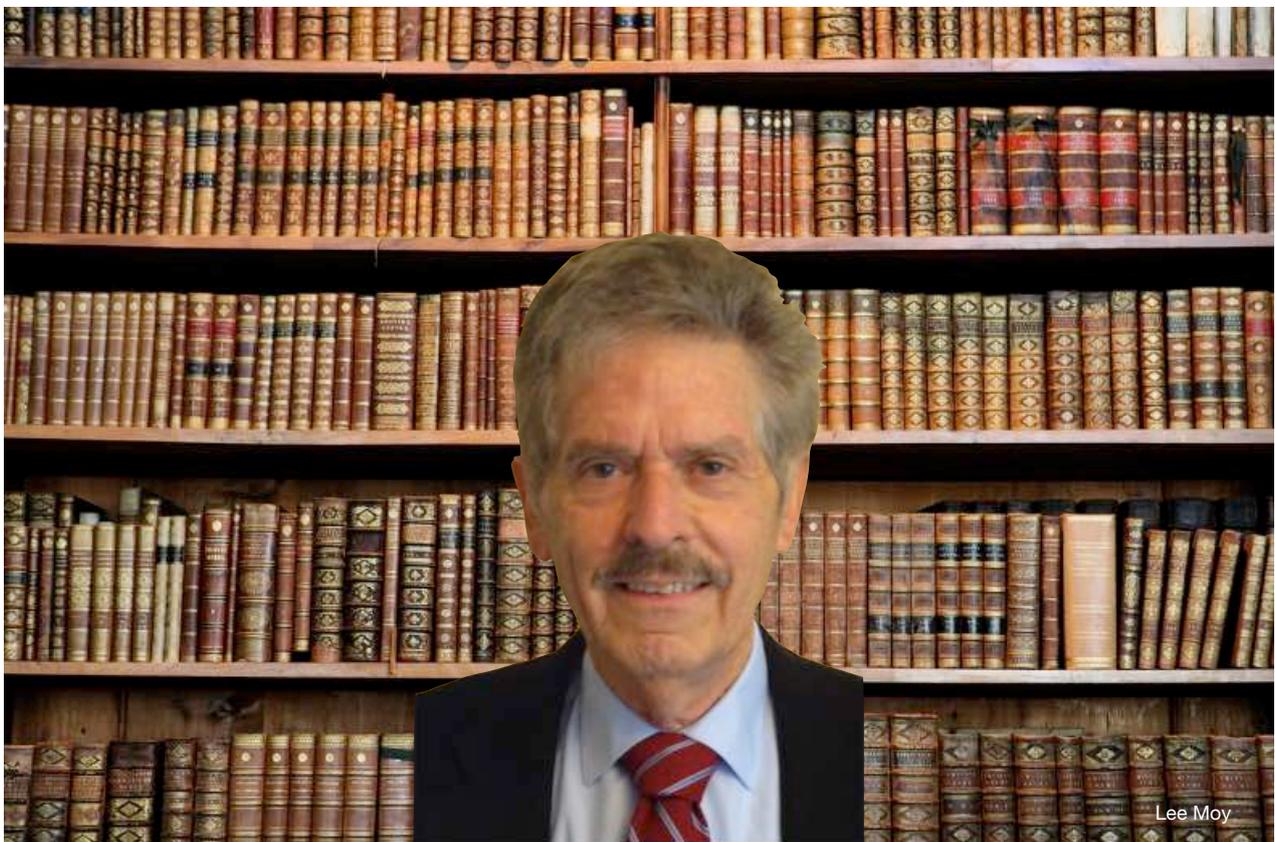
"There are no strangers here, only friends that haven't met." W. B. Yeats

STATE SIR BOARD PRESENTATION

**HONORARY LIFE MEMBER**

**ALAN H. MELNICOE**

**LEGAL ADVISOR**



State SIR Legal Advisor Alan Melnicoe was recently acknowledged for his insightful counsel. He along with president Stu Williams and Insurance Chairman Craig Hoffhines teamed to provide guidance with regards to the Covid-19 protocols & waiver. Alan brought over 35 years of legal experience: partner in a Silicon Valley law firm, counsel for technology startup companies/businesses, and a Hastings professor of law specializing in contract drafting and analysis. He is presently a member of Damian Reynolds (SIR founder) Branch 1 & has volunteered to be their assistant secretary.

# A Few Shots from the Holiday Luncheon



## Tom Keefer & Bill Schmid Awarded Honorary Life Membership

SIR awards a few rare individuals the distinction of *Honorary Life Member* (HLM) as recognition for exceptional and extraordinary service to SIR. The SIR Manual emphasizes that “It is not to be treated lightly or awarded merely on the basis of good fellowship. The award will be meaningful if bestowed only to those who, upon careful review and scrutiny, are found to have clearly earned it through faithful and outstanding service to the organization for five years or more.” The nomination for HLMs is submitted to the State SIR for ratification after approval by no less than 2/3 of the Branch Executive Committee.

### Barbara Keefer receiving husband Tom’s HLM from Area Governor Foster Kinney



HLM Tom Keefer joined Branch Number One in March 2002. He served as Secretary of the Stock Study Group 2002-2003; Secretary of the Economic Research Group 2004-2006; Asst. Speaker Chair 2007-2012; Chair Economics Research 2008-2009; Chair Activities 2010-2011, 2015; Asst. Roster Preparation 2012-2013; Little Sir 2012 (taking over Big Sir duties in mid-year); Big Sir 2013; Asst. New Member Orientation 2014, Asst. Nominating 2014-2015, 2017; and Chair Nominating

Committee 2016. Tom also undertook a thorough survey of Branch Activities in 2011 and was instrumental in organizing our recruiting efforts at two Senior Showcases in 2012. The Branch awarded Tom’s HLM posthumously to his wife Barbara

HLM Bill Schmid joined Branch Number One in August 2010. He served as Activities Chair 2012-2013; Recruiting Chair 2013-2014; Little Sir 2013, Big Sir 2014, Asst. Roster Preparation 2014, Asst. New Member Orientation 2015-2018; New Member Orientation 2019-current; Asst. Nominating



Bill receiving HLM from Foster Kinney

## Edit Them Out of Thinking & Speech

### Self-defeating Phrases to Avoid

Sarah Showfety, in her August 24th posting to Lifestacker.com, identified 11 self-sabotaging phrases that she urges folks to avoid, because “... saying these things unwittingly holds us back.” [see: <https://lifestacker.com/11-self-sabotaging-phrases-to-drop-from-your-vocabulary-1847529464>] Following are the phrases folks are well-advised to **stop** using:

#### “I’m not ready”

This excuse assumes that readiness will develop at some ill-defined time in the future. Even after landing a good job and accumulating some experience, most people still do not feel ready. Those who spend too much time preparing often find themselves in the same place a year – or ten years – later. People only change when the pain of not changing is greater than the anticipated pain of dealing with a new situation.

#### “Just my luck”

Folks use this phrase to shirk responsibility of their actions (or inactions), blaming “bad luck.” Some folks who play this “victim card” harbor the unspoken belief that they have no control over what happens to them. To defeat this fallacy, consider the last activity that turned out poorly. Then think of different actions that would have improved the outcome.

### **“I should...”**

“Should” is a judgment word, one implying that some action is the correct choice to make, and if it’s not chosen, some negative consequence will ensue. Zero-in on a choice and replace “I should” with “I will.” Making a choice and committing to an objective empowers folks and reduces fear.

### **“I’m not smart/talented/brave enough”**

This response is based on fear. Folks don’t need superior intellect, exceptional courage, financial prowess, or deep understanding to succeed at worthwhile endeavors. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Focus on strengths. Bolster courage by practicing bravery.

### **“I don’t have time.”**

When pursuing life goals, it’s easy to cite lack of time as a reason not to get started. To avoid this excuse, see the phrase as a delusion. Folks make time for activities of greatest value to them. Envision the results from as little 10 or 20 minutes a day focused on a major goal that’s been deferred.

### **“I’ll try”**

Master Yoda wisely said, “Do or do not. There is no try.” This insidious two-word phrase expresses an implicit lack of commitment. While “I’ll try” is more comfortable, “I will” is more productive, because it requires choosing and being accountable for the results.

### **“Maybe”**

“Maybe” keeps folks stuck in a comfortable malaise of indecision. They see “maybe” as a decision, one that pushes the same choice further into the future. Realize that deciding to go forward provides more time to achieve an objective.

### **“But so-and-so really needs me”**

While it’s wonderful to help others, some folks become perpetual martyrs and leave no time and energy for themselves. To lead a more balanced life, folks must reserve productive time for themselves.

### **“I don’t know how”**

Most new activities start with not knowing how. Consider what life would be like if folks only did things they already knew how to do. It’s the human condition to not know how to do something at the beginning — a magical fount of necessary knowledge does not exist. We learn as we go. Seek out folks willing to help answer questions.

### **“If it happens, it happens”**

This phrase implies that people have zero agency or impact on reaching an objective. Of the things most desired, most don’t just “happen.” They require vision, commitment, and persistent action.

### **“If only...”**

These two words often lead into a wish, hope, or a complaint. “If only I was younger.” “If only I’d gone to a better college.” “If only my boss liked me.” Phrases like these keep folks in a state of fantasy and helplessness. They envisage circumstances or conditions that would engender a successful, happy life. Recognizing this is impossible is quite freeing. To suppress this futile perspective, shift it into a declarative action, e.g., “Tomorrow, I will...” or “When I get my real estate license...”, and follow it up with the next step toward the major goal.



*“Opportunity texted me, tweeted me, liked me, linked to me, friended me, blogged me and spammed me. I was expecting it to knock!”*

## Advice from a Cybersecurity Expert

### What to Know and What to Do When Scammers Go Phishing

Suspicious emails appear intermittently in my inbox, usually titled something like, “Your att.net email account (or your PayPal account) will be terminated unless you update your account information by (date)...” These messages always seem a bit off, and my practice has been to immediately mark them as “**phishing**” and delete them. My thinking is that, if they’re legitimate and an account is terminated, I’ll just re-apply for a new one. Ed.



Rick Wash, Associate Professor of Information Science and Cybersecurity at Michigan State University, has found that “...most people are good at almost all of the skills that computer security experts use to notice fake emails...” He concludes that becoming 100% protected “...comes down to listening to your instincts.” [see Wash’s presentation on his research at <https://www.usenix.org/conference/soups2021/presentation/wash>] In his research, Wash found that, “...when **cybersecurity experts** receive a **phishing** email, like most people, they initially accept it at face value and assume it’s genuine. They try to figure out what the email is asking them to do, and how that relates to things in their life. As they read, they notice small things that seem off, or different from what would typically be in similar email, typos in a professional email, a bank providing account information in an email instead of the standard notification that a message is waiting for them in the bank’s secure messaging system, and/or someone uncharacteristically emailing them without mentioning it in person first.”

Wash explains that “...noticing these signs isn’t enough to figure out the email is a fraud. Instead, the experts just became uncomfortable with the email message. It wasn’t until they saw something in the message that reminded them of **phishing** that they became suspicious. They would see an anomaly like a link that the email was trying to get them to click. In their minds, this is commonly associated with **phishing** emails.”

Combined with the uncomfortable feeling about the email message, this reminder prompted the experts to recognize that **phishing** might explain the weird things they noticed. They became suspicious of the message and investigated further to figure out if it was a genuine or a fraud.

When Wash interviewed people **without** computer security experience, he found that they use a similar process. “Most people noticed things that seemed **off**, became uncomfortable with the email, remembered **phishing**, and investigated.” Wash found that most folks he interviewed noticed multiple problems when they saw a fake email and felt uncomfortable with the message. Wash thinks that “...the trick is remembering that phishing exists.”

He found that, “...if people thought about phishing, they were also good at investigating.” Instead of looking at technical details, most folks either contacted the sender or asked others for help. But they were still able to correctly discern whether or not an email message was a phishing attack.

### Phishing the Internet Sea

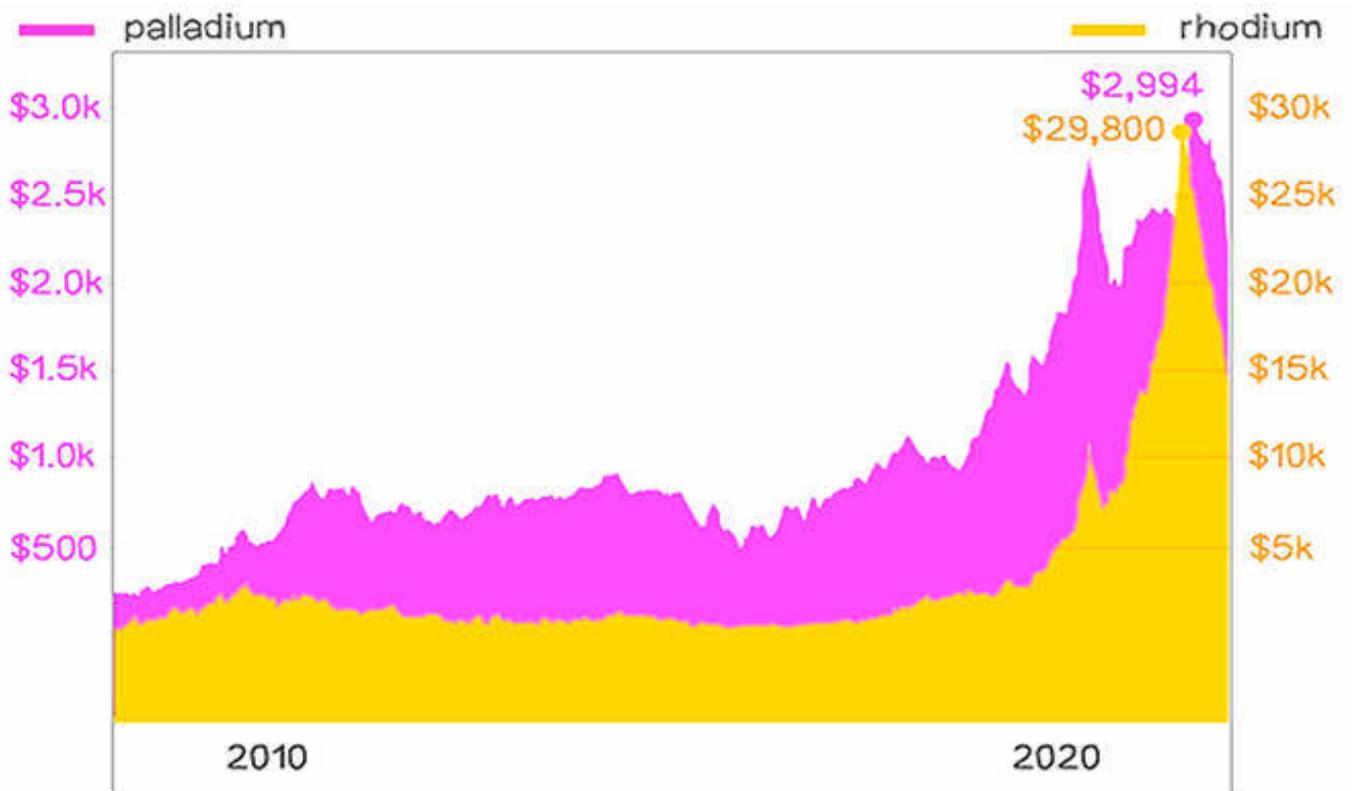
The first “official” definition of **phishing** appeared in 1996 when the new word appeared in *Merriam-Webster* with the following general definition: “...the fraudulent practice of tricking Internet users into revealing personal or confidential information which can then be used illicitly.”

The most common form, also called **phishing**, “...uses emails linked to web sites to trick people into typing confidential information (e.g., passwords and credit card numbers) into web sites that look like the sites of real companies, especially financial institutions.”

By analogy with the sport of angling, these Internet scammers use e-mail **lures**, setting out **hooks** to phish for passwords and financial data from the **sea** of Internet users. The hackers know that although most users won’t **take the bait**, a few unlucky folks most likely will (like **phish** in the **sea**).

## Catalytic Converter Economics

The police blotters in newspapers often report thefts of catalytic converters (CC). These devices, part of cars' exhaust systems, convert noxious exhaust fumes into non-toxic gasses. Thieves find CCs attractive targets because they are valuable (\$800 - \$3,500, new) and easy to steal (a practiced thief with an electric saw can remove a CC from a car in 30 seconds!). Between 2018 and 2020, reported CC thefts increased 11-fold, while an estimated 60% of them go unreported. The heart of a CC is a ceramic honeycomb containing three precious metals that catalyze the chemical reactions: platinum, palladium, and rhodium. In the last three years the cost of palladium has increased 3-fold to \$3,000/ounce and the cost of rhodium has increased 10-fold to a lofty \$30,000/ounce. The primary reason for these cost increases is the shortage of supply. Palladium and rhodium are byproducts of platinum mining and mines have cut back operations due to the excess of platinum in the marketplace. At the same time, demand for these metals is increasing. The catalytic converter market is growing about 8% per year globally. Most stolen CCs are broken open to retrieve the ceramic honeycomb inside, and an illegal smelter retrieves the precious metals from the honeycomb. At current prices, the value of the metals retrieved from a single CC range from \$600 to \$1,400!



**Benefits of Confession** A reluctant Altar Boy enters the confessional, "Bless me Father, for I have sinned. I have been with a loose girl." The priest asks, "Is that you, Joey Pagano?" "Yes, Father, it is." "And who was the girl you were with?" "I can't tell you, Father. I don't want to ruin her reputation." "Well, Joey, I'm sure to find out her name sooner or later so you may as well tell me now. Was it Tina Minetti?" "I cannot say." "Was it Teresa Mazzarelli?" "I'll never tell." "Was it Nina Capelli?" "I'm sorry, but I cannot name her." "Was it Cathy Piriano?" "My lips are sealed." "Was it Rosa DiAngelo, then?" "Please, Father, I cannot tell you." The priest sighs in frustration. "You're very tight lipped, and I admire that. But you've sinned and have to atone. As punishment, you cannot be an altar boy for four months. Now you go and behave yourself." Joey walks back to his pew, and his friend Franco slides over and whispers, "What'd you get?" "Four months' vacation and five good leads!"



## Bill Howland Shares His Misery



### A Ghastly Gruesome Gaggle of Groaners

Folks may want to thank Bill for these bits of humor. Or they may want to do something else to him! (Photo is NOT Bill!)

Dad, are we pyromaniacs? Yes, we arson.

Writing my name in cursive is my signature move.

What do you call a pig with laryngitis? Disgruntled.

Why do bees stay in their hives during winter? Swarm.

If you're bad at haggling, you'll end up paying the price.

Just so everyone is clear, I'm going to put my glasses on.

A commander walks into a bar and orders everyone around.

I lost my job as a stage designer. I left without making a scene.

### A Paltry Pile of Putrid Puns, etc.

Folks may want to thank Bill for these bits of word play.

Or they may want to do something else to him! (Photo is NOT Bill!)

The pirate paid to get his ears pierced? *A buccaneer.*

Once worked at a pizza parlor to get by. *I kneaded the dough.*

Lost my girlfriend's audiobook. *Now, I'll never hear the end of it.*

Never buy flowers from a monk. *Only you can prevent florist friars.*

It's unwise to share your secrets with a clock, *because time will tell.*

I told my contractor not to carpet my steps. *He gave me a blank stare.*

DARK is spelled with a K and not a C, *because you can't see in the dark.*

### Wads of Wonderfully Wonky Wordplay

Folks may want to thank Bill for these — or do something else to him! (Photo is NOT Bill!)

People talked about me behind my back.

*They discussed me.*

Prison may be just one word to you,  
*but for some people, it's a whole sentence.*

My cooking is awesome; everyone says so.

*Even the smoke alarm cheers me on.*

My friends and I have named our music group "Duvet."

*It's a cover band.*

Scientists got together to study the effects of alcohol on a person's walk.

*The results were staggering.*

I've started telling everyone about the benefits of eating dried grapes.

*It's all about raisin awareness.*

What did the surgeon say to the patient who insisted on closing his own incision?

*Suture self.*

I asked the clerk at the toy store where to find the Arnold Schwarzenegger dolls.

*He replied, "Aisle B, back."*



A Non-profit Organization For Retired Men

# HOROLOGIUM

Monthly Newsletter - Est. 1963

North Bay Branch No. 7, San Rafael

Website: [www.sirinc2.org/branch7](http://www.sirinc2.org/branch7)

**BIG SIR—Dick Robinson**

Hello Fellow Sirs – Here we are about to embark on the new year. I am finishing up my two-year stint as your Big Sir and am turning over the reins to new leaders. Michael Sommer will take over as Big Sir, Dr Bob Bundy as Little Sir, Ron DeCook as Secretary, Al Wuthnow as Treasurer, myself as Asst Treasurer and Terry Aleshire as Membership chairman. Bob Rigler, Ted Pullen, Ralph Sherer, Ken Kauer are continuing as board members and Dave Bernardi is joining the board. David Denning, George Sarantakis and Fred Hajduk are leaving the board. Thanks, gentlemen, for your service.

To recap the past year, Branch 7 resumed monthly lunches in August and continued this fall. We did fairly well with attendance of 40-45 for fall meetings and 72 in December including lady guests. The speakers were interesting, and we enjoyed getting together again after the 16-month layoff for Covid. Lucky 7 Golf group started weekly play in March and continued all summer & fall. Our other activities (pool, bowling, bocce, wine tasting, etc.) remained on hold for the time being. Unfortunately, we lost several of our members this last year through deaths and moves. But we welcomed two new members this fall so Branch 7 now has 95 members on our roster. To those members with illnesses or injuries we send our best wishes for recovery. These include Greg Poulos, Tom Bonggi, Bob Testa and Bob Giachino. Take care guys and come back when you can. Our Treasurer, Al Wuthnow, is going to be collecting \$35 annual dues at January lunch so bring checks. Also Ted Pullen will be taking reservations and checks for our Valentine lunch including lady guests on Feb 3. Off we go into the new year with high hopes for lots of good times.



**LITTLE SIR—Michael Sommer**

As the year draws to a close the world is still struggling with the Covid 19 Pandemic and its assorted variants. The SIR state organization has sent us an official notice that all indoor SIR meetings will require wearing masks unless eating per State of California requirements. This will apply to the 30 days beginning December 15th. This will affect at the very least our January 6th meeting. We are required to follow the State SIR requirements or we would lose our liability coverage that we have through them. With that cheery note I will also remind everyone that for our Valentine's luncheon in February, everyone, this includes significant others, who attends, must have proof or have shown proof in the past of Covid vaccinations and must sign or have on file a signed "Waiver and Release of Liability" At the February luncheon we will be asking for those at the door. For your convenience, a copy of the Waiver is attached to this newsletter. You can print it and bring it with you already signed by your date to the Valentine lunch. See you at the January meeting.



## Area 8 Monthly Meetings

- Branch 7 McInnis Park 1st Thursday
- Branch 22 McInnis Park 1st Tuesday
- Branch 47 McInnis Park 4th Tuesday
- Branch 58 Elks Lodge Petaluma 3rd Tuesday
- Branch 68 McInnis Park 2nd Tuesday
- Branch 134 Embassy Suites 1st Tuesday
- Branch 147 Elks Lodge Petaluma 2nd Tuesday



Luther Burbank Branch 17

Santa Rosa, CA

New Website: [www.sir17.org](http://www.sir17.org)

THE REDWOOD BARK NEWSLETTER

## SIR Branch 17 is Looking for **NEW** Members Check Out Our Revised Website at: <https://www.sir17.org> with new information and forms available.

Contact Potential Members Today and Invite Them to the Next Meeting!

### **BIG Sir** George Traverso's Message

For me, November is the month that emphasizes something that is unfortunately taken for granted.

The big holiday of the month is Thanksgiving. The name in itself presents the theme for the month.

The history of this celebration goes back to the year 1621. The Plymouth colonists, arriving in the previous year, and the Wampanoag Native Americans shared an autumn harvest feast that is considered today to be the first Thanksgiving gathering in the New World. Since that time, individual colonies and states celebrated this festive holiday; however, there was no energy to establish a unifying day of thanks on a large scale. Researching this holiday even further, I discovered that in 1637 Massachusetts Colony Governor John Winthrop established a "thanksgiving" to celebrate the "safe return of a band of heavily armed hunters."



President Abraham Lincoln established the "Day of Thanks" in the midst of the Civil War by a proclamation in 1863. Lincoln urged Americans to set aside the last Thursday of November as a day of Thanksgiving. However, at that time, he was unable to influence the States in rebellion and as a result the festive day was incomplete. Continuing to 1941, an Act of Congress established Thanksgiving Day as a "legal annual national" holiday. Today, we celebrate Thanksgiving with TV football games and of course, family gatherings.

In my opinion, the second important event in November's calendar is Veterans Day. This day was originally designated as Armistice Day by President Woodrow Wilson at the end of World War I in 1919. At the time, only thirty states made it a state holiday. On June 1, 1954, the name of the event was renamed to Veterans Day. As opposed to Memorial Day, which is observed in May, Veterans Day celebrates the living service members whereas the former recognizes the memory of the veterans who have served in past wars and conflicts.

Recognizing these two important November holidays is important in that each complements one another with a common thread. Their similarity lies in the fact that both have the spirit of thankfulness. On that special Thursday we, as a nation, reflect on the bounty, freedom and the liberty that are gifted to Americans. On Veterans Day we extend that sense of "thank you" to the many men and women who have served in the armed forces. These two November events give us moments to reflect on the true meaning of two words...a simple "thank you."

### **Little Sir** Gary Bondi's Message

Greetings fellow SIRS and good wishes for a happy, healthy 2022! This will be my first article as Little Sir for 2022 and hopefully many more to follow. I say that because I began 2020 as the Little Sir. As you may recall, the year started pretty normal. Then, things changed drastically for all of us. This pandemic arrived on the scene, and we were suddenly faced with new challenges, not only for our



branch, but for each of us individually. In addition, I was diagnosed with a serious illness that required me to resign as Little Sir. Our branch was faced with an uncertain future and the challenge of what do we do now? Well, here we are 2 years later, and our Branch has weathered the storm and continued to function in innovative ways. It is because our leaders stepped up and accepted the challenge.

I would personally like to express my gratitude to our current Big Sir, Gordon Boulton, for stepping in to fill my position of Little Sir for my remaining term. In addition, a big shout out and thanks to Big Sir, George Traverso, who took on the Big Sir job for two years. Along with the help of our BEC and many of our members, we are functioning today and looking forward to the new year. We have resumed our in-person luncheons and some activities. We are experiencing now about 35 members at our meetings. I realize there is still some uncertainty out there and some members do not feel comfortable attending. We understand that and look forward to seeing them whenever they feel the time is right. With all the healthy protocols and the vaccines, we are in a much better position than the last two years. Let us all do our best to stay healthy, enjoy life and move forward. I Look forward to when we can all gather again and enjoy the true fellowship of our Sirs.

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<p><b>Joke of the Month</b></p> 	<p><b>Understanding Different Degrees</b></p> <p>The graduate with a science degree asks, "Why does it work?"</p> <p>The graduate with an engineering degree asks, "How does it work?"</p> <p>The graduate with an accounting degree asks, "How much will it cost?"</p> <p>The graduate with a liberal arts degree asks, "Do you want fries with your order?"</p>	<p><b>Joke of the Month</b></p> 	<p>My 85 year old grandfather was rushed to the hospital with a possible concussion. The doctor asked him a series of questions: Do you know where you are? "I'm at Rex Hospital." What city are you in? "Raleigh." Do you know who I am? "Dr. Hamilton."</p> <p>My grandfather turned to the nurse and said, "I hope he doesn't ask me any more questions."</p> <p>Why? she asked. "Because all those answers were on his badge."</p>
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## Opportunity to Participate in Alzheimer's Prevention Research Study

Our July guest speaker was Allan Bernstein, MD, a semi-retired neurologist and medical researcher.

His talk was *The Biology of Memory, what could possibly go wrong?* He informed Little Sir Gordon Boulton he has a research study on Alzheimer's prevention that will be starting in the near future, and he is looking for volunteer participants. The goal is to identify people who may be 'at risk' for cognitive decline based on a blood test showing a buildup of amyloid and tau, the two markers for Alzheimer's disease in the brain. The criteria to participate include the following:

- Age range 55-80
- Normal cognitive exam on a screening (can be done on a computer)
- Positive blood test as noted above
- Negative MRI for other risk factors, such as strokes. People who cannot get MRIs for any reason are excluded as it is done for screening and safety assessments during the study
- No other serious illnesses
- Has a study partner who can help assess any cognitive changes (spouse, friend, adult children, etc.)

The study will last about three years. All costs for all testing/exams/MRIs are covered by the study sponsor. There are no costs to the individual or their insurance company.

Exclusions:

- Dementia or cognitive impairment
- Abnormal liver function tests on initial screening

The study involves an IV infusion, once a month, for nine months. There is a placebo arm to the study. After the initial nine months, there is tracking for any cognitive decline or side effects for up to three years, using online visits about every six months, including the study partner's assessment of the individual.

The contact person to get more details or to schedule a screening is Lauren Weber, send an email to:

[Lauren.Weber@stjoe.org](mailto:Lauren.Weber@stjoe.org)



## New Members

Lon Sanford (Nicki)  
 260 Murlagan Ave. Apt F  
 Mountain View, CA  
 650-743-0437  
[lonsanford@comcast.net](mailto:lonsanford@comcast.net)  
 (non-disclosure)  
 94043



Bicycling, Book Club, Book Swap, Movies,  
 Travel,  
 Amateur Radio, Spanish skill

Joe Hauser (Susan) 650-776-5642  
 21461 Milford Drive  
[cuptjoe2@comcast.net](mailto:cuptjoe2@comcast.net)  
 Cupertino, CA 95014 Space  
 Systems Loral  
 Golf, Travel, Investing



Phil Yurtis (Willi) 650-508-9651

Brian Lin (Jean)  
 21876 Meadowview Ln.  
 Cupertino, CA 95014  
 650-471-2358  
[tbrianlin@gmail.com](mailto:tbrianlin@gmail.com)



JPL, Applied Materials,  
 TSMC North America  
 Bowling, Travel, Tennis, Hiking, Bicycling,  
 Book Club, Dining In, Movies, Wine Group

Chris Weberg (Clarice)  
 17721 Bruce Ave.  
 Monte Sereno, CA  
 95030  
 408-205-9120  
[cweberg1@gmail.com](mailto:cweberg1@gmail.com)  
 Juniper Networks, Cisco  
 Systems, StrataCom, Unisys  
 and more  
 Bicycling, Golf, Travel



31 Madrona Street  
[phil@purgeusa.com](mailto:phil@purgeusa.com)  
 San Carlos, CA 94070  
 Golf, Bicycling



PTY Enterprises

Alan Pye (Alison)  
 32 N. El Monte Ave.  
 Los Altos, CA 94022  
 408-425-0247  
[apye.94022@gmail.com](mailto:apye.94022@gmail.com)  
 AMD, Intel, Altera, Jaquar  
 Cars, British Aerospace  
 Golf



## MOVIES

**West Side Story.** Steven Spielberg uses his prodigious talent to bring us a wonderful, fresh, and important adaptation of the classic 1957 musical drama. The Jets and the Sharks fight over the turf in their neighborhood as urban renewal is tearing down their homes and making way for gentrification. The Jets are the white boys, and the Sharks are Puerto Ricans. The two groups are sworn enemies. Tony (Ansel Elgort) is a Jet who falls hopelessly in love with Maria (Rachel Zegler) who is the sister of the leader of the Sharks. The film explores forbidden love in song and dance. The singing and dancing are spectacular as the cameras swivel and fly to capture it all. The rivalry between the two opposite teenage street gangs will lead to tragedy but with a glimmer of a different future. This is the one to see this holiday season. Rated PG-13 for some strong violence, strong language, thematic content, suggestive

material, and brief smoking. In Theatres and is a Peggy's Pick.

**Don't Look Up.** This is a wily satire that will grow on you. At first the black humor is off putting, especially when delivered by Meryl Streep. Stay with it and this film will make you laugh and fume at human folly. Kate Dibiasky (Jennifer Lawrence) is an astronomy doctoral student who discovers a comet. She and her professor Dr. Randall Mindy (Leonardo DiCaprio) determine that the huge comet is on a direct collision course with Earth which will annihilate all life on our planet. Their bigger issue is that no one really seems to care. The military brass has better things to do. US President Orlean (Meryl Streep) is indifferent and more worried about mid-term elections. Muckraking TV personalities Brie (Cate Blanchett) and Jack (Tyler Perry) are not too worried as

**Continued Next Page**

impact is six months off and instead poke fun at Kate and Randall. Then a cell phone company gets involved wanting to mine the comet for precious metals. Well, this does not end well, but it is quite funny. Reminiscent of Dr. Strangelove. Be sure to stay through the credits for two extra scenes. The performances are all great. This film has not received much attention but should have. In Theatres. Rated R for language throughout, some sexual content, graphic nudity, and drug content. It is a Peggy's pick.

**Julia.** This documentary reflects on the wonderful life of Julia Child and how she changed American culture and how we eat. Julia had a difficult time writing and publishing her now legendary

cookbook – Mastering the Art of French Cooking. She finagled her way on to a PBS TV show in Boston to promote her book and then for the first time on TV demonstrated how to cook an omelet, giving birth to the modern cooking show. Thus started the career of the legendary cookbook author. She became a TV superstar with shows that spanned decades. Her influence changed the way we think about food and how it is prepared. The documentary is also an interesting look into the television industry and how it has influenced all aspects of our lives. Rated PG-13 for brief strong language, sexual references, and some thematic elements. Available on Amazon Prime Video. It is a Peggy's Pick.

### Tom Marshburn is Launched

This morning (11/30/21) I got up early to watch “live” our July guest speaker, Tom Marshburn (second from the left in both pictures), make a six-hour spacewalk to replace a defective antenna on the International Space Station. As I headed to the TV, I heard on the 4am news that the walk had been postponed at the last minute because the space station had to be maneuvered around “space junk” headed its direction.

This misadventure was par for the course. The launch was originally scheduled for 2am October 30th but was postponed a day for testing and then another day because of bad weather off the coast of North Carolina where the rocket's first stage was to land on its recovery barge. (The family gathered anyway for dinner and watched the video of Tom talking to Branch 35 – all agreed it's great!) The next day we learned the launch was postponed a third time because a crew member (not Tom) became ill (not Covid-19). That was too many delays for me, so I headed back to Texas to drive home with my wife.

Finally, at 6:03pm California time on November 10th Tom was launched to the space station as the SpaceX-Crew3 pilot. This was his third trip: once in the shuttle Endeavor, once in the Russian Soyuz and now on SpaceX. Once there, he pinned official “space pins” on the three “rookies” who travelled with him on their 22-hour journey from Cape Canaveral to the ISS where they will spend the next 6 months. ---**Big Sir-Elect Andy Danve**



11/10/21 Awaiting launch in Dragon Capsule



11/11/21 Joining the existing ISS crew

## BIKING

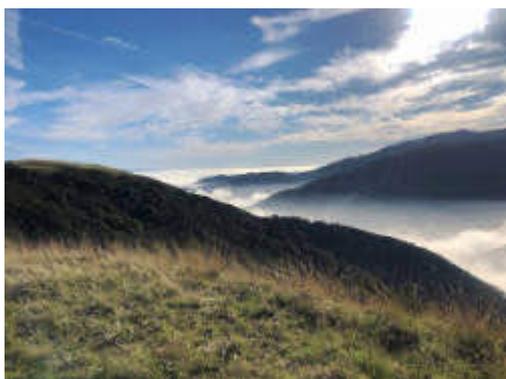
GORDON TONG 408-242-0557 [gordy6850@gmail.com](mailto:gordy6850@gmail.com)

2nd Thursday— January 13, 2022, 11:00 AM Wives and guests welcome, Rain cancels, Helmet mandatory and Face masks optional.

**Stevens Creek Trail & Shoreline Park (Mt. View) Ride:** We will ride a flat, scenic 14 mile round-trip to Michael's Restaurant in Shoreline Park, plus an optional 5-mile loop to the Palo Alto Duck Pond, next to the Palo Alto Airport (total ride 19 miles). Lunch is usually at Michael's in the Shoreline Park but it's been closed for renovations. An alternative lunch spot may be the Baylands Cafe at the Baylands Golf Link near the PA Duck Pond. We will finalize the lunch spot on the day of the ride. **Directions:** Meet at the south end of the Stevens Creek bike path at the corner of Sleeper Ave. and Franklin Ave. From Palo Alto, go south on El Camino Real to Grant Rd; turn right. Drive past the 3rd traffic signal to Sleeper Ave.; turn left. Drive to the end of Sleeper Ave., which is the intersection of Franklin Ave. Park your car near the intersection. If you plan to ride or have questions, please contact Gordon Tong at 408-242-0557 or [gordy6850@gmail.com](mailto:gordy6850@gmail.com). Hank Bottino at (650) 207-4320 or [bottinoh@comcast.net](mailto:bottinoh@comcast.net) will be my biking group co-leader.

The SIR Branch 35 monthly bicycling is a combined activity with all SIR Branches in Area 16. The objectives of the monthly rides are to continue to promote fellowship, share experiences, get some exercise and above all, have FUN! Planned SIR rides are announced in each SIR Monthly Newsletter and by email to all interested members. The rides are on the 2nd Thursday of each month. Wives and guest are welcome. All that a bicyclist needs are a bike (including an e-bike), helmet, and a jacket or vest. Rain will cancel the planned ride. We ask that all participants exhibit a positive attitude, exercise good judgment when riding such as maintaining a safe distance between riders, obeying all traffic signs, stop lights, etc. There will always be a **lead** rider and a **sweeper** as the last rider to ensure that all riders stay on course. It's important that all riders keep the lead rider in their sights.

### Holiday Season Hike - Mt. Umunhum



On December 3rd twenty-one adventuresome SIR Branch 35 hikers accepted the challenge of the Mt. Umunhum hike — a 7.5 mile, 1,150' gain hike which is about twice the length our typical monthly hikes. We left our warm homes on a chilly and deeply overcast morning for the 45 to 60-minute carpool to Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve south of San Jose. We were hopeful that the overcast would clear before our hike.

As we began our drive up the winding Hicks Road along the Guadalupe Reservoir, we were still covered in the heavy cloud layer. Just before we reached the Mt. Umunhum trailhead at

2,300' elevation, we broke through into a clear sunny sky. Doug Tanner captured this magic moment in the picture at the Mt. Umunhum trailhead.

Our group included six Sirs who had not hiked with us before this year, five spouses, and three guests. The magic continued as we climbed up the two-track hiking trail which provided many opportunities for everyone to talk and get to know each other.

### Branch 35 Monthly Spouse Hikes

Our monthly hikes are designed to encourage spouse participation. Now that Covid-19 vaccines are available, we are beginning to visit nature preserves that require carpooling. There are many opportunities to socialize and to get to make new friends. Pack a lunch and we will stop at a scenic spot to eat, and to enjoy nature. Branch 35 members, spouses, or friends who has signed the Covid- 19 Waiver and are able enjoy a moderate hike of up to 5 miles and up to 1,000 feet elevation gain are invited to join us. **Hikes normally occur on the 4th Friday of the month. Next year our first hike will be on January 28th. If you wish to join our January hike, send an email to Peter Thurston, [peterthurston@gmail.com](mailto:peterthurston@gmail.com).**

**The 2021-year summary** We end 2021 with memories of the smells of redwood and fir forests, the sounds of running streams, sights of beautiful wildflowers, ocean views, and ocean hikes with views of abundant wildlife. We ended the year healthier, happier, and with many new friends.

## BIG SIR COMMENTS

Dear Fellow Members of Branch #36, Let us take this time of Thanksgiving to set aside the tendency to focus on those “negatives” that can very easily bring our outlook on life down, but rather take the “high-road” by reflecting on and embracing the many things that make life beautiful and meaningful. Things like family, friends, freedom and for many of us, our faith-community support and reasonably good health. So, with that said, I again remind ourselves, as “Sons In Retirement”, and NOT thinking of ourselves as “Old Men In Retirement”:

1. Stay active and healthy.
2. Reconnect in-person with family and friends and faith community.
3. Make it a monthly goal to attend our first Wednesday of the month luncheon meetings.
4. Contact the leader of one of our golf, bowling, bocce ball and “saunderers” (walking group) leaders listed in this newsletter.
5. Make an appointment for your COVID-19 booster vaccination.

Hope to see you all this coming Wednesday, December 1st when, in addition to a great luncheon, our fun “Ladies Day Luncheon” will feature Entertainment by the Trolley Drops, presenting a fun music program. We will also induct two new members into our SIR Branch #36. Simply make your reservation using [this link](#). If you are bringing your lady guest with you, click on the green link “YES + Guest”. Guests also need to present proof of vaccination.

**Charlie Johnson**  
Big Sir, SIR Branch #36  
Cell: 831-594-8965  
Charles Johnson <acejohnsonrce@yahoo.com>

### DECEMBER: BRING YOUR SPOUSE OR SIGNIFICANT OTHER

**Program:** Good, Fun Music!  
**Entertainment by:** The Trolley Drops

The Trolley Drops play songs from the good-time, prohibition- era folk jazz genre known as Jug Band music, which blends the call and response of gospel with the drive of the delta blues and the raucous sounds of New Orleans Jazz.

---

**Dog Training** I pulled into the crowded parking lot, at the Safeway shopping center and rolled down the car window part way to make sure my Labrador retriever pup had fresh air.

She was stretched full out on the back seat and I wanted to impress upon her that she must remain there. I walked to the curb backward, pointing my finger at the car and saying emphatically, "Now you stay. Do you hear me? Stay! Stay!"

The driver of a nearby car, a pretty young blonde, gave me a strange look and said, "Why don't you just put it in park?"

**God is Watching** The children were filling their lunch trays at the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school. At the head of the food line was a pile of apples upon which a nun had posted a note reading, “Take only one. God is watching”

At the opposite end of the table was a pile of chocolate chip cookies and a handwritten second note, this one posted by a fourth grader, reading, "Take all you want, God is watching the apples".





# PLACER GOLD

ATTACH  
FIRST CLASS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
STAMP HERE

## SIR Branch 37 Bulletin

FOUNDED JULY 1958

Auburn

Org. March 6, 1972



# 2021 Christmas Luncheon

HO HO HO  
PEACE  
JOY HOPE  
SNOWFLAKES  
HOLLY JOLLY  
SANTA & TOYS  
WONDERLAND  
GINGERBREAD



Visit the SIR Branch 37 web site at <http://sirbranch37.weebly.com/> and For SIR Happenings use the SIR State Website <http://sirinc.org/sirhappenings/>



**SIR'S ROUND TABLE**  
**THE PEARL OF THE SIERRAS**  
**AREA 1 PARADISE, CA BR. 52**



**INCORPORATED DECEMBER 11, 1974**

Sorry for the minimal Bulletin Big Sir Dave Moore has been very sick

**BIG SIR DAVE MOORE 530-893-2157 - 519-6904**

**LITTLE SIR Sir Bill Mc Nelly 530-228-7949**



*David Moore Big Sir*



*Sir Bill Mc Nelly*

**2021 A YEAR THAT WE NEED TO INCREASE OUR MEMBERSHIP**

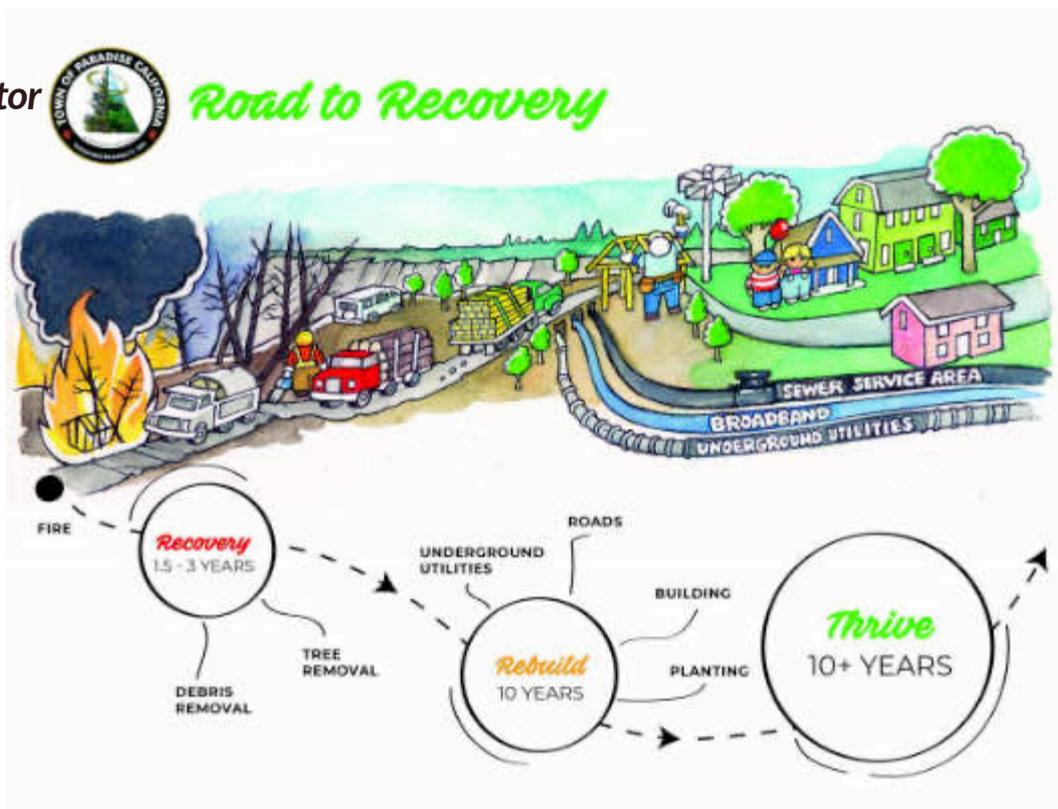
The statement above reminded me that the whole town of Paradise was devastated by the Camp Fire. Branch 52 has initiated a drive for new members. Now we can see that Big Sir Dave Moore has been seriously ill. I think that we all need to send our prayers and good wishes to Dave and the town in recovery and that Branch 52 can flourish.

Happenings Editor



*Road to Recovery*

The diagram on the right is on the city of Paradise website.





# The Pathfinder

Fremont Branch 59

Forty-Fifth Year

Bulletin No. 11



Announcements from Treasurer Larry Lardie, and Membership Chair Rob Ingebretson, Past Big Sir Larry Jett introducing newest member Sir Wes Murakami, newly appointed Big Sir Bob Marshall, our special entertainment, and a few random photos.





Cyber Geezers usually meet on the Tuesday following our monthly SIR Luncheon. Our next meeting will be held on January 25th. We will again include Seniors of the Greater Niles Village, and any SIR Member wanting to join us. The meeting will begin at 1:00 pm. Login information is given below. Since many of you are unable to attend our Zoom Cyber Geezer meetings, Jerry has recorded many of the old and new sessions and posted them on YouTube so they may be watched at your convenience. These videos are listed at <https://jsabo.info/youtube-computers-video/>.

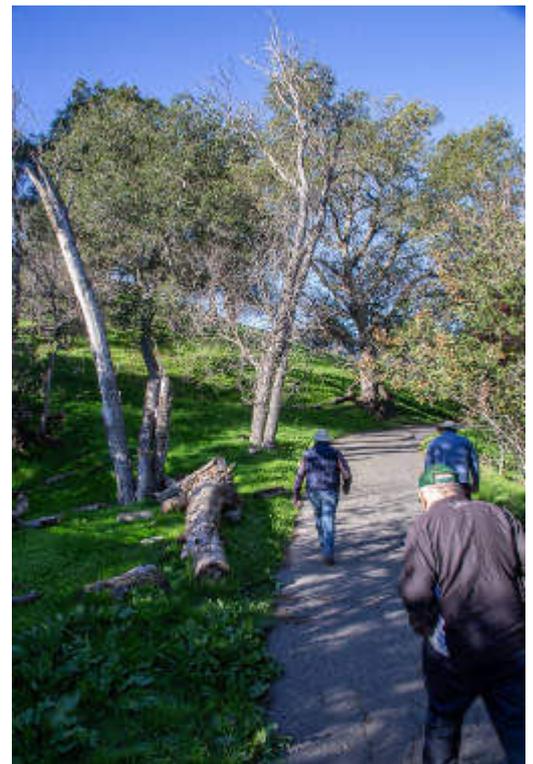
The list is also available on <https://sirbranch59.org/cyber-geezer-tutorial-videos/>

Join the next Zoom Cyber Geezer Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/96358532596>

Meeting ID: 963 5853 2596



**Getting Back to  
 "Normal"  
 -Sort of-**





# The ROOSTER

The Monthly Bulletin of

Sunnyvale Branch # 62

**SONS IN RETIREMENT**

**A Non-Profit Organization of Retired Men**

**Devoted to the Promotion of Independence and Dignity in Retirement**

## Bridge

We meet the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of the month at Roger Falberg's office, 3375 Scott Blvd. office 332 in Santa Clara to play in person. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, we play online using Bridge Base Online app.

We play every week on Tuesdays at 1:30. Roger Falberg organizes the play and sends each player the table positions and hosts prior to our gathering time for either on line or face to face play. If you want to join us, let Roger know ahead of time so he can arrange the player tables. John Dieckman - Bridge Publicist

## SIR Travel – Branch 62

**Travel Chairman: Jim Hohenshelt (408 394-7226).**

**Assistant: Roy Jordan (408 735-8765).**

**Reminder:** Trips organized by Sons in Retirement (SIR) are available to SIR members, their spouses, siblings, children, grandchildren, also to guests and widows of SIR members.

Branch 62 is still considering a day trip to Golden Gate Fields for some horse racing, likely the last Friday in April (2022) or the first Friday in May. If you have any thoughts about details (meals, transportation, etc.) please contact Jim or Roy.

Branch 32 is still planning two trips; **May 20– 25, 2022, Chicago** all access & Wisconsin, includes Gangster Tour, Frank Lloyd Wright architecture, Wrigley Field, cruise on the Chicago River and **October 2–10, 2022, Explore the Northwest, cruise the Columbia River** from Clarkston, WA to Vancouver, WA. Information on both trips from John Pletsch at (408) 504-1255 or [jeplet@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jeplet@sbcglobal.net), or Mike Console at (408) 246-1080.



Trips from the Dec. 2021 State SIR Travel Opportunities newsletter: **Holland (Michigan) Tulip Festival & Mackinac Island's Grand Hotel (May 12-19, 2022)** is presented by Branch 143, Bill Stires at 209-988-5445. **Columbia and Snake River Cruise (May 12-20, 2022)**, Branch 128, Tan Matosian, [tgmat54@gmail.com](mailto:tgmat54@gmail.com). Two trips, **Alaska Land & Sea (May 23-June 4, 2022)** and **Classic New England (Sep 29-Oct 7, 2022)** from Larry Yarberry (925) 890-9245 [l.yarberry42@comcast.net](mailto:l.yarberry42@comcast.net). **Quebec City to New York City cruise on the Crystal Serenity (Oct. 5- 13, 2022)** Branch 146, Milt Smith, [miltsmith549@gmail.com](mailto:miltsmith549@gmail.com). The Travel Opportunities newsletter has more detail about these trips, contact Roy to have the newsletter forwarded to you.

**Reminder:** Trips organized by Sons in Retirement (SIR) are available to SIR members, their spouses, siblings, children, grandchildren; also to guests and widows of SIR members.



Tom Duncanson is seen here smiling at the October Poker day. With a winning hand of a Royal Flush, who wouldn't be smiling. The November poker day will be held at Marc Longoria's home. Call Marc for details if you want to play.

**OUR LATEST GROUP ...SQUARE DANCING!!!** Three of our branch members do-si-do every Wednesday at the Napa Senior Center. It is a coed group that anyone can join with a partner or without! If you are a wanna be swinger, check it out! Contact Greg Dobbs at [gpdobbs1@comcast.net](mailto:gpdobbs1@comcast.net)



## OCTOBER LUNCHEON

Steve Hazelton of SIR Br. 88 introduced us to the wild world of engine models. He and George Spain demonstrated the skill as members of the Bay Area Engine Modelers Club as they started up their beautifully crafted engines behind the Elks Club. The engines are tooled by the members and fueled by gas or steam. You can see videos of the working engines on our Facebook page titled "SIR Branch 65", or look for Steve Hazelton on You Tube. If you'd like to learn more or start sharing your building skills look on the website at [www.baemclub.com](http://www.baemclub.com) beginners are welcome! Yes, that's a miniature V-8 !!!





## CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON 2021

Branch 65 members and their guests enjoyed a great time during our annual Christmas Luncheon. We were entertained by cellist Jeff Johnson during our social hour and after lunch.

There were 55 members, family and guests...great gathering!





Lance Houser,  
Chair

Our **Vine Walker Adventure Group** had two fun walks of a central Napa neighborhood which included the Calistoga Ave historic district, Napa Senior Center, Napa Art Association and a wonderful restored cabooses. We marveled at the flood control works along the Napa Creek which include the removal of several homes along Arroyo Dr.

Our next adventure explored a well established Browns Valley neighborhood of Century Oaks where Glen Mattila has a bench dedicated to his 30+ years of service to the citizens of Napa City.  
**Join us for our next walks exploring Napa City!**



The Calistoga Ave Historical District has beautiful Victorian era houses and cottages. This caboose is tucked away next to a Wine Train employee's house on Behrens St. Ask Lance or Jerry S. about the backstory on this!!!



*Happy New Year!*



## Branch 68

The November lunch was a great success in regard to having our first luncheon since March 2020. We had 33 members attend with three guests, two of which have become members in the meantime. The check in procedures went fairly smooth with everyone remembering to bring their vaccination cards, so we were able to allow everyone in. It was nice of the county to drop its mask mandate just a couple of weeks prior to the meeting thus making it very comfortable to talk to each other. The restaurant had a slight mix up in food and had to replace the turkey dish with a steak, which I didn't hear any complaints about. Hannah Fliegel our guest speaker had a very informative topic (reverse mortgages, and alternatives to them). Her talk was so enthralling that several members asked for her return to able to talk about real estate investments. Everyone was on their toes for this presentation. We are looking forward to our December Christmas Luncheon on the 14th with our loved ones. Remember to make your reservations so that we have enough meals available.



The branch's December Christmas Luncheon was a great success with a turnout of 62 people. 2 members had to cancel at the last minute due to circumstances beyond their control. We started out at 10:30 with the BEC frantically working to set-up and decorate the room with the help from several wives. By 11:00 o'clock we were all ready for the arrival of members and their guests.



Check-in went really smooth even though we had to have proof of vaccinations and get the State waivers signed. We accomplished both with the thoroughness of our check-in staff. The next hour was spent in noisy conversation and happy greetings from members and spouses who hadn't seen each other for quite some time. At just about noon, in busts a jolly old man greeting us all young and old, naughty and nice to open our luncheon on a festive note. After the formal opening we enjoyed a luncheon of Ham or Salmon with a lot of good cheer and conversation. After our meal we inducted two new members into the branch and set about dealing with the announcements for the New Year. Kym McNicholas, our speaker for the afternoon, had a presentation that was interesting and informative to both our members and guests. Kym was very gracious in answering all our questions and extended her time to cover everyone. After the luncheon was over, we had several people remain behind to check out the book/puzzle exchange and to continue their conversations. It was a joy to see everyone so thoroughly enjoying themselves that the board has decided to continue the December luncheon along with the Christmas party. As most of you know, we do most of our recruiting in October at the Marin Senior Fair. This results in perspective members only able to attend the November luncheon and then miss out until January, waiting to be inducted into the membership. By inducting new members during the December meeting, we can get the spouses involved right away. For those of you who were able to make it, I hope you enjoyed it and for those of you who were not there, see what you missed! The upcoming January luncheon looks to be a great one, so make sure you can make it. See You There, Kent





FRUITRIDGE BRANCH 93 October 2021 Vol. 43/ 10 –

**October 18<sup>th</sup> Membership Luncheon – Riverside Elks Lodge – 11:30 AM**

***Promoting the Independence and Dignity of Retirement***

Yes, it has been a rough and frustrating couple of years, but we are starting to see some loosening of the grip this COVID has had on our lives. And that is good news! We are looking forward to everyone shooting par (or at least their age) in golf and for some pin splitting at the bowling alley. How does a golf trip to Carson City sound? Sounds great to me! We are going to have that going on! How about searching for the best hamburger in the Sacramento area? We are going to get out there and do some tasting and some reviewing! Anybody got a volunteer gig they would like to share with a couple of fellow members now and then? Some Food Bank prep or distribution? Something along those lines? Well, there is a new program the State SIR is rolling out this year to make SIR and all its fine members more visible in their community. Got some pretty cool red t-shirts you can score through this program. But most importantly, we are looking forward to seeing YOU! Some come on out and let's help get SIR93 back up and running.

**George Thoma Bio:**

I have been a member of SIR for two- and one-half years. I was introduced to SIR by Andy Dong when I was playing golf with him as part of the Land Park Seniors golf group.

I grew up in St. Louis, MO and am naturally a life-long Cardinal baseball fan! And yes, I am old enough to have seen Stan Musial play the year he retired! I moved to California in 1971, settling in Oakland. I worked in the wholesale floral supply business, and I had an industrial laundry route all around the Bay Area.

I relocated to Sacramento in 2001, working for Raleys as a night crew clerk, and finished up my grocery career with the Sacramento Natural Foods Coop. I enjoy golfing, hiking, and whittling (not wood carving).

My wife, Amy Caffrey, and I have been married for 15 years and we live in beautiful Hollywood Park.

I am looking forward to getting to know as many of you as possible. Best wishes!

**Robert Luttrell Bio:**

I have lived in Sacramento most of my life, Tahoe Park, Land Park, and now in East Sacramento. I attended Holy Spirit Elementary School and Bishop Armstrong High School, now known as Christian Brothers. I continued my education at Sac City College finishing with a degree in criminal justice before graduating from Sac State with a BS degree in Social Science.

I began working for the City of Sacramento; first with the Department of Parks, then with the Utilities Dept as a street cleaner, and continued my career working with the fire department for 34 years. After 21 years as a firefighter, I was promoted to become an Arson Investigator. In 2001 I was appointed to Supervisor Investigator for Sacramento City before retiring in 2006.

I have been involved with the sport of rugby for most of my adult life. First, by playing for the Sacramento Men's club for 17 years, then coaching at Sacramento State winning a National Title in 2000, Carmichael Eagles High School Club, and currently at Christian Brothers High School.

My wife, Kathy and I enjoy many outdoor activities, including Clamping (camping in trailer), golfing, softball, and traveling to Rugby World Cup Matches.

I am following in my father's footsteps as **he was also a Little Sir and Big Sir over 20 years ago**



## **The SIR Quest for the Best Burger in Sacramento**

**Monday, January 24 at 11:30**

**Burgers and Brew  
1409 R St, Sacramento, CA 95811**

Join your fellow Sirs in the quest for the best burger in town. Meet old friends or make a new friend.

In-person events require both a signed waiver and vaccination record. If you attended a SIR event last year, you're all set. If not, plan to bring both.

For a ride or information, contact Alan Baker at 802-339-0059 or [baker@alanbaker.net](mailto:baker@alanbaker.net).

### **From Jack Reefer:**

Land Park Seniors Golf is comprised of members SIR 69 and SIR 93 and others are inviting you to join us every Tuesday at Land Park 9 AM for 9 holes of golf. Currently running 20-24 players each week - room for more. \$5 buy in playing for lowest number of putts for 9 holes, gross score on three selected holes plus closest to the pin for sleeve of golf balls. Group divided into two groups based on index 0-24 and 24 plus no index.

This is considered as a non-SIR Event or Activity for other people outside of SIR play at the Tuesday Land Park Seniors Golf. Remember, you play at your own risk and judgement of health conditions.

Email sent out every Sunday morning asking who is playing. To join email list contact [mratz246@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mratz246@sbcglobal.net). Questions - Phone Mike Ratzlaff 916-768-6348.

You must check in with the pro shop and let them know if you are walking or riding for your tee time payment.

# Bulletin

Contributed by Bill Leach:

1. An English teacher was giving an example of a double-negative in a sentence to her class.  
For example, "He didn't say nothing!". She then mentioned that while a double-negative exists, there are no double-positives.  
From the back of the class, "Yeah, right!"
2. Wife: "I have a bag of used clothing I'd like to donate."  
Husband: "Why not just throw them in the trash? It's much easier."  
Wife: "There are poor starving people who can use these clothes."  
Husband: "Honey, anyone who fits into your clothes is not starving."  
Hospital visiting hours for the husband are 2 to 4 pm.
3. Light travels faster than sound, which is why some people appear to be bright until they speak.
4. George Burns, at 97, was asked by Johnny Carson "How's your love life?"  
His reply: "Have you ever tried to shoot pool with a rope?"
5. From my house to the bar is a five-minute walk. But from the bar back to my house is 45 minutes.  
The difference is Staggering!
6. Things that tell the truth: Small children, drunk people, and yoga pants.

## BOCCE

**When:** 1st, 3rd and 5th Thursdays, November and December, 10:00 AM - 11:30AM

**Next:** Nov 18, Dec 2, 16 and 30, 2021

**Where:** Bothwell Park, 8th and H St

**Contact:** Chuck Molenkamp, Chairman, 925-455-1952,  
[SIR101Bocce@googlegroups.com](mailto:SIR101Bocce@googlegroups.com)



Bocce is a SIR 101 Approved Activity. With a major rainstorm on October 24th, SIR 101 bocce has definitely moved out of summer with concerns about high temperatures and into winter and worries about rain. It is always interesting to see how the court changes when there has been significant rain. The courts are built on packed sand with a layer of green carpet on top, and rain causes the sand underneath to settle and change the little high and low spots just enough to change the path of the balls. SIR 101 bocce is scheduled for the first, third and fifth Thursdays of the month during October, November and December to minimize conflicts with Thanksgiving and Christmas. The next few dates are November 18 and December 2, 16, and 30. During January we switch back to the normal second and fourth Thursdays of the month starting with January 6, 2022.

On October 22nd we ended up not playing due to a light rain and too few players. On November 4 we had six players and three very competitive games. We all had a great time, the court was interesting, and our conversations were delightful - a wonderful time for the group. Since there are two courts at Bothwell Park, there is space for additional players, and we would love to have you join us. If you have trouble remembering things, an email reminder goes out to the active bocce players on Monday or Tuesday of the week we are playing. If you are interested in bocce you can get these emails by requesting them from Chuck Molenkamp [SIR101Bocce@googlegroups.com](mailto:SIR101Bocce@googlegroups.com).

# The Town Crower

Volume 38, Number 2

The Monthly Newsletter for SIR Branch 103

January 2021

## Stanislaus SIR Branch 103

### Your Yearly Dementia Test! (Only 4 questions this year)

Yep, it's that time of year again for us to take our annual senior citizen test. Exercise of the brain is as important as exercise of the muscles. As we grow older, it's important to keep mentally alert. If you don't use it, you lose it! Here is a very private way to gauge how your memory compares to your last test. Some may think it is too easy, but the ones with memory problems may have difficulty. Take this test to determine if you're losing it or not.

#### #1. What do you put in a toaster?

Answer: 'bread.' If you said 'toast', just give up now and go do something else. And try not to hurt yourself. If you said, bread, go to Question #2.

#### # 2. Say 'silk' five times. Now spell 'silk.' What do cows drink?

Answer: Cows drink water. If you said 'milk,' don't attempt the next question. Your brain is already over-stressed and may even overheat. Content yourself with reading more appropriate literature such as Women's Weekly or Auto World. However, if you did say 'water', proceed to Question #3.

#### # 3. If a red house is made from red bricks and a blue house is made from blue bricks and a pink house is made from pink bricks and a black house is made from black bricks, what is a green house made from?

Answer: Greenhouses are made from glass. If you said 'green bricks', why are you still reading this? PLEASE, go lie down! But, if you said 'glass,' go on to Question #4.

#### # 4. Do not use a calculator for this: You are driving a bus from New York City to Philadelphia. In Staten Island, 17 people got on the bus. In New Brunswick, 6 people get off the bus and 9 people get on. In Windsor, 2 people get off and 4 get on. In Trenton, 11 people get off and 16 people get on. In Bristol, 3 people get off and 5 people get on. And, in Camden, 6 people get off and 3 get on. You then arrive at Philadelphia Station. Without going back to review, how old is the bus driver?

Answer: Oh, for crying out loud! Don't you remember your own age?!?! It was YOU driving the bus! If you pass this along to your friends, pray they do better than you. PS: 95% of people fail most of the questions!



*New Members Jim Long, Sonny Crim, and Thomas Pannier*

# MERRY CHRISTMAS

2021



Ed Davis, oldest SIR 103 member (97) and longest 103 member since 1987. Newest married, Ted Baucht and wife Sheryl, who live in Oakdale, a member since August 2021.



Don Locke and wife Bette. Longest married couple at 75 years. They live in Modesto and he has been a Sir since Jan. 2000 Gary Del Nero presented each couple with presents.



# SONS IN RETIREMENT

## TWIN RIVERS BRANCH #109

Marysville, California  
Incorporated June 18, 1984

**FUN**

**FOOD**

**FELLOWSHIP**

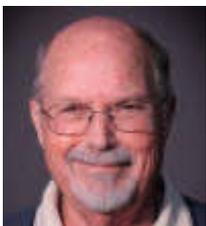
1. When one door closes and another door opens, you are probably in prison.
2. To me, "drink responsibly" means don't spill it.
3. Age 60 might be the new 40, but 9:00 pm is the new midnight.
4. It's the start of a brand-new day, and I'm off like a herd of turtles.
5. The older I get, the earlier it gets late.
6. When I say, "The other day," I could be referring to any time between yesterday and 15 years ago.
7. I remember being able to get up without making sound effects.
8. I had my patience tested. I'm negative.
9. Remember, if you lose a sock in the dryer, it comes back as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any of your containers.
10. If you're sitting in public and a stranger takes the seat next to you, just stare straight ahead and say, "Did you bring the money?"
11. When you ask me what I am doing today, and I say "nothing," it does not mean I am free. It means I am doing nothing.
12. I finally got eight hours of sleep. It took me three days, but whatever.
13. I run like the winded.
14. I hate when a couple argues in public, and I missed the beginning and don't know whose side I'm on.
15. When someone asks what I did over the weekend, I squint and ask, "Why, what did you hear?"
16. When you do squats, are your knees supposed to sound like a goat chewing on an aluminum can stuffed with celery?
17. I don't mean to interrupt people. I just randomly remember things and get really excited.
18. When I ask for directions, please don't use words like "east."
19. Don't bother walking a mile in my shoes. That would be boring. Spend 30 seconds in my head. That'll freak you right out.
20. Sometimes, someone unexpected comes into your life out of nowhere, makes your heart race, and changes you forever. We call those people cops.
21. My luck is like a bald guy who just won a comb.

**GOLF --- Sir Dennis Dempsey 487-3830 / Sir Roland D'Arcy 743-8742**

**DINING OUT Sir Roland D'Arcy 743-8742**

**BOWLING Ray Buttacavoli, 530-671-5599  
Sir Jeff Brockman (530)755-0746**

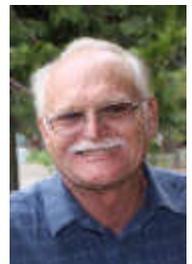
**SLOWTROLLERS - Sir Don Allen 743-2160**



Fishing Report by Don Allen

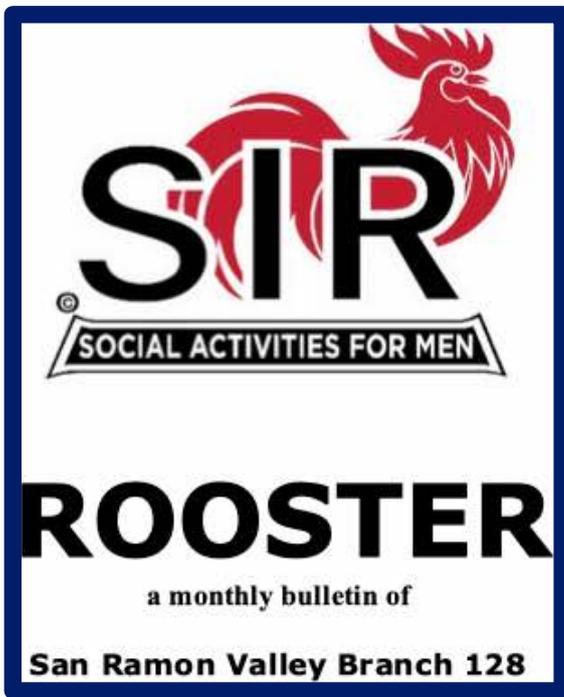
Last month we had a "Fun Day" at Lake Oroville 4 boats showed up all reported catching Bass.

This month we are again fishing Lake Oroville, we have a "Fun Day" scheduled for January 20th. Fishing for Bass should be good.



We meet the 1st Monday of the month at the Moose Lodge in Yuba City, 8:30 -

## USS HORNET TOUR



On **Wednesday, January 12, 2022**, at **10 am**, SIR128 members and guests are invited to attend a **docent led tour of the USS Hornet**, a unique historical venue. A *Registered Historical Landmark*, the aircraft carrier Hornet participated in two of history's most significant events: World War II and the recovery of the Apollo 11 and Apollo 12 manned lunar missions.

**Cost is \$18 per person--this includes general admission and the 2-2.5-hour docent led tour.**

**NOTE** that registrants will be required to navigate narrow and steep stairs; **not recommended if you require a cane or have stability challenges.**

At this time, we have space for **4 more Sirs and guests**. If interested in attending, please go to our **SIR128 website to register**.

You can find out more about the USS Hornet on their website at [uss-hornet.org](http://uss-hornet.org).



On **Friday, January 28th**, 30 SIR128 members & guests have the opportunity to experience a **guided tour led by two of our very own Sirs, Truman Howard and John Chiorini**. Truman and John will guide us through the "**Best of the West**" exhibit where we'll explore the Old West from Native Indians to Trappers and Traders, and Settlers and Cowboys. We'll see wildlife, wagons, tools and much much more. The guided tour should last about an hour.

Afterwards, **you can tour any/all of the exhibits at your leisure**. Cost is **\$8 per person** which includes the tour and access to the entire Museum (classic cars, "Art of Africa" and "Into China" exhibits) until 5pm. **Go to our SIR128 website to register.**



The tour begins at **10:30 am** and will take **approximately 45-60 minutes**. After the Spirit of the West tour, **feel free to visit all other areas of the Museum**. You can remain until the Museum closes at 5pm.

Cost is **\$8 per person** and includes admission and docent led tour. **Go to our SIR128 website to register.**

## ANO NUEVO TOUR

A docent led tour of the **Elephant seals** at **Ano Nuevo State Park** is being planned for **February 17th 2022**. Ano Nuevo State Park is between Half Moon Bay and Santa Cruz and is home to a large colony of Northern Elephant seals. Seal activities, birthing and population counts vary widely from December through March, but are at their peak in early February. The round trip walk is approximately 3 miles, lasting 2.5 hours, and is considered moderate with varied terrain including sand dunes. We have done this tour two times since 2018, and it is always interesting and fascinating to see the elephant seals in their natural habitat.



The **cost of the tour is \$11.00 per person**, and is **limited to 24 participants** Please go to our SIR128 website to register.

## SIR BILL CORBETT ON CYCLING

### SIR128 Cycling in 2021

Considering all the issues this year:  
-Working around COVID  
-Cancellations due to smoke, and rain,

We had a **very fulfilling year of cycling** with our fellow Sirs.

**Rides** - 91

**Miles** - 2,778

**Ascent** - over 53,000 feet

**Average speed** - 13.04 mph

About 40 flat tires

1 broken chain

Multiple minor crashes. (no injuries)

**And many, many true stories at our coffee breaks.** At least I think they were true.

We all had lots of fun and are ready to do it again next year.

**Thanks to all who participated** and made it enjoyable for everyone!

Bill Corbett



**SIR JOHN MONAHAN ON BOWLING** The SIR Annual Danville Bowling Tournament was held on 12/1 & 12/2 at the Danville Bowl. There were 39 participants bowling in the singles and doubles brackets. There was only one bowler from Branch 128 and unfortunately, I didn't win any of my groups. The 2022 schedule has been posted to the SIR bowling website and SIR 128 is on the schedule. Requirements needed to be eligible to participate include being a USBC member and having a USBC or SIR maintained SBTA average. For more information: See, or call John Monahan, 925-837-1598 johnmon596@yahoo.com

***Editor's note—This is the first report from Branch 128 except of course the Consumer Tips by Jim Quon. The Branch has a lot going on! Thanks.***

***Jerry Sabo—Happening Editor***

## SIR JOHN NOLL ON COOKING

Boy, how things can change. **January Cooking Class is cancelled.** Just when we expected to get back together the Omicron surge hit us and we are almost back where we were two years ago. Working closely in a kitchen environment, laughing and joking, then eating elbow to elbow is not a good recipe in contagious environment. Hopefully, February or March.

### Dine In

Nothing happening with Covid rearing its ugly head. **Dine In will start when we can.**



### Cooking Tips

**Eggs** - You've wondered, here's the answers.

Color - brown or white? Doesn't make any difference. Taste. Quality. Flavor. NADA.

Grade - you can most likely only find Grade A. Perfect. AA only exist very close to the farm source. Grade B - never find them; sent to food processors.

Size - Most common and recipe standard is Large (1.8 oz). Alternatives are Medium (1.6), Ex Large (2.0) and Jumbo (2.2). [Weights are *net*, excluding shells.]

Organic - refers to the organic feed the hens receive, with no antibiotics, and outdoor access. Again, no flavor or nutritional value difference.

Storage - keep in the fridge, unless you buy unwashed from the farmer, in the carton because eggs absorb other flavors.

How long - three to five weeks after purchase. However, 3-4-month-old eggs are still good.

For whatever reason I have learned older eggs are easier to hard boil - the membrane does not stick so they peel easier. Store cooked eggs sealed in the fridge.

Fun facts - an average American consumes 279 eggs per year. A typical hen lays around 300 eggs a year! Buy one hen, put her in the backyard and you're set for the year.

**Air Fryers** - Maybe the family received one for Christmas or you are considering getting one.

They are really nothing more than a small version of a convection oven. "Air Fryer" is a marketing term to dress up the stodgy "convection oven" moniker and to sell you a new counter-top appliance.

They are convenient, easy to use, and generally are fit for smaller 1-2 person meals.

Strong fans circulate hot air around the food to approximate the crisp, juicy results of deep fat frying without the oil. Shortens the cooking time also.

The 'drawer-style' fit all the convenience, finish and size requirements. Compact and easily cleaned.

The winner: Vortex Plus 6-Qt Air Frier (\$120) - 12'5" high with intuitive digital controls.

**Fantasy Football leagues will be closing out competition** in the coming weeks. Tan Matosian and Steve Miller will be facing off in the first weekend of January to determine who will be our **2021 \$\$\$ league champion**. Tan also has a lead in our **POINTS league** with Bob Biasotti in close pursuit. Check out our [web page](#) for additional information.



## NEW MEMBERS

**Robert (Bob) Murphy #268** Barbara  
(415) 271-3993  
721 Liquidamber Place, Danville 94506  
bmurphy352@aol.com  
Kranz & Associates, Consulting CFO  
Book Club, Bocce, Dominoes, Golf, Hiking, Investments, Pickleball, Treasure, Budget Planning



**Colin D. Proudfoot #71** Anneke  
(925) 323-7171  
750 Pietronave Lane, Pleasanton 94566  
colinp55@aol.com  
Level 5 Technology Group, Executive  
Bowling, Bridge, Cribbage, Golf, Pool, Wine Tasting, Auditing, Budget Planning



**Robert G (Bob) Slyker #158** Peggy  
(925) 285-8445  
220 Burleigh Place, Danville 94526  
bgsly@aol.com  
Chevron Overseas, Geophysicist  
Astronomy, Baseball, Dine Out, Hiking, Pickleball, Poker, Wine, Activities Leader, Check-In  
**Sponsored by:** Chuck McCormick #88



## SIR PAUL KUPRAS ON CLOTHING DRIVE

Fellow Sirs,

I am **collecting coats and sleeping bags** for the homeless again this year. I have enclosed a few pictures from last year and I think that they can tell the story a lot better than whatever I could say.

Please tell anybody who wants to shed some coats and/or sleeping bags to contact me at 925-785-2363. My address is 340 Goshen Court, San Ramon.

**Thanks in advance for your generosity.**



# SIR

## Newsletter



### NASCAR/INDY CAR Report by Barrie Lee

Most people are unaware of certain guidelines set by both the IndyCar series and NASCAR. What follows here is a little information about the action behind the scenes.



Starting with the Indy Series, teams have mandates that they have to follow in order to stay within the rules, or face disqualification. These rules include the total amount of fuel allowed for each scheduled racing event. As an example, each team has an elevated fuel tank in their pits. The tanks appear to me to be approximately 500-gallon capacity. A fuel truck provided by the track or the series, goes from pit to pit well before the race and places 280 gallons of fuel in each tank. That means each team must make fuel mileage equal to 1.8 miles per gallon. We probably all know that achieving high speed requires a large amount of fuel per mile. Weight, heat, fuel, all have an effect on reaching high speed. For example, the British/French Concorde (SST'S) were finally shut down due to the expense to fly those magnificent aircraft. The USAF SR71's has been mothballed because their benefits finally became less important to the US than their expense. Those planes are still the fastest jet fueled aircraft made by man.

Getting back to racing cars, and continuing with IndyCars, the number of crew members allowed over the wall are strictly regulated. The main reason for allowing a set number over the wall is SAFETY. The fewer the better, less chance for accidental contact with other cars entering and exiting their pits. I believe the current number of over/wall crew is 5. You have two members to change the tires, one member to carry tires, both to and away from the car, a fueler, and the jack man. In Indy racing, unlike NASCAR, the jack man goes to the rear of the car and inserts an air hose into a socket that forces 3 jacks into action, lifting the car to whatever preset height needed to remove and replace tires. This process was perfected by Team Penske back in the 1970's when I was with the team. Total time in the pits is approximately 10-12 seconds. There is only one wheel nut on Indy Cars, so changing the tires is quicker than NASCAR. In previous years it required six men over the wall because one crew member had to hold the "catch can" which took the overflow of fuel when the tank was full. It was a safety thing. Now, the fueling hose not only provides fuel, it also vents the tank. My job in the Indy series was to control the fuel tank by operating the "Dead Man" valve, located at the tank and feeding the fueling hoses. I also kept track of the fuel usage and reported that information to the crew chief after each pit stop. If a fire breaks out during a pit stop, as it did with Rick Mears in the 80's, I would slam the valve closed and avoid it reaching the fuel within the tank. While driving for Roger, Rick came into the pits and a fire started around the fueler, with flames climbing the fuel hose to the tank. The fuel hose blew with an explosive reaction, but the tank was saved by the crew member manning the valve.

NASCAR is a different beast. In 2022, stock cars will be using only one lug nut to hold their wheels on the cars. I don't like this change since seeing five lug nuts flying through the air during a race was always one of my favorite views during a race. This series also only allows five crew members over the wall. There are two tire changers, one tire carrier, one jack man with a floor jack, and the fueler. NASCAR regulates teams by the number of tires given to each team for any given race. I don't believe



they are restricted by the total amount of fuel consumed.

There is one exception to the rules, a sixth member can go over for safety reasons, such as pulling the plastic off the windshield, allowing for better driver vision. Each car has a 22-gallon fuel cell in the rear of the car. The fuel cans you see being used are able to hold eleven gallons of gas and weigh around 90 lbs. per loaded can. When I was with Team Penske, my job required me to handle the fuel, both in Indy Cars and stock cars. I'll explain what other teammates do

behind the wall. In NASCAR, I was responsible for maintaining the fuel cans by helping the fueler over the wall, catching empty cans or loading the second can onto the fuelers shoulder. After a pit stop, I would remove the coupling from the cans, load them in a cart and go to a fueling depot. I would record the amount of fuel I received, return to the pits, give the fuel numbers to the crew chief, and then reassemble the couplings to the cans, burp the cans, and reinstall the cans into the can stand. You have to burp the cans to remove the air from the top of the can. If you don't, fuel will come gushing out of the breather tube. Other behind the wall crew members would assist the over/wall crew in fine tuning the tire pressures and preparing for the next pit stop with possible needed changes determined by the driver and crew chief. Those changes could involve changing tire pressures on one or more tire locations, jacking one or more elevators in the rear suspension, or other tricks of the trade.

## **Fishing Report** by Morgan Akin

Nothing to report at this time regarding the "going ons" in the fishing world. Shasta Lake is coming up with the help of the rain and snow. We should continue to see it rise over time. Reminder from last month - effective January 1st, 2022, you'll need a new Boat Launch Permit. Permit is good for Lake Shasta, Trinity Lake and Lewiston Lake. You can either go through the application process or just stop in at Phil's Propellers, Red Bluff Sporting Goods, or the California Welcome Center near the Anderson outlets and pick one up. Have a wonderful New Year.



## **HAPPY NEW YEAR** from Big Sir

2022 has broken the door down and we are leaving 2021 behind. I'm wishing all of you a most prosperous new year and hope that as we put the past few years behind us, we are able to again come together and enjoy each other's company so much more often than these past couple years. I'm genuinely looking forward to our first in-person luncheon in 2 years this coming March.



# **.SIR INC. MODESTO BRANCH 144**

## **THE ALMOND CAPITAL BULLETIN**

Dedicated to enriching the lives of members through social activities while making friends for life



January 2022 Newsletter

Volume 01-2022



*December Ladies Day luncheon*







# Rooster Talk



November 2021

Vol. 36, #11

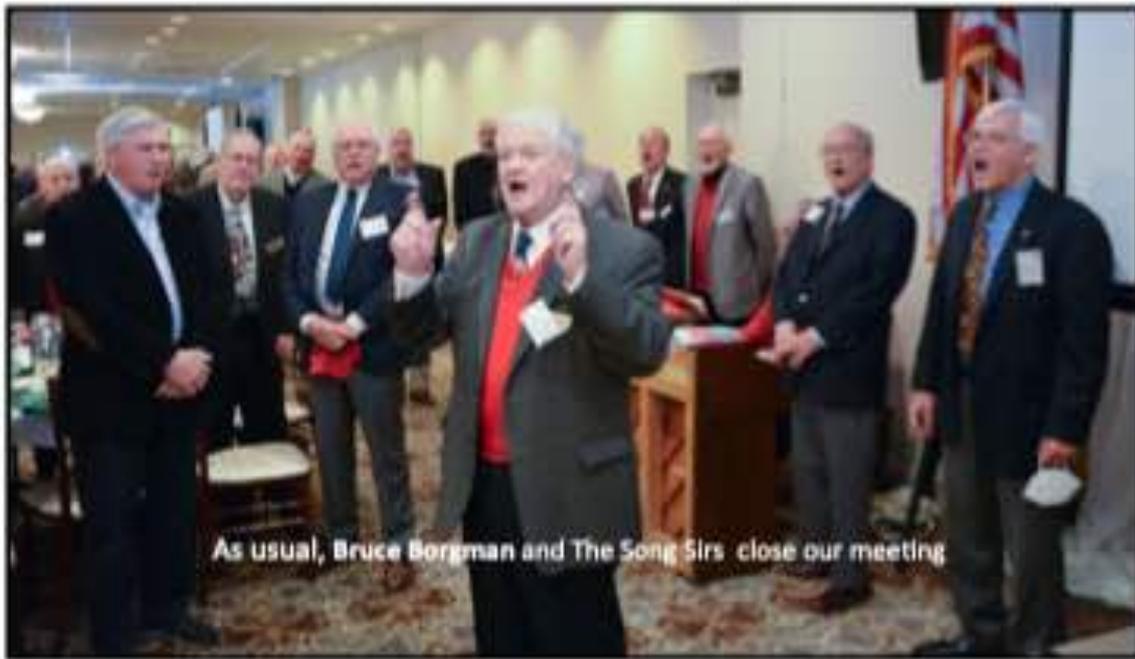
Branch 147 Web Site:  
[sirinc2.org/branch/147](http://sirinc2.org/branch/147)

Little Hills Branch 147

**NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:** Our SIR group paid out \$215 for the 8 “no-shows” at our October lunch! These are the SIRs that did not bother to call in to Herb Mitschan’s Vmail to let him know that they were not coming. Each lunch actually costs our group about \$27. Our Branch is temporarily only charging us \$20. Guess who is paying for the 8 people that did not call in to Herb. We all are! In all the Branch is out about \$420 for the October lunch. We need your help to fix the “no-show” problem. Please remember to call in to Herb if you are not going to come.

## PICTURES FROM OUR OCTOBER LUNCHEON, OUTSIDE and INSIDE AT THE ELKS







# The Mountain Messenger

Branch 152 Arnold, CA

Volume 32 No. 1

## NEW MEMBERS INDUCTED AT OUR OCTOBER MEETING



ART GOLDMAN



DENNY HINTZ



JOHN HUDDLESTON



KAI CHUNG



MIKE HURST

### TRAVELS WITH DAVE -

#### Dave Baugher

*Last month, I joked about nine Pennsylvanians and the lone Californian. Due to my ineptitude with a calendar, the report on that adventure will have to wait. However, during my October speech to our SIRs group, I mentioned a short letter about a 48-hour long hike in 2019 published on the PCT Trailside Reader website. Below is that letter and publisher comments:*

Hey Family and Friends,



Perhaps you have been watching my journey along the Pacific Crest Trail. In that case, you may have noticed a bit of an anomaly over the past two days compared to the other years. I'm back home now, and everything is fine! However, my May PCT hike is over.

To sum it up, here is what occurred over the 48 hours of PCT hiking from May 13th to May 14th. Leaving Sacramento on Amtrak at midnight, I arrived in Dunsmuir at 5:30 a.m. on the 13th. Catching a ride from a fellow train passenger to the PCT trailhead, my hike commenced in the early morning light. Everything went well, covering 17 miles and a total elevation change of 7,100'. It was a tough day, ending at a snow-covered ridge overlooking Mt. Shasta. However, the trail would climb another 1,000' in the next section, then cross steep, mile-long snowfields in the shade of high cliffs that could not be circumvented. Falling asleep with my face on topographic maps, I slept 12 hours straight that night.

Morning broke to a boiling grey sky, blowing winds, and falling rain with a faint mixture of snow. Then I received a winter storm alert for this same area. The Pacific Crest Trail from this location climbed higher. It would stay in the snowy elevations for 60 miles, then descend to Etna, California. The decision was easy; I packed camp, headed back down the trail, contacted Luann, and made a train reservation for the midnight ride back to Sacramento.

I'm sitting at home writing this letter to you all. Glancing at the on-coming weather, confident the right decision was made in light of the circumstances seen on the trail that morning. As mentioned, many times, my goal is to complete the PCT by my 61st birthday. LuAnn is supportive, my friends are watching out for me, Trail Angels are looking over me, and my spirit is in good shape. The judgment call on that windy ridge yesterday was correct. More to come!

*Dave From Rees Hughes, publisher of the PCT Trailside Reader: I connected with Dave 'Chief' Baugher recently as I attempted to help him link up with a friend of mine in Dunsmuir. The latter was willing to drive him to the PCT trailhead at Castle Crags. He has been section hiking northwards as a MYTH (Multi-Year-Thru-Hiker) since 2014, to complete the trail by his 61st birthday in 2023. I don't exactly know what he was expecting in mid-May, but it was clearly more than he was ready for. But he wisely exercised the PCT hikers' most important but challenging lesson - discretion is the better part of valor.*

## NEW MEMBERS INDUCTED AT OUR NOVEMBER MEETING



**DENNY LAPHAM**



**BILL OSINCUP**



**SCOTT ALDRIDGE**



**MIKE COFFEY**

### TRAVELS WITH DAVE - Dave Baugher



In October, I joked about nine Pennsylvanians and the lone Californian in Montana. Last month, that adventure found me right back in that State for a reunion of sorts with my eastern brethren.

Our entire group arrived at the Upper Canyon Ranch at the same time. Quite a feat, given that the nine Pennsylvania's had driven 33 hours straight from the east coast. This lone Californian had an easy flight from the sunny west coast. My truck and trailer, which Luann and I had left in Bozeman on our previous trip, was waiting for me at the airport. Then it was an easy drive to the Ranch.

On my Father's side, my family has resided in the area of Hanover Pennsylvania for over three centuries, tracing our roots to three brothers who arrived from Germany in 1645. Nowadays, every couple of years, I end up back home to visit the farm and family during the winter. In January, various families gather to butcher meat for the coming year. This event means a shop full of brethren, cutting meat, wrapping it up for the freezers or smokehouse, and of course, telling lies.

During my last trip out to the farm, some of us knuckleheads suggested we all go hunting in Montana. Well, fast forward, ten of us were here, at the Tate Ranch in the upper Ruby River Valley, to spend time together, explore the area, and hopefully take home some game for butchering in January.

Upper Canyon Outfitters is a family- owned and operated ranch in Montana's wild and beautiful Ruby Valley, situated along the banks of the Ruby River. The Ranch is surrounded by the mountain ranges of the Snowcrest, Greenhorn, and Gravelly Mountains. The Tate family has been exploring these lands since the family homesteaded here in 1910.

This is a century-old place seeped in the history of the Ruby Valley. The valley has a rich history, from Native American campsites on the Tate Ranch to Lewis and Clark's explorations and the Gold Rush days. The Ranch is known as the Tate Ranch from the days grandfather homesteaded the area. Homesteads date back to the time when the West was still a wild and untamed territory.

Well, we all were treated well at the Ranch. The valley weather cooperated with sunshine, rain, and snow over the week. We covered hundreds of miles exploring the game trails, valley, and river bottoms, looking for elusive elk, whitetail, and mule deer. In the end, the group scored some success, and the coolers were filled for January's gathering.

On the last day, the nine Pennsylvanians said, "Come on back to PA to see the farms, foliage, and the colors of fall. You just don't know what you are missing there in CA. Just don't forget your coat; it's been 15 degrees in the evening." Lone Californian replied, "Come to California, go hiking in our mountains, view a coastal sunset, and play some golf; then come to my home and soak in the hot tub with a glass of wine."

Cheers!



~The SIR~ LAKE TAHOE BRANCH 160~

CHARTERED APRIL 22, 1991

MEMBERSHIP OPEN TO MEN REGARDLESS OF AGE, RACE, COLOR, OR RELIGION  
GETTING TOGETHER FOR LUNCH AND ENJOYING OUR VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

## HIGH MOUNTAIN NEWS



### Big Sir Message Season Greetings to all our SIR

Well, the year has come to an end. I would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I would like to welcome our new officers for this next year. I hope you get all the support that I received.

I don't have a lot to share with you this month. We will be having a zoom meeting instead of a regular meeting, on December 20, 2021, at 10:00 AM. Zoom information will follow thru email. There will be a discussion on next year's calendar on where our luncheons will be held. So please come and give us your input.

Thank you to all the officers for this past year, I really appreciate all your help guiding me in the right direction. Thank you to all the membership for standing by me and sharing your thoughts with me.

Please have a safe Christmas and New Year.  
Best Wishes, Big Sir Joe Tomlin



This is my final newsletter report for 2021 and Little Sir or Branch 160. We did get to have some meetings and our picnic this year. Next year 2022 I will be your Big Sir I am very confident that the new blood that we have in the BEC this coming year will live up to your expectations. We are actively searching for a meeting place that we can call home and can accommodate our membership and needs for the coming years. Our November meeting was well attended with almost 40 members attending and we had some great input about what we can do to increase our attendance at meetings and grow our membership.

We are still in need of a secretary for 2022 it won't require a lot of your time and the BEC will help in any way we can. Sig is also looking for someone to take the position of Winter Golf Chairman, again you will get any help you need form the golfing members, please contact Sig for more information. We do need everyone's helping to make Branch 160 be health and grow. With only a few hours of your time you can help our Branch be strong again.

If you have any questions or comments about our branch, please feel free to contact me or one of the members of the BEC and we will address them.

Do to the very low response to our survey of attendance to our December Meeting we will be having a Zoom meeting on December 20. All members are welcome to attend watch for an email with directions and information on the Zoom meeting and mark it on your calendar.

John Lilygren, Little Sir Branch 160

*SIR BRANCH 160 BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022*



*Big Sir John Lilygran*



*Director Jim Maxadon*



*Director Terry Cannon*



*Little Sir Tom Kearns*



*Director Steve Butts*



*Director Jim Beilstein*



*Director Joe Tomlin*



*Director John Gerard*



*Director Skip Hempler*



*TREASURER MIKE PATTON*  
*(No picture at this time)*

Branch 174 Website:  
<http://branch174.sirinc2.org/>



**OUR NEXT REGULAR MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10**

*HOLY TRINITY CULTURAL CENTER - 1700 SCHOOL ST., MORAGA*

Social Hour: 11:00 – Program: 11:30 – Cost \$15.00. Payment in the exact amount would be appreciated.

## The Story of Bill Mauldin (Military Cartoonist)

### Willie&Joe

He meant so much to the millions of Americans who fought in World War II, and to those who had waited for them to come home. He was a kid cartoonist for Stars and Stripes, the military newspaper; Mauldin's drawings of his muddy, exhausted, whisker-stubble infantrymen Willie and Joe were the voice of truth about what it was like on the front lines.



Mauldin was an enlisted man, just like the soldiers for whom he drew; his gripes were their gripes, his laughs their laughs, his heartaches their heartaches. He was one of them. They loved him.



He never held back. Sometimes, when his cartoons cut too close for comfort, superior officers tried to tone him down.

In one memorable incident, he enraged Gen. George S. Patton, who informed Mauldin he wanted the pointed cartoons celebrating the fighting men, lampooning the high-ranking officers to stop. Now!

*"I need a couple guys what don't owe me no money for a little routine patrol."*

*The news passed from soldier to soldier. How was Sgt. Bill Mauldin going to stand up to Gen. Patton? It seemed impossible.*



*"I'm beginning to feel like a fugitive from the law of averages."*



*"Orduance? Ah'm havin' trouble with mah shootin' arn."*

**Not quite. Mauldin, it turned out, had an ardent fan: Five-star Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, SCAFE, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe.**

**Ike put out the word: "Mauldin draws what Mauldin wants." Mauldin won. Patton lost.**

*If, in your line of work, you've ever considered yourself a young hotshot, or if you've ever known anyone who has felt that way about him or herself, the story of Mauldin's young manhood will humble you.*

*Here is what, at 23 years old, Mauldin accomplished: He won the Pulitzer Prize & was on the cover of Time magazine. His book "Up Front" was the No. 1 best-seller in the United States.*

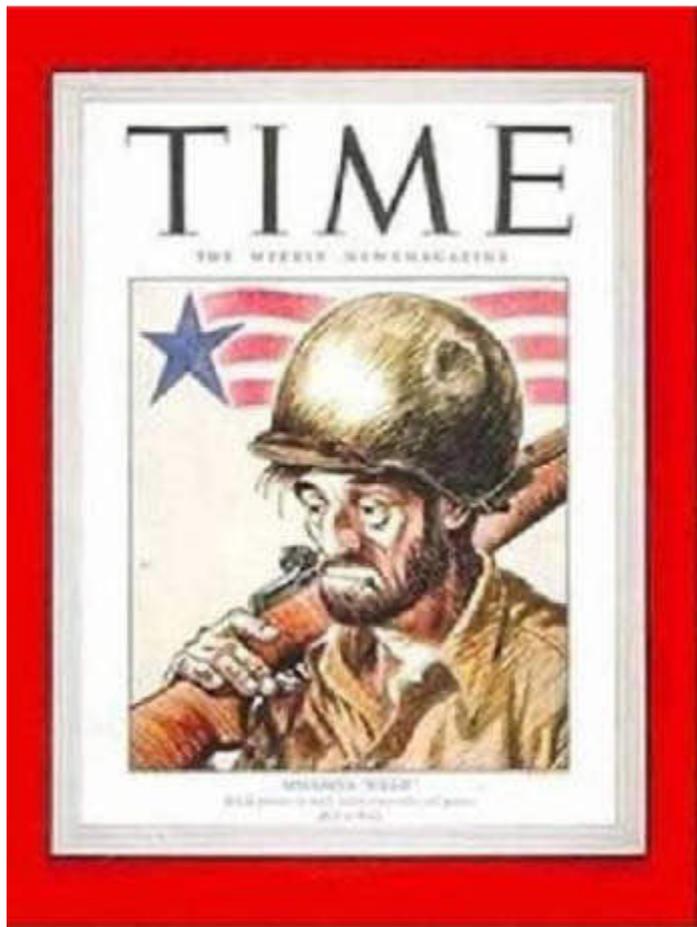
*All of that at 23. Yet, when he returned to civilian life and grew older, he never lost that boyish Mauldin grin, never outgrew his excitement about doing his job, never big-shotted or high-hatted the people with whom he worked every day.*



*"I calls her Florence Nightingale."*



*"By the way, wot wuz them changes you wuz gonna make when you took over last month, sir?"*



## Bill Mauldin's Army



Bill Mauldin's Greatest World War II Cartoons

**He had achieved so much. He won a second Pulitzer Prize, and he should have won a third for what may be the single greatest editorial cartoon in the history of the craft: his deadline rendering, on the day President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, of the statue at the Lincoln Memorial, slumped in grief, its head cradled in its hands. He never acted as if he was better than the people he met. He was still Mauldin, the enlisted man.**

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**Editors note: I left out much of the story that was in the Lamorinda SIR Branch 174 newsletter of November 2021. Please use the link below to get the full story.**

**<http://branch174.sirinc2.org/newsletters/archive/2021-11%20email.pdf>**

#### **Know Your SIR**

**Please Note** a biography of our latest inductee, Dennis Heath, has been posted on our website. You can view Dennis' bio as well as yours and other of our members' biographies by visiting our website and clicking on the Member Biographies link in the left column on the page. You will need your User Name and Password to access this section and the section with our current Member Roster. If you have forgotten or misplaced your user name and/or password, check with Dick Curry at [racorinda@pacbell.net](mailto:racorinda@pacbell.net). **Do we have your biography?**

# The SIERRA ECHO

Branch175 Newsletter

Volume 2019, Issue 11

Information: Call Don Laines (see last page)

See our web site: [www.sirinc2.org/branch175](http://www.sirinc2.org/branch175)



Two "Shows" for Branch 175

Japanese Teppanyaki  
"No Time to Die"—James Bond



SIR Members of 175  
enjoying a wonderful  
day together with their wives/  
guests at a luncheon & movie.

Members included:

- Rich Andrus & Carrie
- Bob Mitchell & Felicia
- Dennis Eckenrod & Cindy
- Howard & Jean Jones
- Tom Thomas; Tom Lean
- Marshall & Ruby Goodwin
- Mike & Mary Castle
- Paul & Susan Dehn
- Ron & Donna Rayburn
- Lee & Mi Moy





**SIR Mission Statement:**  
The Mission of SIR is to improve the lives of our members through fun activities and events – while making friends for life. Visit the SIR INC Webpage: <https://sirinc.org/>

**Windsor Branch 176**

Monthly Meeting Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday  
Noon at Charlie's Grill  
130 19<sup>th</sup> Hole Drive Windsor CA  
Bring your proof of vaccination.

**Windsor Winds Edition**

November 2021  
Volume 26 Number 288  
[www.windsorsirs.com](http://www.windsorsirs.com)



**Tuesday morning coffee and Bocce Ball at the Windsor Sr Center**



**Thursday morning Poker at the Windsor Sr Center**





**GENERAL CONSUMER ITEMS/ISSUES:**

**AUTOMOTIVE ITEMS:**

- **Hidden Features on Many New Cars That You May Not Even Know About.** Check to see if these are part of your vehicle features.

*Lane Assist*

Lane assist has become one of the best additions to any car, and probably saved countless drivers from accidents or near-fatal collisions. Not only does it correct your car based on the road's lines, but it shows you the visual representation on the dash now, too.

*Drowsiness Detector*

One of the most important breakthrough additions to newer cars is the drowsiness detector, which monitors your erratic steering and head movements, hoping to notify you before you get too tired behind the wheel. While this is a luxury for now, expect it to be in all cars soon.

*Signal Change Detector*

This is one of the most practical on the list, and should be finding its way into more cars soon. This sensor on the back of your rearview mirror watches for the stoplight to switch green, then promptly alerts you in case you're distracted on your phone or something while waiting for the light to change.

*Road Condition Detector*

You may not notice road condition detectors if you live in a warm place, or somewhere it doesn't rain much, but these detectors are incredibly useful in wet, snowy and frozen environments. This way you can be informed of dangerous roads before their treachery grabs hold of you.

*Built-In Vacuum*

We all know how easy it is for your newly cleaned car to go from spotless to a disaster in a matter of days, so when larger SUVs that typically were transporting more people added mini vacuum cleaners, it totally made sense. And recently, more larger vehicles have followed suit.

*Auto-Dim Rearview Mirror*

Rearview mirrors are solid, but a lot of times lighting can make them less effective, especially when the sun's behind us. But more recently, auto-dimming mirrors have been the norm, and they have actually done an amazing job considering most people don't even realize it's a feature.

*Automatic Hazard*

Sometimes cars break down on the side of the road, and if there's an underlying electrical issue, it can be dangerous if you're not able to activate your hazard lights. Luckily, more cars have auto hazards built in now, which activate when they know the car is in trouble and incapable of driving correctly.

*Tire Pressure Monitor*

This is one everyone has at least noticed. Typically you will see the exclamation mark in the yellow triangle when your air pressure is running low, and it can be really useful if you find a nail or some other debris that's affecting your tire. Surprisingly, some people don't even know what it means!

*Internal Trunk Release*

This is a safety feature that unfortunately isn't in every car, but is increasingly pushed by people to be a necessary component of every car with a trunk. The internal release allows the trunk to be opened from the inside, just in case someone is trapped inside for any reason.

## Lower Windows Using Keys

A mind-blowing feature that the majority of modern cars have is one of the least known, but coolest of all – hold down your unlock for 5 seconds, and you'll see your windows roll down! This is brilliant for cars that need airing out in hot places, especially if you're in a rush.

*The above items are excerpts from thedelite.com*

### **GENERAL INTEREST ITEMS:**

#### **[Unscrew A Broken Lightbulb With A Potato](#)**<sup>1</sup>

Have you ever broken a light bulb while it's still in the socket? If so, you know how frustrating it can be to remove it. But, you can use a potato to get it out without cutting your fingers.

Cut the potato in half, push the soft side into the broken bulb and turn it counterclockwise until the broken glass is embedded into the potato. Don't forget to turn off the power and put on protective gloves before you attempt this hack!

#### **[Repair Dents In Wood With A Hot Iron](#)**<sup>1</sup>

You can quickly and safely remove small dents in furniture and hardwood floors with an iron. Wet the indentation with a small amount of water and place a moist towel over it. Then run the iron over the area in a circular motion.

#### **[Remove Marker Or Crayon Scribbles On Walls With WD-40](#)**<sup>1</sup>

If your paint has a sheen, you can use WD-40 to easily wipe off markings from crayons or marker. However, if you try to use this trick on matte or flat paints, the oil in the WD-40 can stain the walls, making matters worse. In that case, you should try a Magic Eraser. WD-40 is also good for removing road tar and tree sap from your vehicle. It is also great for removing adhesive residue from pressure-sensitive labels like price marking labels. And, have you ever let a used paint brush dry without cleaning it? You're not alone. WD-40 can help soften and remove paint, even after it dries. It can also clean spray paint nozzles, remove paint from shoes and help you open stuck paint can lids. You can also spray some on your doorknobs before you start painting to keep them clean and paint-free.

#### **[Clean Grout With Toilet Bowl Cleaner](#)**<sup>1</sup>

Apply toilet bowl cleaner to the grout and let it sit for 15 minutes. Then scrub with a small cleaning brush or toothbrush. Finally, mop the area with warm water and prepare to be amazed.

#### **[Spot A Toilet Leak Using Kool-Aid](#)**<sup>1</sup>

If you suspect a leaky toilet, use a 20-cent packet of Kool-Aid to find out. After removing the lid of the toilet tank, pour in the contents of a dark-colored Kool-Aid packet. Wait 30 minutes, and if you return to find the inside of your toilet bowl the same color as the Kool-Aid, then you'll know you have a leak. Just make sure that you don't flush your toilet while you wait for the Kool-Aid to work its magic.

#### **[Clean Your Bathtub With Dish Soap And A Broom](#)**<sup>1</sup>

Save your back while you put dish soap and a broom to work cleaning your bathtub. The same soap that cuts grease on your dishes will tackle soap scum and mildew in the bathroom.

#### **[Remove Rust From Chrome With Foil](#)**<sup>1</sup>

Another nifty use of aluminum foil is clearing rust off of a chrome surface. Merry Maids cleaning service recommends cleaning the surface first with a microfiber towel and soapy water, then dipping your aluminum foil into clean water before rubbing it on the rust.

#### **[Use Tennis Balls To Open Containers](#)**<sup>1</sup>

Need help getting a grip on your jar of pickles? Cut along the lines of the tennis ball to get the perfect opener. You will be shocked how well this works.

#### **[Prevent A Door From Shutting With A Rubber Band](#)**<sup>1</sup>

If you're doing something such as bringing in groceries, let a single rubber band lend you a hand. By looping it over the outside door knob, twist it once before looping over the inside door knob. The rubber band will form an "X" over the door latching mechanism to prevent the door from latching.

### [Rotate Your Ceiling Fans Correctly](#)<sup>1</sup>

Changing the rotation of your ceiling fan can save you heating and cooling costs. Fans should turn clockwise, at a low speed, during the winter to pull the warm air up and around the room. During the summer, set them to counterclockwise to push the cold air down. While a fan won't actually change the temperature of the room, the warm or cool air on your skin will make you feel warmer or colder and you'll be more likely to give your thermostat a break. Note: Most fans have a switch mounted on the motor housing that can be flipped to change direction, while newer models offer the option on the wall panel.

### [Paint Screw Threads With Nail Polish To Prevent Them From Coming Loose](#)<sup>1</sup>

It's amazing what a thin coat of nail polish can do! By painting the screw threads with nail polish, which acts like glue, before screwing it in, it is more likely to stay in place.

### [Fix A Clogged Printer Cartridge With Windex](#)<sup>1</sup>

If you've got a clogged printer cartridge, you can easily clean it with some Windex to delay the need for buying an expensive new one. Just spray some Windex on a paper towel before wiping the bottom of the cartridge, where the ink comes out, against the wet surface. You should see streaks of ink on the paper towel when the job is done.

### [Pour Hot Water Over A Propane Tank To See How Full It Is](#)<sup>1</sup>

Not sure how much propane you have left in your tank? There's a safe and easy way to check before you fire up the grill. Boil a cup of water then pour it over the side of the tank. Then, feel the tank. The point where it goes from hot (empty) to cool (filled with propane) is your propane level.

### [Use Bread To Protect Hands From Broken Glass](#)<sup>1</sup>

If you find yourself with broken glass scattered across the floor, don't pick it up with your hand and risk cutting yourself. Use a slice of bread! The bread will latch onto both small and big shards of glass, making it a safer way to clean up an accident.

### [Peel A Whole Head Of Garlic Using The Microwave](#)<sup>1</sup>

OK, this one isn't really a home repair hack, but if you love garlic then you know the struggle of peeling it. Save yourself some time by placing individual cloves on a plate or paper towel and microwaving them for about 20 seconds. The skins will slide right off.

### [Law & Order is Returning](#)<sup>1</sup>

*Law & Order* is being revived by NBC. The network previously ran for two decades between 1990 and 2010 before it was canceled for no good reason after 456 episodes. Returns have been a television staple for nearly as long. After eleven years, [#LawAndOrder](#) has been revived for Season 21 at NBC.<sup>1</sup> [Source for the above Consumer Items: thedelite.com](#)

### [Price Increases Across the Board](#)<sup>2</sup>

It is readily apparent that Consumer Prices have gone up as a result of manpower, raw materials shortages and transportation woes brought upon our economy by the huge effects of the Covid Pandemic. This, however, will be additionally impacted in the near future by another problem – the serious drought that California is now immersed in. We are the major supplier for 80% of the nation's produce. Scarcity of water has forced farmers to eliminate some of the most water-hungry crops that will result in shortages and higher prices. Farmers are foregoing almonds, avocado, rice and other highly profitable crops.<sup>2</sup> [Source: Chan 7 ABC News](#)

### [Mandatory 10-Digit Dialing Becomes Effective on October 24.](#)<sup>3</sup>

A reminder - Beginning October 24, 2021, you must dial 10 digits (area code + telephone number) for **all local calls**. On and after this date, local calls dialed with only 7 digits may not be completed, and a recording will inform you that your call cannot be completed as dialed.<sup>3</sup> [Source: Google News](#)

### [Parklet Dangers](#)

Outdoor Dining Parklets, a product of the current Pandemic, will be with us for awhile into the future. Be aware that these are highly vulnerable to vehicular intrusions (crashes) that may result in serious injury or even death. In most cases, there are few, if any, protective measures to avoid accidents by the local traffic. Some are better designed than others. Choose your seating with care. Look for tables that have some natural or constructed barriers or closed street restrictions. Look around and use common sense before sitting down for a meal.

### [Homemade Italian Meatloaf](#)

A very easy way to make Italian Meatloaf at home is to use your regular recipe for this classic dish but simply use a mixture of beef + mild Italian sausage or beef + pork or veal + mild Italian sausage. Optional – add 1 tsp Dry Oregano.

### [New Danville Costco Gas Station Coming](#)

By now, you may have heard that the Danville Costco will be adding a gas station across the street in the former Office Depot property. You may not have heard, however, that it will be the largest gas station in Northern California! It is planned to have 32 gas pumps. There is no estimated opening date at this time.

### [Pho Saigon, Dublin, is moving](#)

Unfortunately, lease increases, constant maintenance costs not covered by the landlord and lack of mall security has forced Pho Saigon to move to a lower cost, more modern and secure location in Pleasanton. The new address is 4555 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton, CA 94588. Phone: 925 829-9361; 925 549-7944. The new location will have a bar, plenty of parking and a larger menu that will include Vietnamese 'Street Food.' The move will take place in November. At first it will be limited to take out and delivery services only. Dine In will be a bit longer – probably January 2022. The new

## DECEMBER 2021 CONSUMER TIPS–by Jim Quon

### GENERAL CONSUMER ITEMS/ISSUES:

#### ■ **Covid 19 Rapid Testing”**

Joyce and I had to make a quick trip up to Portland, OR on some urgent family issues. We drove in order to avoid crowds and places that might expose Joyce to the Covid 19 virus. We took this precaution because of her weakened Immune System caused by the Chemotherapy. While en route, we had covid scare – Joyce woke up with a sore throat. We quickly did some research via Walgreens, Safeway and CVS Pharmacies. **There are 3 types of Covid rapid tests, 1.** 'At home' self-test kits with results shown in 15 minutes. **2.** Self-test kits that are sent in to a lab with results available in about 24 hours. **3.** Go to a lab, hospital, clinic or other medical facility to be swabbed by trained medical staff with results known within 24 hrs.

**How tests work** - Rapid tests are antigen tests, and they're a little different from the PCR tests that your health care provider probably offers. Antigen tests identify proteins of the virus SARS-CoV-2 that causes COVID-19. They tell you whether you are infectious at the time of testing, which is useful information heading into a holiday season where you might be interacting with vulnerable loved ones. One of the most common tests on the market is Abbott's BinaxNOW, which comes with step-by-step instructions for swabbing your nose, inserting the swab into a few drops of liquid that comes with the kit and immediately reading the results – which like a pregnancy test, show a control line. If another line appears, that indicates the test is positive. If no other line shows up, that means it's negative. Other brands include Quidel's QuickVue test and BD Veritor's digital test kit. Chain pharmacies like Walgreen and CVS carry at-home, along with stores like Walmart and Target. A quick check of Bay Area Stores showed prices ranging from about \$15 - \$30 for a two-pack. The one we bought was the BinaxNOW at \$23 from a local Portland Walgreen. We followed the instructions carefully and the test came out negative. Follow the instruction carefully. If you keep it out too long, it can look like a positive. False positives are a problem. But if it's negative, it is usually negative. You can feel good about that.”<sup>1</sup>

The immediate results of the test were negative. The following morning, her sore throat was gone. Because the box held 2 complete test kits, we still had one left. We will use it the next time there is any question about her Covid-19 status.

<sup>1</sup> Source: [ederuy@bqyareaewsgroup.com](mailto:ederuy@bqyareaewsgroup.com)

■ **Coffee, Tea and other food/drink containing caffeine can reduce your risk of Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease:** Caffeine has well-known short-term stimulating effects on central nervous system, but the long-term impacts on cognition have been less clear. Dementia and Alzheimer's disease (AD) are rapidly increasing public health problems in ageing populations and at the moment curative treatment is lacking. Thus, the putative protective effects of caffeine against dementia/AD are of great interest. Here, we discuss findings from the longitudinal epidemiological studies about caffeine/coffee/tea and dementia/AD/cognitive functioning with a special emphasis on our recent results from the Cardiovascular Risk Factors, Aging and Dementia (CAIDE) study. The findings of the previous studies are somewhat inconsistent, but most studies (3 out of 5) support coffee's fa-

avorable effects against cognitive decline, dementia or AD. In addition, two studies had combined coffee and tea drinking and indicated some positive effects on cognitive functioning. For tea drinking, protective effects against cognitive decline/dementia are still less evident. In the CAIDE study, coffee drinking of 3-5 cups per day at midlife was associated with a decreased risk of dementia/AD by about 65% at late-life. In conclusion, coffee drinking may be associated with a decreased risk of dementia/AD. This may be mediated by caffeine and/or other mechanisms like antioxidant capacity and increased insulin sensitivity. This finding might open possibilities for prevention or postponing the onset of dementia/AD.

Source: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20182054/>

**More information:** Conclusions: We found that drinking coffee and tea separately or in combination were associated with lower risk of stroke and dementia. Intake of coffee alone or in combination with tea was associated with lower risk of poststroke dementia.

Source: National Library of Medicine, Nov. 2021

■ **O.E.M. Wiper Blades Last Much Longer than 'Aftermarket Replacement Blades:** I have noticed that the original wiper blades of each of our new cars seemed to last considerably longer than replacement blades purchased at tire shops, auto parts stores, big box stores, etc. Our original factory equipped 2015 Outback wiper blades are still in excellent shape after 6 years of normal use. Typical replacement brands seem to last only half as long. Similar experiences were true, as well, with all the new cars we have ever acquired. An article in our local newspaper confirms this phenomenon. Therefore, I recommend that you purchase your future replacement blades from the local dealer for your brand of vehicle.

Source: San Jose Mercury News, Car Talk Column, Nov. 2021

### **Food.Tasting and Dining Issues:**

■ **Substitute for Buns in Mu Shu Pork/Chicken:** Whenever you order Mu Shu Pork or Chicken from your local Chinese take out restaurant, they only give you 4 of the white wheat buns. But, there is more filling leftover. Try using small 6" diameter Wheat Tortillas as a substitute.

■ **Try Trader Joe's Green Onions:** We seem to have a problem with typical supermarket Green Onions. They begin to show signs of spoiling within a few days if not used immediately. We have found that the prepackaged ones from Trader Joe's last much longer that that – up to 2 weeks when unopened. Somehow, the packaging helps to preserve the fresh onions inside the pack.

■ **Summary Rating of National Chain Store Sandwich Shops:** The following are listed from worst to best! **Subway; Blimpie; Quizno's** (recently filed for bankruptcy); **Which Wich; Panera; Atlanta Bread Co.; Corner Bakery; Schlotzky's; Potbelly Deli; Pret A Manger; Firehouse Subs; Jimmy John's; Au Bon Pain; Jersey Mike's Subs.** **Tip:** If you have an air fryer at home, put your sandwich in the air fryer on high for a couple of minutes and it will freshen up the exterior and provide an improvement on the bread/bun texture – a crunchy exterior. Note: my wife grew up in New Jersey with access to Philadelphia. She was terribly unhappy that none of the sub shops made really authentic Hoagies until Jersey Mike's entered this West Coast Market. That's now her favorite Hoagie/Sub/Grinder. It's the oil/vinegar/Italian seasonings that make a big difference. BTW, this kind of sandwich is said to have originated in the Philadelphia Naval Shipyards during WWII as an inexpensive but substantial sandwich for the workers of that era.

■ **The single biggest mistake made by restaurants putting up their "orders to go."** This is an easy one. I'm sure that you, too, have experienced this – the customer receives an incomplete or wrong items when they come to pick up their 'to go order.' Tip: Always check your order before leaving the restaurant! This function of putting up orders 'to go' is primarily a human error when it happens. So, double check the contents before you leave the restaurant!

■ **Supermarket Taste-off of Strawberry Ice Cream:** Starting with the best and ending with the worst. **Tillamook Oregon Strawberry Ice Cream, 4- star; 365 Organic Strawberry Ice Cream ((Whole Foods), 4-star; Breyer's Strawberry Ice Cream, 3.5-stars; Haagen-Daz Strawberry Ice Cream, 3-star; Straus Family Creamery Organic Strawberry Ice Cream, 3-star; Turkey Hill Premium Strawberry Ice Cream, 2.5 stars; Alden's Organic Strawberry Ice Cream, 2.5 stars; Baskin-Robbins Very Berry Strawberry Ice Cream, 2-star; Humboldt Creamery Organic Strawberry, 1.5 stars; Signature Select Strawberry Ice Cream (Safeway), ½ -star; Sunnyside Farms Premium Strawberry Ice Cream (Lucky Stores), ½ -star.**

Source: San Jose Mercury News, Aug. 1, 2021.

■ **Considering Dentures?** Recently a 'foodie' friend lost a tooth and was left with the following options – install a partial denture, go through a lengthy/expensive implant or, lastly, do nothing. He discussed his options with his dentist and chose to go with a partial denture. After the procedure, he was very unhappy. Why? He complained bitterly that it changed his tasting ability. My wife had a similar experience. So, I decided to investigate this loss of taste phenomenon. It turns out that the dentist in both cases should have included the part of loss/change of taste might be a consequence of the dental work. I 'Googled' this 'loss of taste' and it turns out that any work in the mouth could result in the loss of taste. The entire inner mouth is covered with taste buds. A denture – even a partial one – will cover some of these taste buds and that will alter the individual's ability to taste as well as before. Leaving a void where the tooth was extracted or installing an implant should not affect the existing taste buds. The dentist should have advised the patients of this before proceeding.

■ **New Additions to the Tri Valley Dining Scene:** **Pleasanton:** **Elia** is, perhaps, the best Greek place in East Bay. It's a bit pricey but the food and service is excellent. If you like Octopus, this is the place for you! **Brava Garden Eatery** has been open about a year but it is excellent. This is primarily Italian pastas with an Argentinean twist. If you like Empanadas, I recommend their Chicken and Beef versions of this iconic dish. **Pho Saigon** has moved from Dublin to the mall where Sweet Tomatoes was located. It is not yet open but, hopefully, they will open by the end of the year. The new address is 4555 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton, CA 94588. Phone: 925 829-9361; 925 549-7944. The new location will have a bar, plenty of parking and a larger menu that will include Vietnamese 'Street Food.' They will have a new name but I don't know it, yet. **Livermore:** **Locanda Wine Bar** – they are related to Locanda Amalfi, Pleasanton; Locanda Ravello, Danville and Locanda Positano, Lafayette. They are all popular but our experiences were just so-so. **Dublin:** **Amakara** is newly relocated a block from their former location. Menu is still the same but parking is non-existent and I've heard reports that the food is not as good as before and it is now higher in price. **Berevino** has changed hands but I have no reports or experiences to mention, here. The menu remains similar to the former operator's offerings. **Rhama Mediteranean Grill** is a new, casual, fast food place across from Taco Bell near the Dublin Post Office. They offer sandwiches, wraps, bowls, platters in chicken, beef, lamb, etc. Prices are reasonable and the food is very tasty. **San Ramon:** **Gaucha Brazilian Steakhouse & Lounge** – A newcomer offering Brazilian Churrascaria Steakhouse dining format. This opened in the space formerly occupied by Sh Boom Club. Again, I have no reports by friends or trustworthy reviewers of any experiences here, yet. **Roam Artisan Burger, Bamboo Sushi, Mendocino Farms, Salt & Straw, LB Steakhouse and Ramen Hiroshi** are all newly opened eateries in the Bishop Ranch complex. I can heartily recommend **Salt & Straw** (originally started in Portland, OR). This could be the best, small batch, high end ice cream shop. Tip – instead of waiting in the long long lines out the door, simply walk into the lobby and select your flavor from pre-packed ice cream in the display freezer and pay for it without any delays. **Mendocino Farms** is a typical sandwich, soup and salad place. We can heartily recommend **Ramen Hiroshi**. It's excellent! **Tomahawk** is a new steakhouse that now occupies the shuttered Rodney Worth Ranch Barbecue across the street from the Crow Canyon Safeway. Unfortunately, I have no word on how good or bad it is, yet. **DareDevil Hot Dogs** – this is a small place with wide variety of hot dogs. They have a Chicago Dog listed but it is not quite authentic. It is missing the poppy seed bun, neon-green relish and needs more celery salt. But, it's a start.

■ **Good Buys for Christmas Gift Giving:** The 3 hottest gift items for use in the kitchen this year are Air Fryers, Sous Vide Machines and Instant Pots. **Air Fryers** are very simple devices. They are nothing but a heating element coupled to an internal fan to move the hot air in an enclosed cooking chamber. A timer will determine how long the unit stays on. They are designed to achieve temperatures of 250°F to 410°F. We use ours on a daily basis and sits out on the kitchen counter at all times. It's great for reheating foods, crisping up food item exteriors and is great to crisp up the exterior of fried foods. French Fries, pastries, onion rings, sandwiches, etc. come out great! I've seen these appliances for as low as \$40. Ours (compact Dash Air Fryer) is now about 3 years old and still works beautifully. **Sous Vide Machines** are gaining popularity as method to cook using a precise temperature water bath. Here's a good one from Amazon for just \$40. <http://tinyurl.com/ycks7jwu>. These are great for cooking steaks, chops, roasts, fish, chicken and more. The long, low, precise cooking temperature can yield very tender proteins using inexpensive cuts of meats. There are thousands of Sous Vide recipes on the Internet. Use it to cook medium rare throughout a cut of meat precisely each and every time. You can use Tri Tip that will rival Prime Rib or Filet Mignon at considerable savings. Note, however, there is no browning dur-

ing Sous Vide cooking. You will have to brown/sear your food using a separate step using a hot grill pan, outdoor charcoal or gas grill, an oven broiler or propane torch. **Instant Pot** units can be found in various sizes on sale for about \$45 in the 6 qt. size. These units are capable of multiple cooking methods all in one unit. These can add new meaning to "one pot meals." These devices have earned the respect and recommendation from Consumers Reports.

## JANUARY 2022 CONSUMER TIPS—by Jim Quon

### GENERAL CONSUMER ITEMS/ISSUES:

#### ▪ Possible Fraudulent Book About Covid 19 Rapid Testing:

[THE TRUTH ABOUT FDA-APPROVED HOME TEST KITS AND N95 MASKS FOR COVID-19 PROTECTION: Everything about Binaxnow, Ellume, Lucira Check It, Quickvue, Saliva Antibody, Rapid, Antigen & Self-Test by Dr. Bryson Bob](#) is a book offered for sale on Amazon.com. Unfortunately, this appears to be of no real value. Per Amazon reviews, the book is self published, the author is fictitious and the information in the book appears to be of little or no value. One reviewer calls it a "fraud." For a full explanation, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/2kp43fsu>

▪ **Dollar Tree is no longer 99¢:** The supply problems caused by the Pandemic have really put pressure on the Dollar Store business across the U.S. The only way for these stores to stay in business is to raise prices. **Dollar Tree** has not made any major announcement but per my visit to our local store, yesterday, it appears they are now using \$1.25/each, as their standard price. That's a 25% jump! **Dollar General**, a part of this chain store, probably is doing the same. I also visited **99¢ Only Store**, Livermore, yesterday and they were still selling their general merchandise for 99¢, each.

▪ **Consider Using the Flat Rate Priority Mail Boxes Offered by the U.S. Postal Service:** I recently sent something by Parcel Post to Portland, OR. I paid the \$10+ charges. After I left the counter, I suddenly remembered that there is a flat fee service, Priority Mail. This parcel service is a flat rate determined by the size of the furnished box/envelope. If your items will fit in one of three sizes of box, the flat fee for that box, regardless of weight, applies. The fee for the three sizes are: Priority Mail 2-Day™ **Large Flat Rate Box**, USPS-Produced Box: 23-11/16" x 11-3/4" x 3" or 12" x 12" x 5-1/2", priced @ **\$21.90**; Priority Mail 2-Day™ **Medium Flat Rate Box**, USPS-Produced Box: 13-5/8" x 11-7/8" x 3-3/8" or 11" x 8-1/2" x 5-1/2", priced @ **\$15.50**; Priority Mail 2-Day™ **Small Flat Rate Box**, USPS-Produced Box: 8-5/8" x 5-3/8" x 1-5/8", priced @ **\$8.45**. I could have saved \$2 and would have saved having to find a box at home and do the packaging. The above rates are for destinations within Zone #1. Delivery by regular Parcel Post is 3 – 5 days. The Priority Mail would have been 2 days!

▪ **Wendy's Offers New/Improved French Fries:** On Oct. 12, 2021, the company announced its new "Hot & Crispy Fry Guarantee" in an attempt to attract customers to its restaurants and steer them away from its competitors. The new fry recipe is made with real potatoes for "improved heat protection and crispiness" and is available across the country. Texturally, the Hot & Crispy Fries were definitely crispy and seemed crispier than even a fresh batch of the previous fries. Additionally, the crispiness had a good amount of staying power. ... When it comes down to it, Wendy's new Hot & Crispy Fries do indeed present hotter and crispier French fries. Source: <https://www.wendys.com>  
**Note:** My wife and I recently tried these new fries and they really are an improvement over the older version. I liked them better than the McDonald's product.

#### ▪ An iPhone Tip While Composing:

If you have been looking for an undo or reverse button on apps such as Notes and Mail, you won't find it. However, Apple still provides a way to delete text without pushing the backspace button multiple times. The next time you need to make a correction, shake your iPhone.

It may sound silly, but in iOS, the way of undoing things when there is no undo button present is to shake your iPhone. You don't need to shake it much — just give it a quick flick. After a moment, a prompt will appear titled *Undo Typing*. Tap "Undo," and your typing will be reversed. This method works across [iOS](#), so don't think it's solely limited to just your Notes app. You can apply the following steps to most other apps and situations you and your iPhone face. It will even help you undo an undo (or, better put, redo).

Shake it after you undo, and you can redo or undo another step. I have found that many iPhone users are unaware of this feature. I am glad to pass it along and hope everyone finds it useful.

Source: Don Lindich at [www.soundadvicenews.com](http://www.soundadvicenews.com)

■ **Brine Your Turkey, Chicken or Pork Roast Before Roasting:** America's Test Kitchen did a "Roast Turkey Taste Off" prior to Thanksgiving 2021 to determine what the best method of roasting a turkey. They prepared brined/non-brined, fresh/frozen and commercially basted/non-basted turkeys. Mary's Free Range Turkey was judged the winner! They also recommend brining or salting your bird or pork roast for at least 4 hours before roasting. Also, Butterball Turkeys are injected with a salt solution during processing and qualifies as "brined."

■ **Blow Your Nose Just Before Getting a Covid Test:** Blowing your nose before getting tested will result in a more accurate test result. By doing so, you will bring fresh, moist mucous to the surfaces within your nostrils for the swab to collect a viable sample for testing. This is why the medical professional administering the test inserts the cotton swab so far up/back of your nose.

Source: Chan. 5 KPIX News Interview

■ **Emergency Finger Cots:** If you accidentally cut or scrape a finger and have applied a Band-Aid, the best way to protect the injury is to slip a Finger Cot on the finger to cover the bandage and keep the injury dry. If you don't have any commercially manufactured Finger Cots on hand you can make some by cutting the fingers off of a new/clean rubber, nitrile or vinyl disposable glove.

■ **Use of Disinfectant Spray Instruments, Keyboards, Appliance controls, TV Remote Controls, Touchtone Phones, etc:** Do not spray the disinfectant directly onto these predominantly plastic surfaces. Excess liquids can drip down into crevices and enter the instrument's internal workings that may be harmful. This will definitely damage keyboards, phone pads, etc. Instead, spray the disinfectant onto a soft, clean cloth and wipe down the objects. This will ensure that no excess fluids will drip down into the device or overspray to contaminate surrounding surfaces. This technique is also good for cleaning eyeglasses!

■ **How to Get Results When Complaining About Service, Products or Merchandise:** It happens even to savvy consumers, including Consumers' Checkbook staff: Sometimes - even after you do extensive homework before making a purchase or contracting for a service - things still go wrong. The supposedly repaired clothes washer is once again inoperative, and the repair person says it's a new problem (which, of course, it's not). The TV starts acting screwy exactly one week after its warranty expires (of course). A crown falls out of your tooth after only a few months of chewing (seems like it should outlast your caramel cravings by a few years).

Per Consumers' Checkbook staff, although most of us gripe about service headaches to family, friends, and co-workers, we seldom (studies show it's as few as one out of four) complain to the company that dropped the ball. And many consumers who do complain to businesses do so ineffectively. Also, lot of consumers remain silent because it seems like too much trouble to complain or they want to avoid a confrontation. Others don't complain because they think it won't help - the warranty expired a week ago, so the store won't do anything. But, telling a company - especially a reputable company - that things didn't go well usually produces good results. The trick is to complain effectively, and to diligently follow up.

The first step is to make sure the company's owner or manager knows you are dissatisfied. Even if the employees you dealt with know you're unhappy, that information might not reach someone who has the authority - and cares enough about customer service - to put things right. If your gripe is with a large company, call to obtain an email address or phone number for the company's CEO or president. Although the company's top executive is unlikely to handle your complaint personally, his or her staff is likely to get it to someone in the company who can help you - and is more likely to respond to a request that comes from the top.

If your complaint involves a product that you bought or was installed, contact the manufacturer. Even if your problem did not result from a manufacturing defect, the company may want to settle your claim rather than risk your ill will.

In your complaint, state the facts as you view them, why you feel entitled to relief, and how the company can make amends. Make your request reasonable. For example, don't ask for a full refund on a home improvement project if four out of five tasks were performed correctly.

**Complain in a Firm But Nonthreatening Manner.** No one responds well to hostility: If you are in-temperate, an otherwise reasonable business owner might respond in kind. As a result, what could have been a calm (and quick) resolution escalates into a feud. Even if you believe you were

intentionally cheated, don't utter words like "crook," "criminal," "incompetent," or...you know ...worse. Harsh words rarely get positive results.

If complaining in writing, attach to your email, or enclose with your letter, copies of relevant documents such as contracts, invoices, receipts, and previous correspondence.

Another option is to post your complaint - and your desired resolution - on Facebook or Twitter, and tag the company. This forces the company to decide whether it wants to attract good or bad publicity from your dispute. While it's not too risky to ignore complaints from one customer, many companies will respond to complaints broadcast to hundreds of other potential customers. Many companies, particularly national ones, have staff who monitor social media websites to resolve complaints quickly and show that the company is responsive to its customers.

Still no favorable resolution? Complain again. With large companies, ask that your case get "escalated" to the next manager on the corporate customer service food chain. Unfortunately, with some companies you might have to fight (politely!) through several layers of staff to reach a resolution. For example, I recently had to complain to increasingly higher-up staff at Alamo Rent a Car for nearly six months to get a refund for the \$276 "special cleaning fee" it charged me to vacuum my kids' crumbs from the backseat of a rental.

If the company won't do the right thing, there are third-party programs that can help.

[If you paid using a credit card, the federal Fair Credit Billing Act and the policies of credit card issuers provide enormous leverage by allowing you to withhold payment for goods and services you believe are defective or not delivered as promised.](#) After you've tried unsuccessfully to resolve the matter with the service provider, contact your credit card bank to dispute the charge (you usually can do this even if you've already paid the bill). Once you've requested this "chargeback," your credit card bank will place a hold on the disputed charge and investigate. The service provider can protest the chargeback, but sellers rarely successfully reverse chargebacks if the customer has returned (or tried to return) the goods or can document the service defect.

Another option is to file a complaint with a government consumer agency. Your most broad-reaching resource is the [California Department of Consumer Affairs \(DCA\)](#) (800-952-5210), which has legal authority over many types of businesses. You can complain to the DCA even if you're not sure it has jurisdiction over your complaint: It will refer matters it can't handle to the Attorney General's office, another state agency, or a federal agency. The matter might be resolved via phone or email, but the DCA may also perform inspections, gather evidence from third parties, do legal or technical research, or mediate the dispute. The DCA staff might do more than resolve your complaint; they might get the merchant to agree to change business practices and/or provide relief to additional aggrieved consumers; or they might force the business to pay penalties.

In addition to government consumer agencies, you can seek help from a private agency, such as the [Better Business Bureau](#), or from the watchdog department of a local media outlet—for example, [KGO's 7 On Your Side](#) (415-954-8151) or [NBC Bay Area Responds](#) (888-996-8477). [Consumer Action](#) (415-777-9635), a nonprofit San Francisco-based consumer advocacy group, is another great source for help.

**Bottom line** – the way you complain will likely determine whether you get satisfaction or not.  
**Source:** Kevin Brasler, Consumers' Checkbook staff

■ **"Ghosting" in Your Home:** "Ghosting," to a builder or painter, refers to **apparently unexplainable dark streaks or patches on walls, ceilings, and carpets, especially on interior walls, ceilings and corners.** What causes ghosting in a house?

It is the result of a slow build-up of soot, dust, dirt, and other particles that have attached to objects such as studs, joists, walls, ceilings, rafters, and even sheetrock screws. The buildup of ghost marks can be caused by any combination of **moisture, cold spots, static electricity, air currents, and a supply of dust, soot, and other particulates that can drift with the air.** Cold spots on walls and ceilings get damp from condensation, and air-borne dust clings to the dampness.

**How do you stop ghosting?** **1.** Stop using candles or combustible oils and frying foods in oil. In most cases, these are the three main culprits. **2.** Improve your attic insulation. Ensure the insulation covers the ceiling joists/rafter ties. ... **3.** Lower your interior RH. The issue is exacerbated by the excess humidity in the air.

In greater detail, it all has to do with the construction of a home. To evenly heat and cool a home, there must be 3 barriers that surround the home to protect it: a thermal, air and moisture barrier. Together, the 3 are called the building envelope. While there should never be gaps, penetrations or voids, they are present in homes with ghosting issues, allowing air and moisture to be carried by the air current through the gaps that cause the ghosting.

#### ■ **5 Ways to Prevent Catalytic Converter Theft**

A stolen catalytic converter replacement can cost as much as \$3,000 for the often-targeted Toyota Prius. Catalytic converter theft is on the rise nationwide. Thieves can steal this antipollution device in a matter of minutes and sell it to scrap metal dealers for several hundred dollars for the precious metals it contains.

A replacement for a stolen catalytic converter can cost as much as \$3,000 for the often-targeted Toyota Prius, says Colby Sandman, owner of Muffler Tech in Sacramento, California, who saw an uptick in thefts as the lockdowns took hold. Now, his shop replaces 15 to 20 stolen catalytic converters each day.

Such a theft is a “crime of opportunity,” Sandman says, so removing that easy opening will cause these cat burglars to move on to easier prey. Here are the top tips from mechanics and law enforcement agencies to avoid a wrenching experience and a costly repair.

##### **1. Know if you're a target for catalytic converter theft**

Call a good local muffler store and ask what cars have been targeted in your area, Sandman recommends. I called a shop and, sure enough, they reeled off many vehicles affected nearby, such as Ford trucks, Honda Elements and Jeep Cherokees, that had often been seen in the shop for a catalytic converter replacement.

“The Prius is the No. 1 vehicle for cat thefts” in the Sacramento area, Sandman says. As an ultra low-emissions vehicle, the Prius has a catalytic converter that contains more of the rhodium, palladium and platinum that render pollutants harmless.

Trucks and SUVs are often hit by thieves because it’s easy to slide under the vehicle rather than jack it up. Sometimes thieves unbolt the catalytic converter, but more often they just cut the connecting pipes using a battery-operated saw.

##### **2. Install an anti-theft device on your catalytic converter**

Investing in a cable locking device is much cheaper than replacing a catalytic converter, says Arantxa Chavarria, public information officer for the Long Beach, California, police department. The internet is filled with such devices to protect the catalytic converter, which is part of the exhaust system that runs along the bottom of your car. The anti-theft devices Sandman’s shop installs range from \$250 to \$800.

##### **Here are a few of the popular devices:**

- A steel shield that fits over the catalytic converter, requiring time and extra tools to remove.
- Cages made of rebar or other high-strength steel that’s difficult to cut.
- Stainless steel cables welded from the catalytic converter to the car’s frame.

Some muffler shops will custom-weld such a device to your car. But Sandman cautions that attaching the catalytic converter directly to the car’s frame can be noisy since the exhaust system otherwise is suspended from the car by sound-buffering hangers.

##### **3. Paint your catalytic converter**

Some sources recommend using a high-temperature fluorescent orange paint, such as those sprayed on barbecue grills, on your catalytic converter and then inscribing your vehicle identification number in the painted surface. This makes it traceable, and in theory at least, a reputable scrap metal dealer might decline to buy it.

#### 4. Set an alarm or camera to catch thieves.

You can turn up the sensitivity of your car alarm so that it goes off when thieves jostle your car. That's fine, but as Sandman points out, then the alarm blares when your cat jumps on the car in the middle of the night. Other alarms are designed to be activated when the car is tilted, such as when it's jacked up. Installing a motion-sensitive dash cam can notify you of a theft in progress or possibly record the license plate of the getaway car.

In addition to alarms, Chavarria recommends getting motion-sensitive lights and parking in your driveway or a closed garage whenever possible. She also suggests getting to know your neighbors so you can recognize strangers who might be casing parked vehicles. I checked my local Nextdoor.com and found almost a dozen accounts of catalytic converter thefts in the past three months.

#### 5. Check your car insurance

Comprehensive insurance covers stolen auto parts. If you have [full coverage](#) — liability insurance, plus collision and comprehensive policies that repair or replace your own car — you're covered, minus your deductible amount. It's typically required if you have a loan or lease. If you have a vehicle at high risk for a catalytic converter theft, you might consider lowering your deductible amount. If you carry liability coverage only, you're not covered for theft.

#### What to do if your catalytic converter is stolen

If you come out in the morning and start your car, you'll know by the loud exhaust noise that your catalytic converter was stolen. Here are a few steps that can get you going again:

- Aftermarket catalytic converters are cheaper, but make sure they're allowed in your state. A good muffler shop should know what's legal. In some cases, an aftermarket catalytic converter will be less desirable and prevent future thefts.
- Ask your mechanic if driving your car without the catalytic converter will further damage it. If not, drive only to the repair shop.
- Contact your insurance company and take pictures of the damaged exhaust pipe where the catalytic converter used to be.
- File a police report, which can easily be done online in many jurisdictions. This will help police track such crimes and might assist in arrests.
- While your new catalytic converter is being installed, ask the repair shop about adding an anti-theft device to prevent future thefts.

**Source:** Philip Reed, NerdWallet.com