

Subject: A Bright New Year for SIR A Message from Our New President

Fellow Sirs,

I am honored to serve as your new President as we step into 2024. It's with honest enthusiasm that I assume this role and with it the opportunity to evolve and strengthen our organization.

My hope is to make "SIR Happenings" but one of three documents made available to our members to help you improve your branches. The first is a regular email from me "From the President's Desk" (the first one went out on January 1st), the second might be called "SIR Successes" which would highlight SIR recent updates and successes and the third is this one called "SIR Happenings" which is an introduction from the president followed by a compilation of the best articles which have appeared in your branch newsletter.



*Big Sir Dale Decker
and his '98 Corvette*

As I wrote in my letter to SIR branch leaders: ***Our mission at SIR is clear:*** to enhance the lives of our members through fun activities, special events and lunches while forging friendships that last a lifetime. ***Our vision is compelling:*** to be the best active senior's organization in Northern and Central California by promoting physical, mental, and social engagement which research shows will improve our quality of life and longevity.

Our number one challenge is to embrace the purpose and increase the vitality of our organization. It is clear we need to recruit younger members as our older members are becoming less active. New members will play a pivotal role in leading us into an exciting new time. They bring fresh ideas and perspectives, ensuring a dynamic blend of the past with the future. In 2024, our primary goal is to reach out to our local communities and add new members and new life to every one of our branches.

Thanks for your time and enjoy getting caught up with what's **happening** in other branches.

Dale

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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*

Last year the State SIR Branch Support team developed nearly 50 recipe cards of marketing ideas. These excellent marketing idea cards are available on SIRinc.org under the Marketing tab and have been distributed through the Area Representatives for distribution to their respective branches. The messages on these cards are meant to help branch BECs improve branch community visibility, increase fun at luncheons, and entice the an out reach to new folks by offering more activities to engage in.

The area of focus in this issue is "Reaching the Community" Sample recipe flyers are displayed on Pages 3 thru 11. Enjoy!

Jerry Sabo
Happenings Editor

Note from the Happenings Editor

The SIR Happenings is a compilation of the information I get from every SIR Branch that sends a copy of their Branch Newsletter. This issue reflects the content of newsletters from November, December and January. I especially try to include new members, awards, photos, and SIR recruiting ideas. If you would like to submit comments or suggestions please email me at jlsabo3@comcast.net.

I recommend that many of the newsletter editors take the time to go over one of the videos that I uploaded into YouTube involving embedding photos into a document.

Many of you might ask:

Why is the Happenings (a 60+ page document) less than 10 GB in size while many newsletters that I receive from branches are as large as 25 GB (for an 8 page document)?

See <https://youtu.be/YHd2O kZUPs>

Other YouTube tutorials can be found on our Branch 59 website at

<https://sirinc2.org/branch59/cyber-geezer-tutorial-videos/>

Thank you all for your input. I welcome your suggestions and your feedback. What would you like in the Happenings that has been left out?

Jerry Sabo



So many ways to reach out to your Community

Sandwich boards

Sail banners

Signs

Brochures &

Pamphlets

Handouts

Local newspaper articles

(print)

Retail stores

Window posters

Community Centers

Community service

(where the boys are)

Senior Centers

Farmers' Market

Pickleball Courts

Trail heads

Churches

Time to Get Busy



Be Wiling to Try

Business cards

Free lunch

invitations

Wine Tastings

(personal)

Face-to-Face

Neighbors

Golfers, Bowlers

Follow-up

Wear SIR apparel

(electronic)

Internet

Social media

Websites

Next door

Facebook

www.WeAreSIR.com

Consider trying these recruiting ideas

Lee Moy



Communicating With The Community Signage

Prospective members come from the community.

It is important therefore to let the community know about SIR and its activities.

One excellent way of doing that is through the use of signs.

Consider placing signs at your activities to let the community know of your activity and they are welcome.

Consider placing signs in your community to advertise your branch and your activities. (Ensure you have permission.)

Other branches are successfully using signs to attract members.



Communicating With The Community Signage

This sign is being used by Branch 95 at its activities.

Notice that it is an all purpose sign which identifies each of their activities.

Also, notice it provides a brochure for interested persons.

Signs come in many different forms and can be prepared without excessive costs.

Signs are a proven method for increasing membership.

For more information, contact Kevin King of Branch 95 at kmking00@gmail.com or Neil Wheeler of Branch 17 at njmwheeler@science-one.org.





Communicating With The Community Brochures/Handouts

Handouts or brochures can provide significant community visibility.

Brochures generally emphasize Branch activities and include photographs which convey how fun and enjoyable it is to be a member of your branch.

Handouts can focus on a single activity or more generally, again emphasizing fun.

This type of marketing material can typically be placed in a number of community locations. From community centers to retail stores to community events and programs. Their uses are limited only to your creativity.



Available at the State SIR Website
SIR Branded Marketing Materials



Communicating With The Community Brochures/Handouts

This handout is being used by Branch 65 in Napa.

Looking at the handout, you immediately see the branch activities and the how much fun one can have being a member of the branch. There is a suggestion to ask for a brochure to get more information.

Handouts/brochures have successfully attracted new members.

For more information on the use of handouts/brochures, you can contact Jerry Stabile of Branch 65 at j_stabile@yahoo.com.





Communicating With The Community Business Cards

Most think that the best way to attract new members is through face to face meetings.

At each such meeting, one should always provide a SIR Invitation Business Card.

Because meetings often occur unexpectedly and at random times, it is important to carry one or more cards.



Communicating With The Community Business Cards

Since every member may have a conversation with potential non-members, your branch may wish to provide SIR Invitation Business Cards to each member.

Don't forget you can use the back of your cards to provide marketing information about your branch.

Consider developing programs to encourage your members to use the business cards. Instead of a lunch speaker, perhaps have a discussion about the use of business cards.

If you have questions or would like suggestions on programs involving business cards, contact Russ Salazar of Branch 113 at rctalazar@aol.com.





Communicating With The Community Newspapers

Newspapers: Local papers provide an avenue for you to print upcoming programs and events.

- First, review your local paper to determine where notices of future events are found, their format, and the editor to whom a notice should be sent.
- Second, write your notice in the correct format and, if possible, attach a photograph of the activity.
- Third, send your it to the editor and request it be printed.
- Consider meeting with the editor for coffee or lunch to get to know the editor and to further introduce him/her to SIR.
- Continue providing your notices to the editor even if they are not published immediately. They will be eventually.



Communicating With The Community Websites

Internet Media: Most men between the ages of 50 and 70 use the internet for research, social media and games.

One of the prime places that potential members to evaluate whether they want to become a member is your website.

Your Branch will be judged by the appearance of its website. If non-existent, out of date or cursory only, then it will make a negative impression on the potential member.

So, what can you do to improve your website? Simply request assistance from internet and website wizards found at State and in other Branches. These webmasters will guide you through the process and answer your questions. Webmasters can be contacted at _____.



**Don't Ignore Or Avoid Your
Branch Website Because It
is Confusing.**

**Ask questions and get
training!!**



MARKETING THROUGH THE INTERNET

The internet is going to become increasingly important to your recruitment efforts.

DON'T BE AFRAID OF IT.

DON'T BE LOCKED OUT OF IT.

Learn now how best to use it.



MARKETING THROUGH THE INTERNET



Ask your members, you will likely find one or more that already know how to use social platforms on the internet like Facebook, UTube, Instagram, and Reddit

If not, reach out to

(Alan Baker) who will see that someone contacts you to help you, or your team, learn how to safely use the social media on the internet for marketing.

You might want to check out www.facebook.com/sirsocialactivities.

Also, watch for Zoom training sessions that will be offered.



GROWTH THROUGH Community Service

Community Service is not a required activity.

But, if you poll your members, you will likely be surprised how many of your members are already performing community service, many of which would enjoy an activity focused on community service.

If your Branch has a community service activity or will be adopting one, it is a terrific marketing tool.



GROWTH THROUGH Community Service

Pick a service project that is important to your members and the community.

Service projects that involve work with other groups provide a greater opportunity for marketing SIR.

Provide members with shirts or hats which clearly identify your SIR Branch.

Your members will likely be asked about SIR and should be prepared to talk about how much they enjoy your Branch.

Provide invitation cards or business cards to your members and encourage their use.



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SENIOR MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS Locating Places To Market

Where do you want to invest your marketing efforts with the greatest likelihood of attracting members?

Activity Locations: If you want to attract active seniors, you market where active seniors are. These locations are plentiful. Consider, among many others, golf courses, tennis and pickleball courts, parks, trail heads, gyms, bowling alleys, children athletic activities, churches, community activities, businesses and many more.

Posting, with permission, attractive visible and relevant signage at these locations will inform active seniors about SIR and its benefits and opportunities.

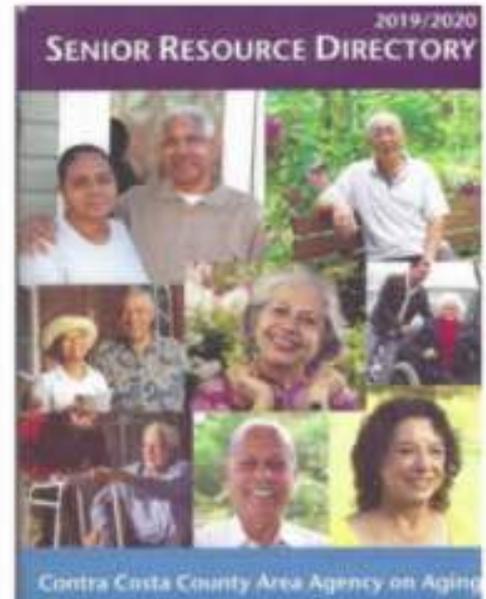


SENIOR MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS Locating Places To Market

Existing Senior Programs. Perhaps the quickest way to identify senior programs with active senior men is through information you can obtain from your City and/or your County.

For example, Contra Costa County publishes a Senior Resource Directory which provides substantial information relative to seniors. This directory provides the name and contact information for senior organizations and veteran services within the County.

By coordinating with your targeted organizations, you will be able to reach many that you otherwise would not have known about.





INSPIRING YOUR MEMBERS

Goal: Member Marketing

With each passing year, branch membership naturally decreases. Unless the branch can attract new active members to offset losses forecasts for your Branch may appear bleak.

While other marketing approaches can be successful, by far the most successful approach is individual person-to-person discussions and invitations by our members.

So let's consider how our members can be inspired to talk about SIR and bring new members to the Branch in sufficient numbers to ensure the Branch's vitality and health.



INSPIRING YOUR MEMBERS

Let's Grow!

There are many ways to energize and inspire your members to get actively involved. Consider the **LETS** approach:

Leadership. Lead by example.

Educate your members as to the need.

Train your members so they feel comfortable talking about SIR.

Support your members and follow-up to ensure performance.



Sons in Retirement

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

Flabbergasting Financial Foolishness?

Homeless Cost Craziness

Consider these numbers:

\$672,000,000* – 2022 spending of San Francisco's City Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing

7,780 – Total number of homeless people living in San Francisco in 2022 (about half lived in shelters and the other half lived "on the street")

\$86,375 – Yearly spending per homeless person

\$87,360 – Income required to rent a one-bedroom apartment in the Tenderloin (per *San Francisco Examiner*, September 29, 2022)

A common assumption about assisting the homeless: aid must be goods (stuff, food) and services (help), **but not money**, because the homeless can't be trusted with cash; they'll just spend it on alcohol and drugs.

Consider the results of a recent experiment conducted in Canada (here's where it gets more interesting):

First, Psychology Professor Jiaying Zhao and his team at the University of British Columbia surveyed "non-homeless" folks, asking them (1) how they would spend a gift of \$7,500, and (2) how they think homeless people would spend the same amount of cash. Those surveyed (as a group) predicted that the homeless would spend four times more on "temptation goods" than would the non-homeless.

Next, Zhao, et al., "put their [grant] money where their [allegorical] 'mouth' was." They gave 50 homeless people in Vancouver a one-time gift of \$7,500 and then followed them for a year.

Zhao summarized their findings: "They did not spend more money on alcohol or drugs, contrary to what people believe, and instead they spent the money on rent, food, housing, transit, furniture, a used car, and clothes. It's entirely the opposite of what people think they're going to do with the money." He explained that, "When we talk to these [homeless] people, they know exactly what they need to do to get back into housing, but they just don't have the money." Amen.

Is Being Positive Overstated?

No.1 Personality Trait Linked to a Long Life

When reporters ask centenarians (folks age 100+) their secret to long life, their most common answer is "being positive." In fact, validated research has shown that a different personality trait tracks best with long life. The top researcher in this area is Professor David Watson, University of Notre Dame personality psychologist, founding president of the Association for Research in Personality, and recipient of the Award for Distinguished Research in Personality from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Psychologists use the "Five Factor Model" to describe personality. It breaks down personality into five areas: (1) Extraversion (outgoing/energetic vs. solitary/reserved), (2) Agreeableness (friendly/compassionate vs.

critical/rational), (3) Conscientiousness (efficient/organized vs. extravagant/careless), (4) Neuroticism (sensitive/nervous vs. resilient/confident), and (5) Openness to experience (inventive/curious vs. consistent/cautious).

Watson's discovery: "Conscientiousness, or how organized and disciplined folks are, is the most closely related to longevity," he says. This is likely because people with high degrees of conscientiousness are better at taking care of themselves. "Conscientious people, for example, tend to drink alcohol in moderation and eat more balanced meals," he says. Moreover, "Conscientious people don't do stupid things, so they have lower rates of accidents and better health behaviors," say Watson.

Good news — as folks age, they can increase their conscientiousness. They can take conscientiousness workshops to help them increase their ability to self-regulate. "The basic idea is, if you want to increase your conscientiousness, act more conscientious, and the attitude follows the behavior," he says. "Try

to be on time for things. Follow through on things.” “This doesn’t mean a positive attitude does nothing,” he adds. “Agreeableness can play a part in longevity, too, especially when it comes to weathering stressful situations.” “Psychologically healthy people have a quicker recovery time,” says Watson. “They are able to tell themselves ‘This is not that big of a deal.’ They find ways to bring themselves back into that equilibrium.” So, folks living a healthy lifestyle are able to bounce back from hardship and can enjoy a longer, more satisfying life.

[see:

https://www.cnbc.com/2023/09/17/this-is-the-nopoint1-personality-trait-linked-to-living-longer.html?utm_source=join1440&utm_medium=email&utm_placement=newsletter

and

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2023/feb/18/100-centenarians-100-tips-for-a-life-well-lived>

Just 3 Times Per Day

Brief Bursts of Busyness Linked to Longer Life

Many folks do not exercise regularly or not at all (except when toddling between their recliner and their refrigerator!). Many folks, over the years, often have found themselves exercising less and less as they’ve grown older.

Some auspicious findings from a new study show that even short bursts of activity derived from simple, household tasks are tied to lower risks of heart attack, stroke, and death. 25,000 adults aged 42-78 wore fitness trackers every day for two years. None of them engaged in leisure-time exercise or played any sports – all their exertion came from things like housework, gardening, and other chores.

A review of study participants’ medical records over the next decade revealed that regular periods of moderate to vigorous activity lasting around 10 minutes or less “...were associated with **a steep decrease in major cardiac events – heart attack, stroke – and death by any cause,**” according to senior author Emmanuel Stamatakis. “The take-home message here is any type of activity is good for your health, but the more effort you put into those daily tasks and the longer you keep up that energy, the more benefits you are likely to reap. If you are huffing and puffing and unable to hold a conversation for some of that time you have hit the sweet spot.” And the greater level of physical exertion in each burst of activity the better: “Those who huffed and puffed for at least 15% of the time (roughly 10 seconds per minute) saw the greatest benefit,” said Stamatakis. The researchers published their findings in the medical journal *Lancet Public Health* (see: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(23\)00183-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(23)00183-4/fulltext))

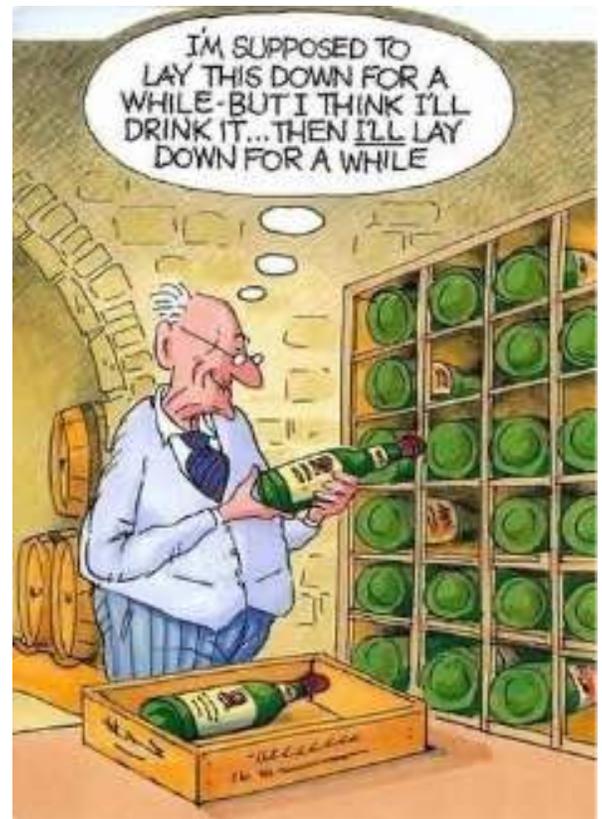
Those findings build off of a previous study by the same researchers who determined **even one-minute bursts of vigorous/intense exercise performed three times a day reduced the risk of overall mortality by around 40% and of cardiac mortality by around 50%.** The goal of the continued research was to examine how duration and intensity affected those positive outcomes. This data is published in the medical journal *Nature Medicine*

(see: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-022-02100-x>)

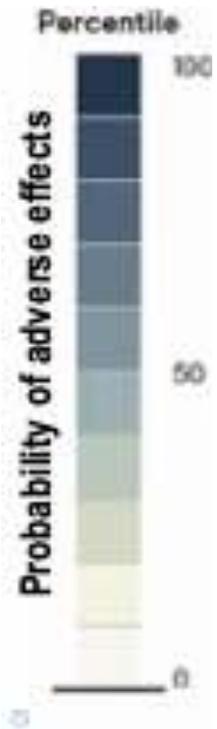
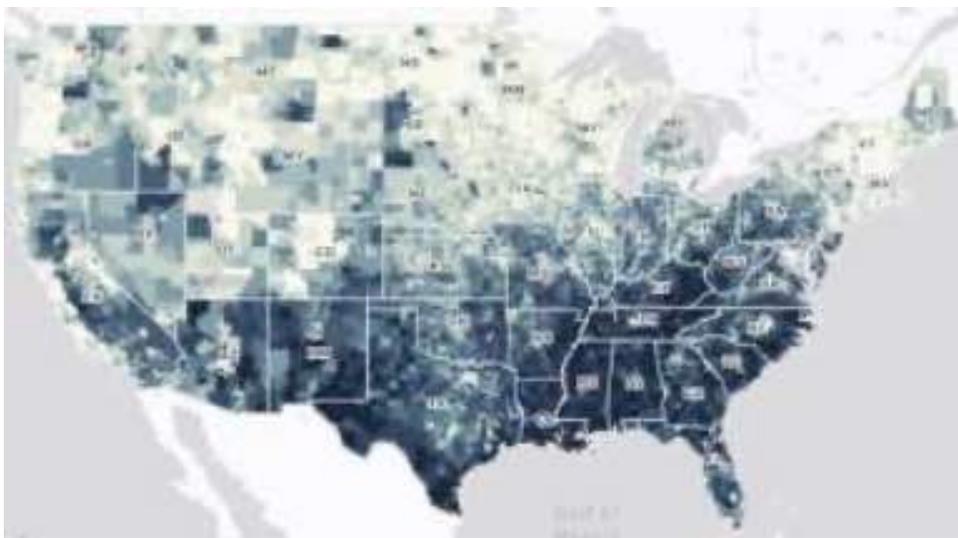
So, the next time folks are crouching to put the pots and pans away or lugging a heavy load of laundry they can feel good knowing they not only “taking care of the business,” but also taking care of their body and their health.

Examples of everyday activities that, with a little extra OOMPH, can get folks huffing and puffing in no time (folks can add their own):

- Wheeling the trash cans to the curb
- Gardening
- Carrying loads of laundry up the stairs
- Walking briskly down the driveway to get the mail
- Vacuuming with gusto
- Scrubbing the bathroom floor
- Picking up or playing with grandkids
- Washing/cleaning-out the car
- Washing windows
- Dusting the tops of hard-to-reach places



Folks Can Check out Their Neighborhood The U.S. "Climate Vulnerability Index"



Checkout the Data for the Whole United States

The map above provides a sobering picture of the effects of global heating on the U.S. as a whole. While coastal areas are in in danger of flooding, the entire southern half of the country faces alarmingly extreme and unhealthy temperatures.

To see how you'll fare, type in your address:

<https://climatevulnerabilityindex.org/>

Even a Simple Thank You...

Science Shows Lasting Benefits of Gratitude

Most folks know intuitively that thankfulness is a positive mindset. Now, research has uncovered more of its benefits. One study found that practicing gratitude 15 minutes a day, five days a week, for at least six weeks improves mental wellness and prompts a lasting positive change in perspective. Other research has identified strong links between practicing gratitude and reduced depression and anxiety, better sleep, enhanced sexual performance, and improved heart health. Cultivating feelings of gratitude can also help folks slow down, be more patient, and make better decisions. Plus, it can boost impulse control, and for some folks this helps them prevent overeating.

Interestingly, practicing gratitude induces positive changes in the brain. Berkeley's *Greater Good Science Center* used functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) to compare the brains of folks who spent time writing gratitude letters with the brains of those who did not. The brains of letter writers showed greater activation in the medial prefrontal cortex, which plays essential roles in the cognitive process, regulation of emotion, motivation, and sociability. "As striking as this effect was, it was still present three months after the letter writing began," said Joel Wang, who led the research study, "This indicates that simply expressing gratitude may have lasting positive effects on the brain." "Much of our time and energy is spent pursuing things we currently don't have. Gratitude reverses our priorities to help us appreciate the people and things we do have," said Joshua Brown, another researcher who worked on the study.



Help Getting Started

Making Gratitude a Habit

Sometimes showing gratitude can feel like an obligation. This sense may stem from our parents telling us to say "thank you" for a birthday gift, thus delaying our chance to play with a new toy. So, how do folks say "thank you" with a genuine feeling of gratitude. "It shouldn't just be something we do on special occasions. We need to turn it into a daily habit," says Psychologist Christina Costa, who studies the positive effects of gratitude on the brain. "The more we do it, the easier and faster it becomes to be grateful. We're wired toward it."

Many Ways to Increase Sense of Gratitude

Keep a Journal Each day, jot down three reasons to be thankful. Set aside 10 minutes every day to make entries in the journal. Pick a time of day when you find it the easiest to identify reasons to be grateful. A 2018 study found that keeping a gratitude journal decreased materialism and bolstered generosity among adolescents. [see: Lan Nguyen Chaplin, et al., The impact of gratitude on adolescent materialism and generosity, *Journal of Positive Psychology*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 502-511; <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17439760.2018.1497688>]

Get Some Hints Buy a copy of Barbara Ann Kipfer's *14,000 Things to Be Happy About*, or any book like it.

Review Each Day "Think about little acts in your day that made it easier and brighter," says Costa. "You'll start seeing things you're grateful for." That might be fresh coffee first thing in the morning, seeing the sun after a rainfall, or finding time to cozy up with a good book.

Pull Inspiration from the Environment Notice the natural beauty all around: the sky, the cool breeze, the soft warmth of a cozy sweater.

People Who Have Helped Thank people who enrich life and the reasons for being thankful for them and things they have done. Send them a letter, an email, or even better, deliver the letter in person and read it to them.

What happens to gas stations when the world goes electric?

Emily Grubert

Transcript of October 2022 talk in **TED**

Countdown Dilemma Series – watch a

video of her talk with slides at https://www.ted.com/talks/emily_grubert_what_happens_to_gas_stations

[when the world goes electric](#) Picture this.

You're in your car and you're getting worried. You were really, really relying on that fuel station being open. Now you're not sure you're going to make it to the next one you see on your map. And this area is notorious for unreliable stations.

You definitely don't have enough range to make it to the one that you know is usually working or even the one that at least has decent customer service on their help line when it's down. So, you slow way down to conserve

energy and sigh when you see a giant hill coming up on the freeway ahead of you. The way people are driving, there is no way you're going to make it up this hill at a safe highway speed without killing your energy efficiency.

It's hot out, but you turn off your AC and remind yourself again that charging your phone in the car outlet doesn't actually use that much energy. "Man," you think to yourself, "I remember when this was a problem for EVs. But when I bought this car, I just didn't think finding gasoline was ever going to be this much of a problem."

If we succeed at reaching international climate goals, the fossil fuel infrastructure



systems that support about 80 percent of global energy consumption will mostly, if not entirely, retire over the next few decades. The global dominance of fossil fuels and the global emergency of climate change means that this retirement imperative exists everywhere, whether infrastructure is relatively old -- like in the US, where I work on these issues and where most of my examples come from -- or relatively newer, as in many countries with more recent industrialization.

What I'm talking about is big infrastructure, like power plants and

refineries, but it's also things like gas stations and people's cars, stoves and furnaces. Fossil fuel infrastructure is a complex network of high-hazard industries that need to be able to continue to operate safely until the new system is completely ready to take

over, including during emergencies complicated by climate change.

Just letting these systems go away would be deeply disruptive and hazardous. We'd expect disproportionate harm to overburdened and underserved communities who can't opt out from skyrocketing prices, abandoned remediation plans and declining access to energy services. This means ongoing fossil expenditures and a reliance on highly trained workers in industries that might not outlast their careers, with a simultaneous focus on phasing out these same industries as quickly as possible to address climate change and a host of other environmental injustices.

This is why we need to plan. And right now, there's basically nowhere in the world where these urgently needed plans for phasing out the fossil system while phasing in the clean energy system exist. When we talk about climate goals, the question I like to ask is, "If we actually believed we were going to succeed, what would we need to be doing right now?" The time between now and success is where this gets real and very difficult. Sara Hastings-Simon and I call this the mid-transition. And even under a best-case scenario, it will probably last for decades.

During the mid-transition, the clean energy system and the fossil energy system are both too small to fulfill all of the energy needs we have, but big enough that they can't really operate without constraining each other. Also, the mid-transition overlaps with the climate transition. This means we'd expect the systems we have now to become less functional as they operate further and further outside of design parameters. And it also means we don't entirely know what the new systems will need to be able to handle.

Another issue here is that we'd also expect that the transitioning system will just generally work less well than either the stable starting point or the stable end point. As long as both systems are operating at scale, we can't optimize for either one's needs. People are often willing to accept some level of problem in order to enable a shared future vision. But trust in that vision will be extraordinarily fragile when it's required for decades, while climate impacts are making everything scarier and while we're visibly dismantling infrastructure that people remember as functional.

As we plan, keeping a clear and focused commitment on people first and foremost and ensuring that these are community-led projects will be critical.

One of the nice things about existing energy infrastructure is it exists. So you can go to a power plant break room and chat up people about how long they expect to keep working or which bits of the plant site might need remediation. This means planning can be very, very specific and guided by the expertise of people that are in these places. Who needs a job if the power plant closes? Does everyone in town have safe temperatures in their homes? Which gas stations need to stay open longer than they're profitable to make sure that everybody can get to work while alternative transportation systems mature? How much extra funding do you need for the library if tax revenues start to decline?

Although good transition plans need to be deeply community-embedded, the scale and the impact of the energy system demands some level of centralized coordination. One strategy here is to set deadlines for fossil asset retirements. Ample notice, say a decade, gives communities enough time to create and implement plans, and a legislated end date gives people enough confidence to commit to what can be an intense process.

I showed that in the United States, requiring all fossil fuel-fired power generators to close by 2035, which is President Biden's power sector decarbonization target, would actually allow the large majority of them to meet or exceed a typical lifespan, potentially giving communities some confidence that these deadlines are manageable. That may not be true in places with much newer infrastructure and so the conversation about how to choose these deadlines would look quite different.

But in general, being honest with people about what's coming, with enough time and support to do something about it can be really transformative, but it does require a commitment to the end point

and to proactively ensuring people have what they need to thrive alongside transition. That is what earns and maintains trust. Not far off emissions targets with vague implementation plans.

The alternative of unplanned transitions is unacceptable, but common. Notably, this is what we would expect to see if we just rely on clean energy becoming cheap enough to displace fossil energy systems. What I've observed over the years is that facilities might close suddenly with a round of layoffs and a bankruptcy notification with very little notice and no plan for what comes next.

Several years ago, I was working on a survey in a coal mining community, and the morning my survey hit people's mailboxes, about 500 coal miners were suddenly laid off. Just four US coal mining companies used bankruptcy to avoid about five billion dollars in pensions and environmental cleanup obligations

just between 2012 and 2017. The coal industry in the United States is actually pretty small, now providing about 11 percent of primary energy, down from 18 percent a decade ago. We're talking about successfully retiring and replacing infrastructure that supports 80 percent of energy use globally and in the United States all before I reach retirement age. Planning the transition is an ethical responsibility that takes time, but also creates opportunities to implement a just and sustainable future that corrects the harms of the past. Collaboration and a laser-like focus on ensuring people have what we need to succeed through this transition will be critical, particularly as the transition collides with climate tragedies.

What would we do now if we believed we'd succeed? Anticipating the bumps and planning for success is the path to a just, decarbonized and sustainable world.



The original "Easy Rider" – Look Ma, no helmet!



Before "service" stations became just gas stations!



Modest swimsuits – before skimpy bikinis!

In Glorious Black & White!
Scenes of the 1950s
"THOSE WERE THE DAYS."



A Non-profit Organization For Retired Men

HOROLOGIUM

Monthly Newsletter - Est. 1963

North Bay Branch No. 7, San Rafael

Website: www.sirinc2.org/branch7

BRANCH 7 ACTIVITIES

ROAD BIKING

Anyone for road biking? I regularly ride with a group of friends on Friday starting at 9:30 from various locations in Marin. A leisurely pace but about 20-25 miles and some significant hills on some routes. E-bikes are used by some and welcomed on the ride. For more information contact Bob Bundy at bundyworld@comcast.net.



CHESS

Come to the Chess Club on Friday afternoons at 2 pm at the College of Marin Kentfield Campus in the Humiston Reading Room of the Student Services Building. Usually there's about 8 players with room for more. Call for more information. Bob Phillips 415-301-1906. Or email at bob.phillips3@gmail.com. This is not a SIR Club. Rather it is a club within ESCOM (Emeritus Students College of Marin).



GENTLE OFF-ROAD BIKING

Contact Bob Phillips, at 415-301-1906 (Bob.phillips3@gmail.com) if you are interested in off-road bike rides or want more information. We can set up several weekly or bi-weekly rides in advance with a meeting time and place to go on a ride together. The intent is to establish this as a SIR Branch 7 activity.



HIKE EVERY FIRST & THIRD THURSDAY AT 9:00 AM

For November 2nd, meet at the Hamilton levee entrance in front of the former Airfield Control Tower for a group hike on the levee. For November 16th, meet at the Las Gallinas settling ponds parking lot. Water bottle, walking sticks, speed, and duration at your discretion.... +/- 60-90 min. More Information and to get onto notifications list contact Ladd Sievenpiper, Ladd7piper@gmail.com

BOWLING

We just completed the summer session of bowling at AMF Boulevard Lanes in Petaluma. The Winter league starts September 6th. Anyone can join after the beginning date. Ralph Sherer



BE A FRIEND

Michael Sommer gave me a gift ... since March I've heard interesting speakers, played billiards, and hiked and biked with new and old friends. Thank you, Michael, I never suspected that your invitation to a SIR lunch would add so much to my life.

Now, Branch 7 members it's your turn ... extend the gift of friendship ... ask someone you know who might benefit from the Branch 7 SIR brand of friendship to join us for lunch.

On January 4th we're having a presentation by Gary Gonser and Leonard Weingarten, the president and vice president of the Emeritus Students at College of Marin. These men will share their excitement about adult educational offerings. Go ahead, ask a friend to join us for lunch.

Be a friend ... Renew a friendship
... Have fun ... Grow your club.

Captain Tom , co-chair, membership

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON





Three New Members Inducted-Oct

Three New Members Inducted-Nov



L/R: Ed Montenegro, Len Grosso, Ed Morrison.(Photo by Neil Wheeler)



L/R: Gary Greenough, Patrick Wentworth, and Peter Tracy.

The Science of Aging: Pupils Get Smaller As We Age



I've been to many BNO and CNO dinners and have noticed that a lot of us have a hard time reading the menu – the light is dim, and we can't make out the writing. I usually blame it on the restaurant trying to provide a warm, romantic ambiance (is that really needed for our BNO?). We've also heard that some of our members will not drive at night because they can't see well, and the bright lights are glaring. The problem is that our pupils are getting smaller, weaker, and less responsive to light. That's why studies have shown people in their 60s need three times more light for comfortable reading than those in their 20s.

The human pupil, the opening where light enters the eye, is surrounded, and controlled by two tiny muscles in the iris, the colored part of your eye.

The sphincter muscle closes the pupil in a circular motion, while the dilator muscle opens the pupil by pulling the iris radially. With age, these muscles lose function, resulting in either too much light or not enough light getting inside the eye. Improving the strength and function of the iris muscles is not something that can be achieved through targeted exercise or training, as they are not skeletal muscles like those found in the arms or legs.

Eye drops and surgery might be helpful depending on the severity of the condition. However, maintaining overall eye health through regular eye exams, a balanced diet rich in nutrients that support eye health, and avoiding activities that strain the eyes can contribute to optimal eye function. If you have specific concerns about your iris or overall eye health, it's best to consult with an eye care professional for personalized advice. Until then, have a flashlight handy when you go to a restaurant.

(Article by Dennis Mangan)



Travel with SIR:

Travel News from State SIR—

We recognize that for many SIR members or branches it's difficult, if not impossible, to organize a cruise or major travel adventure. Therefore, as a benefit to its members State SIR occasionally organizes cost-effective trips which we will promote and you can sign up and join without the hassle of having to make all the arrangements yourself.

This one is time-critical to get a great discount!

Today's offering is for a river cruise from **Prague to Budapest in November 2024**

Dates: 11/6 thru 11/20

Pre-trip to Dresden and Berlin US departure date: 11/1/24. Pre-trip Warsaw and Krakow departure date: 11/1/24. Post-trip to Budapest return date: 11/23/24 A link for more information:

<https://www.gct.com/trips/river-cruises/europe/romantic-blue-danube-budapest-to-prague/2021/itineraries?year=2024&jobcode=010-1514>

Cheers, Milt Smith

SIR State Travel Chair 925-285-2897

Sparkling Wine Tasting *(Article by Bill Traverso)*

Just in time for Valentine's Day, our SIR tasting group will be having a tasting of five very special sparkling wines produced by the highly awarded J Winery, on Wednesday, February 7th, at 11 AM.

The winery is located at 11447 Old Redwood Highway (next door to the Rodney Strong Winery) close to Windsor. We were able to obtain a special tasting price of **\$35.00** (the normal price is \$50.00).

Those who wish to go to a no-host lunch, can do so at the nearby River Vine Restaurant in the Vintners Inn near Highway 101 and River Road.

Please make your reservation with either George (geosan@sbcglobal.net) or Bill Traverso (ynselr2@pacbell.net) for the tasting by Thursday February 1. There is a limit of 12 tasters.

GLOBAL FORUM: *(Article by Marvin Mai)*

As we say goodbye to 2023 and try to look into the future of 2024 it's hard to anticipate how our global events will take shape. That's what makes Global Forum a special happening as we try to maintain our nonpartisan discussions and help each other understand what's going on around the world and why it matters. Our guiding principle laid out by the original founder of GF (Chuck Avers) in the late 1990s was that we do not talk national or local politics and only global or international affairs.

Our in-person meetings on the second Friday of the month have a limit to the number of attendees since most homes cannot accommodate more than 8-10 comfortably and still have a meaningful discussion. The monthly Zoom is unlimited and even though you may not want to speak, you're welcome to join in and just listen to the discussion and get a feel for how we operate. The January 12th 10 a.m. meeting will meet at the home of Chris and Nancy Nelle, 3187 Montecito Meadow Drive, Santa Rosa. There's room for eight attendees so reserve your seat by emailing Sir Chris at: nelleval@hotmail.com or phone, 707-527-0576.



The Zoom meeting will be on January 26 at 10 a.m. Email Marvin Mai at: Maimarvin57@gmail.com to be added to the attendees and receive the Zoom link information.



BRANCH 22, *Ignacio Pacheco*

Ignacio Pacheco Branch News

Independence, Dignity and Social Activities for Men

Published by Branch 22 of SIR, Inc.*

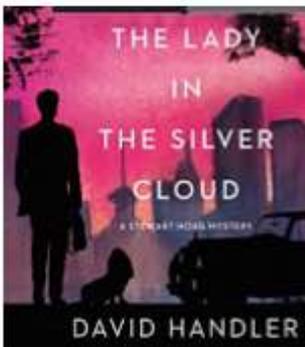


TURNING PAGES

BUD PHLUEGER

***“The Lady in the Silver Cloud”* by David Handler, 2022; Murder/Mystery genre**

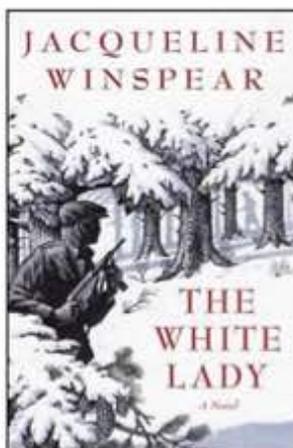
Steward Hoag (Hoagy) lives with Lulu, his dedicated basset hound, in an exclusive apartment building of seventeen floors with four apartments on each floor. Hoagy lives and works as a successful writer, in his ex-wife’s large apartment, Merilee, a movie actress currently in Budapest filming and he may live in the apartment. Returning from a cancelled filming they continue their very friendly relationship with Hoagy, allowed to stay in residence. Muriel, a quiet, very rich elderly neighbor, lives on the same floor. The owner of a rare Rolls Royce Silver Cloud, she is chauffeured on her daily excursions in New York by “Bullets,” her dedicated driver of ten years. Muriel is found dead in the stairwell following a Halloween party. Hoagy and his detective friend, Lieutenant Very investigate the death, which is a murder. Very is partnered for a long time with Norma, who happens to be Hoagy’s publisher. The list of possible suspects is large with three doormen, a druggie nephew of Muriel’s, a shady building superintendent, and two floor neighbors with mixed up infidelities.



You will become addicted to this author’s writing style, with crisp, often humorous dialogue. The author has penned many novels featuring Stewart Hoag. This is an easy stand-alone which is fun to read.

***“The White Lady”* by Jaqueline Winspear; 2023; Historical fiction /mystery genre**

Elinore De Witt (aka “the white lady”), from Belgium, a spy from two wars, is retired to the countryside in a “grace and favor” cottage, which is supplied by the government of a grateful England for her service during WW2 in Belgium in the SOE (Special Operations Executive). Her neighbors, Jim and Rose Mackie and their five-year-old daughter, Susie, have escaped from the pollution in 1947 London and Jim from his gangster family, who are trying to force him back into service. Elinor notices the visiting abusive brothers and determines to aid them through her connection with Chief Inspector Stephen Warren at Scotland Yard.



The story moves back and forth in time amongst two wars and the current time of 1947. Suspenseful and well-crafted, this book is a must-read for those who enjoy the genre.

NEW MEMBERS

- Gerry Czamanske**
- Palo Alto**
- Peter Daley**
- Menlo Park**
- US Geological Survey**

Branch 35 Honorary Life Member celebration and Awards Ceremony for 2023

HIKING See our [web page](#) JOHN TUCKER 408-655-5435 tuckerjg6@gmail.com



Ben Gikis

Our December 1, 2023 hike takes us to the top of Mount Umunhum. The hike is approximately 8 miles and 1200 foot elevation gain. We have 27 people signed up. As you can see from the photo from this vantage point you get a great view of Silicon Valley. The weather will be brisk but it should be an enjoyable hike. Our November and December hikes are combined because of the Holidays.

Our first hike of the New Year will be on Friday, January 26, 2024. I will announce the location as we get into January and we see what the rain situation is. I will try to include a few shorter and less taxing hikes in 2024 in an effort to get more people out on the trails, Not that we have a bad turnout. This year we have typically had between 15 and 30 hikers which is a big number for these hikes. If you are interested in joining us send me an email and I will add you to the Hiking Group email list.

I hope you all have a Happy Holiday and a Prosperous New Year.

John Tucker



Andy Danver



SIR Branch 35 2023 Holiday Party





Movie: Godzilla. Let's start the year with a novel movie that premiered in the U.S. on April 24, 1956. It can be called a classic now as it's original release has spawned 38 sequels to date, 33 from Japan and 5 American films. The movie is credited with pioneering the use of special effects called "suitmation" which involved a stunt performer wearing a suit and interacting with miniature sets. The original Godzilla suits were made of fabric that was sprayed with concrete to give it that distinctive scale look. The weight of the suit was about 220 lbs., and the actor would often pass out from the heat and weight of the outfit. No Unions back then. Since that time the costume moved to latex and filming evolved to stop motion and computer graphics animation.

Haruo Nakajima in portion of Godzilla suit, 1953

Did you know, there is a correct protocol to watch all the Godzilla movies as the Japanese creators instruct. The Showa Era 1954-1975 (18 movies):

spanned from the original "Gojira" movie to a series of "tokusatsu" (live action with special effects) movies, directed by Ishiro Honda who managed to infuse his movies with serious drama even as the scripts became increasingly outlandish.

The Heisei Era 1984-1995 (7 movies): This series of Godzilla movies followed a theme of Godzilla tangling with another big monster. It is during this period that the Mothra (big moth) and Gamera (big tortoise) trilogy movies were spawned from the original.

The Millennium Era 1999-2004 (6 movies) This series on movies were all standalone features and not linked to previous stories. The only common thread was Godzilla destroying Tokyo. The Reiwa Era 2016-2023 Produced by Toho Co. (2 movies) These movies were now blessed with big budgets, good scripts, and special effects. Toho did not count the American made movies as part of their era.

The MonsterVerse Era 2014-2024 Produced by TriStar and later by Legendary Pictures (5 movies). This count includes the upcoming release of "Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire" to be released on April 12, 2024.



Why are they still churning out these unbelievable monster movies? Well, let's follow the money. The original "Gojira" (Japanese mix of words for gorilla and whale) movie cost Toho \$900,000 to make. It sold over 10 million tickets in Japan and attracted U.S. filmmaker Dick Kay to buy the U.S. rights and changed the name to "Godzilla" as it sounded more menacing. He proceeded to shorten the Japanese version and add a narrative that had American reporter Steve Martin (Raymond Burr) narrate. Corman was quoted as saying "I was particularly impressed by the special effects. They were both good and over-the-top. Today you'd say they had a campy quality." America, particularly, the American teenagers loved it and the film earned \$2 million (\$20 million today).



"Ka-ching", Toho, the Japanese version of MGM Hollywood was quick to learn the value of "rinse and repeat" and the Godzilla franchise was born. The one small hurdle besides needing a script was that they had killed off Godzilla with the Oxygen Destroyer weapon in the first movie. In true Hollywood fashion, the sequel started with a second Godzilla that existed with the first and endured the same radiation exposure as the first but did not bother to emerge until one year later. Imagine that what timing. "Ka-ching, Ka-ching."

The franchise Godzilla movies have made over \$2 billion in box office receipts. The highest grossing movie was "Godzilla" released in May 2014 and grossed \$529 million. The highest production budget for a Godzilla movie came in May 2019 "Godzilla: King of the Monsters" which had a \$170 million dollar budget and grossed \$384 million. So, guess what? keep those Godzilla movies coming.



On a final note, the latest Godzilla movie released in 2023 was "Godzilla Minus One". The movie franchise has matured to receive U.S. film critic praise for its visual effects, direction, story, characters, musical score, and social commentary. The Director, Takashi Yamazaki won Best Director at the 48th Hochi Film Awards and the film is a finalist for Best Visual Effects at the upcoming 96th Academy Awards. Who says campy doesn't work? Here is the movie trailer for the original release of Godzilla in America in 1954 with Raymond Burr. Campy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVONRrcn9TI>

Here is the movie trailer for "Godzilla Minus One". What an evolution in animation technology!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VvSrHIX5a-0>

If you are a true believer of Godzilla movies here is a link to experience how Godzilla's roar has evolved over time. Enjoy.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORSvf8eVa0g&t=40s>

Music: "Santa Baby" sung by Eartha Kitt

That voice! Eartha Kitt reveled in cultivating an image that was exotic, scary, sophisticated, and ribald. Her looks evoked someone from the Caribbean where the practice of Voodoo lives. Her unique, earthy accent is believed to have been influenced by her mixed-race heritage, her life experience living in various places around the world, and her ability to speak in four languages and sing in ten.



She was one of those American singers whose career, reputation, and adoration was greater in Europe than the United States. Eartha was branded an activist because she was. A famous incident in history occurred at a White House luncheon hosted by Lady Bird Johnson, the First Lady. She was encouraged to attend as she was active in social improvement programs in poor neighborhoods including her work with young inner-city kids in the youth group "Rebels with a Cause", she accepted. Lady Bird had set the topic of the luncheon as, "Why is there so much juvenile delinquency in the streets of America".

At the luncheon, after several members had given their talk on the topic Eartha raised her hand and Lady Bird recognized her. Eartha then said the following as recorded in history, "You miss the point on why juvenile delinquency exists. I've lived in the gutters and am therefore qualified to speak on these matters. The youth of America today are angry. They are angry because their parents are angry." She attributed this anger to high taxes and "because there is a war going on that the Americans do not understand." Kitt apologized to Mrs. Johnson if she offended her or the President but added "I am here to say what is in my heart." Kitt ended her remarks with a denunciation of the war in Vietnam. "You send the best of this country off to be shot and maimed. They rebel in the street. They will take pot ... and they will get high. They don't want to go to school because they're going to be snatched off from their mothers to be shot in Vietnam. I am talking as a mother who has a child ... so I know the feeling of having a baby coming out of my guts, particularly when it is a boy." Eartha was blacklisted from work in America for the next ten years.

The song "Santa Baby" was written in ten minutes by song writer, Phillip Springer. In August of 1953 he was asked by two music publishers to write a Christmas song for Eartha Kitt, the then 26-year-old Broadway star known for her onstage magnetism. When Springer was told it was for Eartha, he objected, saying "Kitt is the sexiest woman in the world. You don't write Christmas songs that are sexy. How are we going to do that?" The publisher's response was, "Stick to the music. Let us worry about whether this song is going to be sacrilegious or not." He did and was disappointed with his creation and told the publishers, "Gentlemen, this is not really the kind of music that I like to write. I hope it's OK. It's the best I could do." Eartha loved it, recorded it, and it is the most successful of Springer's songs. Here is Eartha Kitt singing Santa Baby in a film recording from 1953. Who else have you seen that can capture your full attention in a film recording with the minimum of set features other than the singer herself? Ooh la la!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDS5RAaCI3U>

This Space Available

Calling all activity leaders (bocce, bowling, and golf): There is space in this newsletter for updates on your group's activities. Let your fellow SIR members know what your group is doing and how they might join in the fun! Send your information to me, kent.madsen@gmail.com around the third week of the month for the next month's newsletter.

Albert Einstein

Albert Einstein is one of the most famous and influential physicists of all time. The German-born scientist was only 26 years old when, in 1905, he changed the world of physics with his groundbreaking special theory of relativity, embodied by the famous equation $E = mc^2$. It changed the world's understanding of space and time, essentially replacing Isaac Newton's long-running pioneering theories from 200 years earlier.

In 1921, Einstein won the Nobel Prize for physics while still living and teaching in his native Germany. Not long after, in 1933, he moved to the United States to take a position at Princeton, where he taught until 1945. While his discoveries made him a famous name in the physics community, Einstein is remembered and revered for more than his scientific contributions. Throughout his life, the great thinker didn't shy away from advocating for various social and political issues; throughout his work, he applied creativity, curiosity, humanity, and philosophy to everything he did.

Einstein continued to work — and to share his wisdom, his wonder, and his compassionate insights — until his death in 1955 at age 76. Here are some quotes that illustrate the mind and humble heart of the once-in-a-lifetime scientist.

- Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.
 - I believe in intuitions and inspirations. I sometimes feel that I am right. I do not know that I am.
 - Try to become not a man of success, but try rather to become a man of value.
 - Although I am a typical loner in daily life, my consciousness of belonging to the invisible community of those who strive for truth, beauty, and justice has preserved me from feeling isolated.
 - I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious.
 - Study and in general the pursuit of truth and beauty is a sphere of activity in which we are permitted to remain children all our lives.
 - Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving.
- I never think of the future. It comes soon enough.

Graveside Service

As a guitarist, I play many gigs. Recently I was asked by a funeral director to play at a graveside service for a homeless man. He had no family or friends, so the service was to be at a pauper's cemetery in the back country. As I was not familiar with the backwoods, I got lost.

I finally arrived an hour late and saw the funeral guy had evidently gone and the hearse was nowhere in sight. There was only the crew left and they were eating lunch. I felt badly and apologized to the men for being late. I went to the side of the grave and looked down and the vault lid was already in place. I didn't know what else to do, so I started to play.

The workers put down their lunches and began to gather around. I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends. I played like I've never played before for this homeless man. And as I played 'Amazing Grace,' the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, we all wept together. When I finished, I packed up my guitar and started for my car. Though my head hung low, my heart was full.

As I opened the door to my car, I heard one of the workers say, "I never seen nothin' like that before and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years."

Apparently, I'm still lost.



The Pathfinder

Fremont Branch 59

The final wine tasting event for the year was held at Dante Robere Vineyards



A Big Hello to our New Members



Sir John Burnett



Sir Darrell Sandeford



Who remembers



the first search engine?

More to Niles Than Main Street

OK, it's called Niles Boulevard, but the point is that other than the old storefronts and quaint bungalows that one usually photographs, there is more to see for folks who want to take a walk.

Today (Sept 6th) it was mostly Alameda Creek and sights along the way to the rubber dam and back. Take the shark mailbox tree for example. We stopped and stared at the myriad of objects and items attached to it. On a day like today, cool and sunny, the walk along the Creek played with our senses of sight and sound. Pretty quiet most of the time except for our own talking, we heard and sighted the BART train near the dam. Other walkers and riders greeted us.

Then there was Fiona. Dave and Linda Nelsen's Fiona, long on stamina and short of leg, would stop and sniff and be left behind, only to suddenly realize the distance she needed to catch up. "Fi," called Linda, and Fiona bolted toward the walkers, at times with all four feet off the ground as she sped toward us. A fun morning it was. Some of us stopped for coffee afterwards. ~ Bruce Roberts



December 20th Christmas Luncheon



Big Sir Jerry Halligan



Entertainment provided by Dave Badilla and his guitar



Lucky winners of the many door prizes



The Social Committee, (L-R) Sir Rob Ingebretson, Sir Fred Serena, Sir Rob Perrill, Sir Bill Bauhofer, Sir Dug Howd and Sir Jerry Ford handing out the door prizes



Social Chairman Sir Rob Ingebretson and his committee put on a fantastic event

Wow, look at all the door prizes!



The Logan High School Jazz Choir performance was well received at the luncheon!



FAVORITE RESTAURANTS

Tomatina

For the pasta lover their menu will make you salivate.. great food and service and oh yes their pizza is really good too....

Texas Roadhouse

By far when you have the need for a super steak and all the sides this stop is my favorite. Service is good the only downfall is the noise level.

Baldie's Cafe

For us retired seniors this is the place to go...A lot of food for your buck breakfast lunch and dinner. Super staff great service.

RICHARD HENRY

I don't have a favorite meal, but I do recommend Massimo's in general as a restaurant. Some of their best entrees are pasta and chicken dishes.

Ted Bresler

My favorite restaurant is The **Dragon House** in Union City. I love Chinese food and my favorite dish is sweet and sour pork. I think I am part Chinese because my middle name is Lee.

Ingy

One of our favorites is Zephyr **Grill & Bar** in Livermore. A bit on the classy side. I really like their seafood chowder and crispy fish sandwich. On Mondays they have martinis for \$6.

A go-to place in Fremont is the Market **Broiler**. Not fancy, but nice. A large menu with lots of seafood choices. Have never been disappointed there.

Andy Long



Both addresses look similar but not the same.

Spot the Difference?

maybank2u.com is not the same as maybank2u.com

citibank.com is not the same as citibank.com
(the first one is correct, the second one is from hackers)

The "a" in the later url is a cyrillic alphabet.

An average internet user can easily fall for this. Be careful for every mail requiring you to click on a link.

Please Stay Alert

Rob's Rock at Don Edwards

As a group we walkers decided independently that today was a cool, yes, cool day. Nobody wore short sleeves. Fall morning views greeted us after we climbed the Visitor Center stairs, about 50 of them (I lost count). We remarked at the Bay the sloughs, the dried grasses, and near the horizon we spied the San Mateo Bridge and maybe San Francisco - pretty clear day.

Rob Perrill found a rock he wanted to take home and asked us to help him lift it. We assured him we could. Let's see, 2 by 3 FEET! Rob decided we could leave it after all. Not too many birds today except for a wedge of egrets near the entrance of the preserve. Oh, and some Northerners shovelers out on the Bay. Bright reflections off the sloughs and deep shadows on the land made for a joyful morning. Oh, and the fragrance of Wild fennel (licorice) capped off the morning walk. ~ Bruce Roberts





The ROOSTER

The Monthly Bulletin of

Sunnyvale Branch # 62

SONS IN RETIREMENT

18 HOLE GOLF

October Recap

Statistically, the recreational golfer has a one in twelve thousand chance of making a hole in one each time a par three is played. September 26th was a beautiful day at the scenic Pacific Grove Golf Links and it was Bob Pastorino's turn to accomplish this feat on his very first shot at the Area Tournament. Obviously, Bob also won the closest to the pin prize. The next best achievement this month was a claim by one of our players who boasted of successfully playing the same ball for fifty-four consecutive holes. In consideration of the paucity of this deed, his name is being withheld.

Subsequently, our stalwart group protected our mid-round snacks from the predatory, but cute, red foxes roaming the Los Lagos fairways; enjoyed an outing at San Jose Muni and were befuddled by the devious greens of the Spring Valley Golf Course.

THE TOM CHATFIELD WALK

Roy Jordan

The January 2024 Tom Chatfield walks will be on the first and third Fridays, January 5 and 19. For this month **the walk will be through Central Park in Santa Clara**. The meeting place will be the parking lot on the east side of Kiely just north of Homestead at 9:30 AM. If you would like a nice walk on either of these days, or have questions, please contact Roy Jordan at jordan_roy_s@yahoo.com or at (408) 735-8765. You could just show up, but if you make contact beforehand, we can tip you off for cancellation (such as for rain). **Walking is good for you.**



In Memoriam
Malcolm "Mal" Hopkins
1936-2023

Mal was a member of our branch for seventeen years.

BRANCH 62 TRAVEL

Chairman: Jim Hohenshelt

Assistant: Roy Jordan

April 28 Columbia and Snake River

This trip is now filled. If you would like to try to get on a wait list, please contact Jim. There is a description on our web site (see link below).

Lower Mississippi River Cruise

Sept. 13 - 21, 2024

We are investigating an American Cruise Line cruise from New Orleans to Memphis. This trip starts in the lively city of New Orleans (Jazz, sites to see) and ends in Memphis, TN (music history, museums, Elvis' Graceland, a delicious barbecue). Along the way are grand estates with their beautiful architecture, antiques, a mint julep under 300-year-old oak trees. Also, the local shops and museums of quaint and cozy towns like St. Francisville and Natchez and Civil

War history in Vicksburg. The cruise boat features a daily cocktail hour, Hors d'oeuvres, delicious meals, and evening shows with regional entertainers. Price will be around \$5400 to \$6000 PP/dbl. occ.

State SIR – Prague to Budapest Cruise

Nov. 6 - 20, 2024

Roy just received notice of a river cruise organized by State SIR travel, prices from \$4295 to \$5095 pp/dbl. occ including air. Contact Roy for more information or possibly see our web site link below.

Check our web site for up to date travel information.

Check our website for all up-to-date Travel info:

www.branch62.sirinc2.org/Travel/Travel.php

Branch 62 Web Site

Have you visited our web site lately?
Want to read the joke from the luncheon?
Forgot the luncheon's speaker details?
Want to read back issues of the Rooster?
Read meeting minutes and Treasurer Reports?
Get all of this and more on our Web Site at:
<https://sirinc2.org/branch62/index.php>



Our 2023 Christmas Dinner at Café Vitale

SIR is a non-profit activities based organization for senior men devoted to the promotion of independence, health and dignity of senior life. Luncheon meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month 11:30 am at the Napa Elks Lodge.

GETTING THE WORD OUT..... BRANCH 65 BOOTH AT THE NAPA FARMERS MARKET

Thanks to all the members who came out and volunteered as we passed out brochures, Br. 65 business cards and had fun hanging out with each other.
(This was our last market booth for the year)



<<<John Harrison came to the Farmers Market to say hello to volunteers Jim Kempton and Victor Bergeven.

Victor showed up early with his Crocodile Dundee hat, where's the didgeridoo Victor?

>>>>>>



INTRODUCING THE SIR ORCHESTRAL BAND



(l-r) Jeff Richard, keyboard; Margis Malisauskas, guitar, harmonica, vocals; Jerry Stabile, guitar, vocals
Jim Kempton, guitars, Richard Bennett, percussion;
Allan Armstrong, guitar;
Not pictured Randy Snowden, bass

Making their first public appearance, The SIR Orchestral Band will be playing some of their favorites from Woody Guthrie, Neil Young, The Band, an original song and Christmas carols at the annual Christmas luncheon.

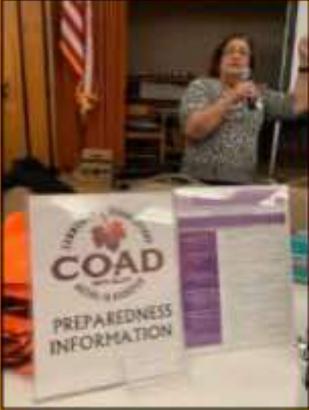
The early years of the band started when Margis invited beginning player Jerry to play with a friend's weekly guitar gathering. Then Margis joined Br.65 and Jeff overheard them talking about playing music. He asked to join in on keyboards. Allan was soon invited to the group. The more we talked the more SIR members sounded interested and we created a separate group with the addition of Richard on drums and Jim on guitars. The band has been playing every two weeks or so for the last few years. They frequently break out in laughter before, during or in between songs

The band's original song, written by multi-instrumentalist Margis called "The SIR Orchestral Band" is a satirical ode about the fun being a SIR. They hope you'll like and join in on the chorus,

NOVEMBER LUNCHEON



We presented our Veterans a certificate with two pins to honor their service (L-R) Mike Blessing, Gary Craig, Bob Boucher, Sam Jones, Jerry Hall, Sandy Harris, Victor Bergevin, Larry Renner, Tim Hetzer, John Cipriano, Chuck Morse, Keith Knox Gene Hoover and Dave Ellingson..... Thank you all for your service.



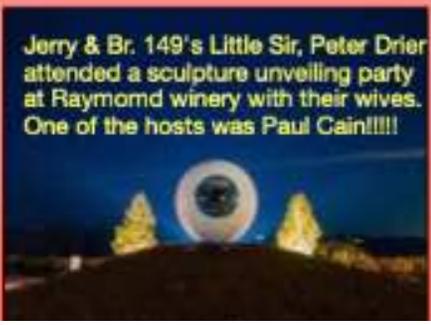
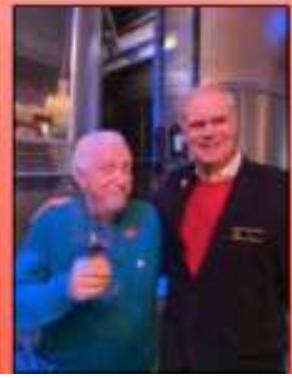
We had a very thorough presentation from the Napa Valley COAD organization. (Community Organizations Active in Disaster). They showed & discussed the many ways for everyone to prepare for possible disasters. They handed out a Go Bag filled with forms & a booklet to organize your contacts, items to be prepared to bring in an emergency. They also raffled off various safety items. (see below)



Learn more at www.readynapacounty.org



SIR SEEN SCENES #652



Jerry & Br. 149's Little Sir, Peter Drier attended a sculpture unveiling party at Raymond winery with their wives. One of the hosts was Paul Cain!!!!





THE MAIL POUCH



Website: branch69.org



The Pony Express Branch #69
January - 2024 Edition

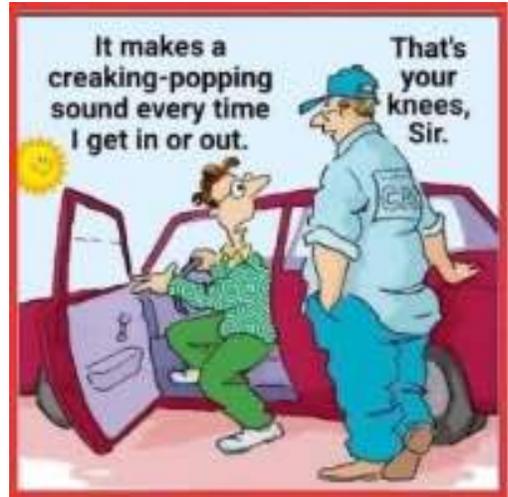


Facebook: Pony Express SIR Branch 69

John Popadak, Editor



LS Connor Chin (R) welcomes new members Stu Nussbaum (L) and Brian Denico (C).

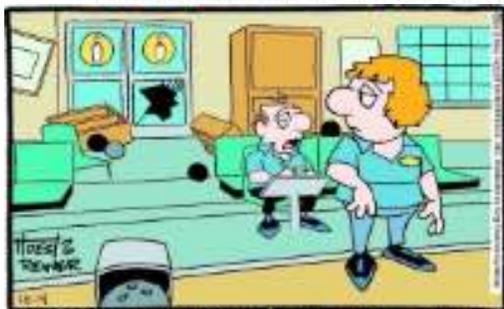


YOUR 2023 CALLERS



A special shout out to the 2023 callers: (From Left) Dan Nelson, Richard Terrell, Bernie Moreno, Wing Tse, Jim Happs, Patrick Lord, Steve Haakenson, Tom Knoble, Marty Miller, Connor Chin, and Bob Clanton (inset).

Great work guys!



"I'LL BET THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN A STRIKE IF IT HAD GONE FORWARD."

Forgot the luncheon's speaker details? Want to read back issues of the Mail Pouch? Get all of this and more on our Web Site at <http://branch69.org>

2023 Holiday Party





Coming soon to a street near you

Street golf





Live Longer, Live Happier, Join SIR.

SIR Solano Branch 88 Newsletter

January 2024

Branch 88 Christmas Party December 7, 2023

I wonder if the people paying \$300 for a colon cleanse even know about Taco Bell's \$4.99 deal.

I don't call it Getting OLD I call it Outliving The WARRANTY



At end of season gala at Bottom of Fifth.



the Cork Pop-the-Cork

David Muth

We are starting up our wine group for 2024 after taking a break for the last two months of 2023. Our next Pop-the-Cork get-together will be January 28. As I look at the year, we will have some planned winery visits and lots of discoveries with wines.



If you are interested in joining our group, please contact me.

Editor's View – Carl Mason

Gail and I went to Spain, Paris and Morocco in October. We did the tourist things, rode a camel, dined on the Eiffel Tower, and walked our feet off. Just getting away from the emails and daily routine was refreshing. However, when I got back I had over 1,000 emails to deal with!

Did you know there are three requirements to be a SIR member?

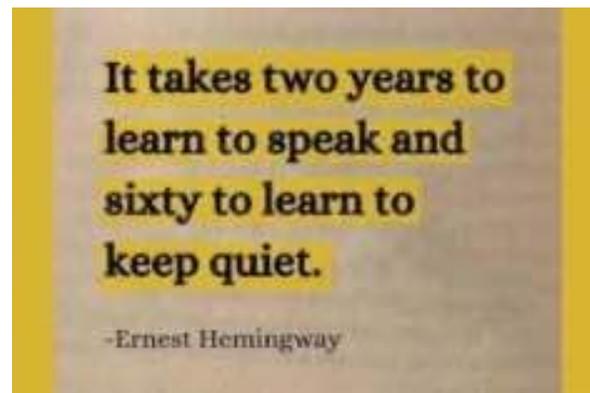
- 1.You should be a friendly guy,
- 2.You are expected to participate in the running of the branch,
- 3.You are expected to help recruit new members.



Being friendly comes naturally to all of us (OK most of us). The second, volunteering to help in running the branch, is not as easy. The branch does not run itself, and it seems much of the effort is made by a small number of our members. A lot of you are familiar with the Pareto Principal that states 20% of the people perform 80% of the effort in running an organization. It may be less than 20% in our branch.

The fact is our branch has difficulty each year in filling our officer and director positions, in getting people to take on tasks like updating the web site, organizing the badges, or organize parties and events.

Please consider stepping up to fulfill the number two requirement above. Teddy Roosevelt once said, "Complaining about a problem without posing a solution is called whining". If you want a more active, interesting, growing branch, we need you to help.



SIR 93 Roster Book – Go to the SIR 93 Officers / Committees Web Page



FRUITRIDGE BRANCH 93

Accessing SIR 93 Member Roster The password has been changed for security purposes.

Contact Brent Williams (Webmaster) for getting a downloaded pdf report sent to your computer.

Please remember all the SIR 93 members that have gone on to the Rainbow Bridge & the Gates of Heaven.

Michael Sharif Al Machado Bill Reiff Jack L. Campbell Vince Damyanovich Sergay Ivazian

A Huge Welcome and Applause to the 2023 New Members to Branch SIR 93 !!

Robert Ortega Michael Woodcheke Lawrence Cram Terry Burkes William Palmer

Rex Hescock Tom Rutsch Randy Fisher Ron Covert Rick Pixley

Words of Wisdom and Hello from SIR 93 Golf – January 2024 Newsletter

The 2024 SIR 93 Golf Schedule - dated 12/7/23 – has been posted to the Golf Club webpage and is included in the Branch newsletter.

First Tournament is March 20th at Bartley and the last tournament of the year is October 30th at Swenson Park.

Jack Dye & Craig Chalmers are working on the final details for the June 2nd (Sunday) through June 5th (Wednesday) for the Carson City Four Man Scramble Event.

The 2024 SIR 93 Golf / NCGA Membership Drive

There are now 49 hardy and skillful golfers that have renewed their 2024 NCGA Membership. We had seven golfers that did not renew for the 2024 Season.

We are adding to the 2024 Roster the following new golfers:

Rick Pixley

Charles Bussey

David Busch

Welcome them to the Club when you see them on the golf course or at the luncheon meetings.



GOLD COUNTRY BRANCH 95

SIR is a non-profit organization whose mission is to enhance the lives of our members through fun activities, luncheons and events while making friends for life.



BRANCH HAPPENINGS / SIR COMINGS & GOINGS | Kevin King (PBS) 916-337-9811 (New Members Left to Right)

Welcome to new member Grant McMicken. He is sponsored by Bob Davenport.

Peter Puglia is another new member.

Harlan Proctor found us through one of advertisements.

John "Jeff" Zehner is sponsored by Terry Privott

Wayne Allen was sponsored by Marshall Armstrong

Harry Hall was sponsored by Terry Privott.

Rick Talone found us through our website.

Following are some photographs of this festive evening. Thanks to all of you who submitted photos. Additional photos can be found at [2023 Holiday Dinner](#).



Past Big SIR Kevin King inducts the 2024 Branch Executive Committee. From left to right: Director, Ken Mahar (partially obscured); Director, David Chighizola; Director, Bill Yeager; Little SIR, Ron Wadsworth; Big SIR, Lew Chapman; Asst. Treasurer, Marshall Armstrong; Director, Hugh Thompson; Secretary, Terry Starkel; Treasurer, Oli Bohlman; Asst. Secretary, Bob Carlson; Director, Tim Irish; and outgoing Big SIR and current Director, Jay Muzio.

Following the induction of our 2024 BEC, several of our members were recognized for their contributions to the Branch. Long-time Branch Secretary and Golf Chairman, Terry Starkel, and Past Big SIR and Mather Golf Director, Dennis Petersen, were awarded the Distinguished Service Award (DSA). Also receiving the DSA was outgoing, two-term Big SIR, Jay Muzio. The DSA Silver Lapel Pin award is the 2nd highest award in SIR, to recognize exceptional/extraordinary service at the Branch and/or State levels.



Two-term Past Big SIR Kevin King honors Terry Starkel with the DSA.



Region 3 Area Representative, Jim Gragg, presents the DSA to Dennis Petersen. Big SIR, Jay Muzio looks on.



Two-term Big SIR, Jay Muzio, receives the DSA and plaque from Region 3 Area Representative, Jim Gragg.

Past Big SIRs Bill Yeager and Kevin King were likewise recognized by the Branch by receiving Honorary Life Member (HLM) awards. The HLM Gold Lapel Pin award is the highest and most prestigious award available within SIR.



Past Big SIR and Honorary Life Member recipient, Bill Yeager (left), shows his HLM plaque and thanks the audience for this special honor.



Region 3 Area Representative, Jim Gragg, presents the Honorary Life Member award to two-term Past Big SIR Kevin King.

JANUARY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

E-BIKING | Ken Mahar 650-504-1393

We are looking for more riders to join up on these rides. I know that not everyone has an e-bike, but if you do, or are planning on getting one in the near future, than you just might want to join this group. If you have a road bike and think you can keep up with the pack, you are free to join us as well. It is not like we are trying to break any speed records as we generally only ride at a moderate pace.



In the colder months we start around 11 or 12 noon once the chill is taken off. Once it starts warming up, we start earlier before it gets too hot. We start out from different locations just to mix it up a bit. We generally meet at the RT parking garage in Old Town Folsom, the Raley's parking lot near the Mexican restaurant, Mexquite, or at the Nimbus fish hatchery off Hazel. Our rides often take us along the river's edge which is most rewarding with an abundance of wildlife to be seen.

Contact Ken Mahar at kmahar@comcast.net or 650-504-1393 with your name and contact information to be added to the list. Once on the list, you'll begin receiving weekly emails telling you when and where to show up. Riders will reply to ALL letting everyone knows who will be attending the ride that week.

I hope you'll consider joining our group.

-  4th, 11th, 18th, 25th - Drop-in bocce Promontory Park EDH; 10am
-  No golf this month; 2024 season begins 2/6/2024 at Empire Ranch
-  10th - BEC & general meeting Cameron Park Country Club
-  18th - location TBD
-  16th and 17th - Napa Bowl
-  4th, 11th, 18th, 25th - Breakfast & Walking - Denny's Cameron Park; 10am
-  3rd - Texas Hold'em; host varies; 6:30pm
-  Mondays and Fridays - e-Biking; various starting locations
-  3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st - Drop-in pickleball; Heritage Park; 1-4pm

BOWLING | Ray DiBasilio, HLM 530-558-9727

Branch 65 and Napa Bowl will host The first tournament of the New Year on January 16-17. This will be a singles/doubles event in which you can bowl both events on one day, or like Cindy and I, drive and bowl one event in the afternoon, spend a night, and bowl the next event the following morning. We always enjoy having dinner with fellow SIRs that travel with us accompanied by some that are local to the area. Doing this allows us to drive home earlier in the day avoiding rush hour traffic.



Napa Bowl is one of only fifteen centers in the nation that have installed USBC-certified string pin setters. USBC has done much research on bowler scoring between free fall and string pin setters which indicate a minimal difference in averages. Those findings will allow bowlers to use their current average in tournaments with string pin setters. I look forward to testing this theory!

February 15-16 we will be bowling a tournament hosted by Branch 69 held at Country Club Lanes in Sacramento. This has been a very popular tournament drawing one of largest groups of SIRs. Interestingly enough, some of the lanes at Country Club also have string pin setters; however, they are not USBC certified and we will not be using those lanes. With this one so close to home, you won't want to miss it!

Interested in how string pins work and the research behind them? Visit the USBC website for all you need to know: BOWL.com | [String Pinsetter Research](#) Better yet, come with us to Napa in January and try them out for yourself!

For more information about SIR bowling and the calendar, check out our website at: <http://www.sirinc3.org/sirBowling/index.html>

TEXAS HOLD'EM | Ken Mahar 650-504-1393

We meet the first Wednesday of every month at someone's home. A \$20 buy-in and you're good to go. If this sounds like something that you might be interested in, please give me a call or email me at kmahar@comcast.net.

BREAKFAST & WALKING | Norman Orrick 916-709-1693

The group meets at Dennys in Cameron Park each Thursday at 10:00am. We eat, discuss the week's events or whatever comes to mind. Then those that wish, take off for a mile or two walk. To receive a weekly reminder, send an email to 7norte@google.com.

From my previous Book Exchange article, I finally finished reading Slovak-land. It does not end well. And I'm still going through Indigenous Continent. More on that when I finally finish it.

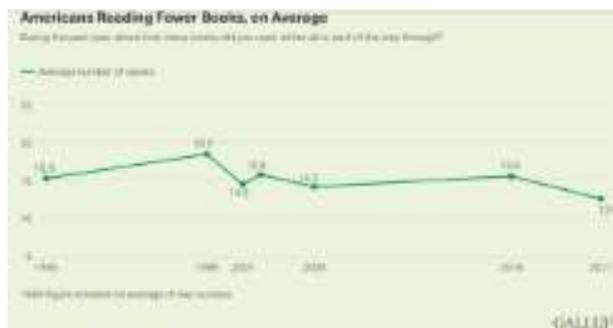
I just started reading Oath and Honor, A Memoir and a Warning by Liz Cheney. You can guess what it's about, it's political so I can't comment. Actually, it's an audiobook narrated by the author, and I'll be listening on my upcoming drives between here and SoCal.

I just saw this on the Internet:

*****NEWS FLASH*****

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Americans say they read an average of 12.6 books during the past year, a smaller number than Gallup has measured in any prior survey dating back to 1990. U.S. adults are reading roughly two or three fewer books per year than they did between 2001 and 2016.

Here's the chart to prove it from Gallup. never read this many books in one year! Who are these people who just lie around all day and read?! Not me, I've got stuff to do, I belong to SIR, social activities for men. Golf, pickleball, you name it.



Anyway. I was thinking, perhaps we should start a "Book Group?" We could all read the same book and every other month meet up for lunch or coffee somewhere and discuss the book. I have never participated in a book group and would have no idea how to lead a book discussion. Have any of you? Let me know what you think of that idea.

In the meantime, remember, *SIR Branch 95 Book Exchange: no cost, no library cards, no late notices, no fines.*

The Town Crower

Volume 41, Number 1

The Monthly Newsletter for SIR Branch 103

January 2024

Modesto SIR Branch 103



Installation of officers at the November Luncheon. From right to left: Dick Nelson, Ted Bracht, Brian Donahue, Lance Underwood, Don Rowe, Juan Salinas, Paul Bender, Ray Tillery, Coe Barnard, and apologies for cutting off either Dennis Imhoff, Kerry Newman, Dave Cooper or Roger Smith.

Train Experience – Turlock to Reno

February 1 – 2, 2024 /\$110/person - Roundtrip (rates subject to change)

Book Flex-Rates / Senior-Military Discount (10%) Amtrak Website link:
www.amtrak.com

Itinerary

TRAIN	ORIGIN	DATE	DEPARTURE	DESTINATION	ARRIVAL
711	Turlock	2/1/24	7:45 AM	Stockton	8:36 AM
3711	Stockton	2/1/24	8:45 AM	Sacramento	9:50 AM
6	Sacramento	2/1/24	11:09 AM	Reno	3:56 PM
5	Reno	2/2/24	8:36 AM	Martinez, CA	3:26 PM
718	Martinez	2/2/24	6:26 PM	Turlock	8:08 PM



2023 Christmas Luncheon



Branch 103 lost two members in December who made outstanding contributions to SIR and all of its members, Ed Davis and Richard Provost. Our thoughts and prayers with their families.



SONS IN RETIREMENT

TWIN RIVERS BRANCH #109

Marysville, California
Incorporated June 18, 1984

FUN

FOOD

FELLOWSHIP

1. What is a New Year's resolution?

Something that goes in one year and out the other.

23. Youth is when you're allowed to stay up on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you're forced to.

4. What do **New Year's Day parades** have in common with Santa Claus?

No one is awake to see either of them.

5. My grandparents had resolutions like donating more time and money to charities. I've decided to make my own coffee once a week.

21. This New Year's, I've resolved to lead a better life. Now all I have to do is find someone who will trade lives with me.

36. My dad gave up smoking cold turkey for New Year's. He's doing better now but ... he's still coughing up feathers.

37. What was Dr. Frankenstein's New Year's resolution?

To make new friends.

38. What do you call someone who says they know all the words to "**Auld Lang Syne**"?

A liar.

39. What's the worst part of jogging on New Year's Eve?

The ice falling out of your drink!





Joe Cardinale (above) received the Presidential Super Senior Award
 Robert Caviglia, Jim Quon, Big Sirs John Kent, John Noll and Michael Garcia received the Distinguished Service Award
 Carl Yoshizawa received the fourth quarter Above and Beyond Award

Congratulations to all our award recipients!

From a membership perspective, we now have over 310 members and will show positive growth for the first time in several years. A big THANK YOU to all members who have sponsored new members in 2023!

NEW MEMBERS

No Photo



Available

Frank Danek



Jim Fulton

No Photo



Available

David F. Harr



Charles P. Hsu



Jim M. Wilson

LONGEVITY AWARDS



Bob Kerner

20 YEARS



Leroy Vares

Special 2023 recognition to Joe Santone and Bob Denison for their past efforts in support of Branch 128:

Joe was awarded the Honorary Life Membership Award at our annual Holiday Gala



*Pictured left are Deb Santone ,
Joe Santone, Fred Serena (SIR
State Representative) and
Michael Garcia*



Bob was honored
with the
**Distinguished
Service Award** for
his many past
contributions:

**GOLF AT YOCHA DEHE GOLF COURSE
Tuesday, February 27
Cache Creek Casino
Brooks, California**



CLOTHING DRIVE FOR THE HOMELESS

Sir Paul Kupras is once again collecting coats and sleeping bags for the homeless.

Please tell anyone who has items to donate to contact Paul Kupras at **925-785-2363**.or bring your donations to Paul at:
340 Goshen Court, San Ramon, CA. 94583



PEDRO CONTRERAS ON FISHING

The SIRs Fishing Group wishes you a Happy Holiday Season!

It is that time of year when only a few adventurous souls get out on the water and continue to fish. Those that have done so have been treated to limits of Dungenous crab, Rockfish and Striped Bass. Weather and swells have been a limiting factor. Trips out beyond the Farallon Islands have been a rock and roll affair but very productive.

Next adventures scheduled for the group are the big fishing shows: The International Sportman's Show (ISE) is coming to Sacramento January 18, 2024 and the Bart Hall Show will be in Long Beach January 25, 2024. Both shows will be attended by members.

It is anticipated that there will be no salmon season again this year due to the low salmon returns. Once again water diversion south and dams are an issue. On the positive side though is the removal of some dams in the Klamath River Basin. We are keeping our fingers crossed for possibly a 2025 season.

The **fishing group meets on the 4th Thursday of the month** (except for November and December when it is the 3rd Thursday) at **8:30 AM** at Legends located at the Diablo Creek Golf Course 4050 Port Chicago Highway in Concord. Members often come early to enjoy breakfast and share fish lies!

For more information and to join the fishing group please contact Pedro Contreras (petjan@pacbell.net) or Clem Teters (clemteters@gmail.com).



BILL CORBETT ON CYCLING

There were **8 rides** in **December** with one rain out. The rides traveled a total of **168 miles** with **75 participants**.

For the year 2023, there were: **89 rides**, that traveled **2413 miles** with **951 riders** attending

Above Photo taken 12-21 –Candy Cane Lane, Pleasanton L to R: Ken Sterba, Bob Turner, Frank O'Neill, Bob Maddox, Don Daniel, Jim Hughell, Jerry Hale, Dave Mosunich, Bill Corbett

BRANCH ACTIVITY LEADERS		
Bocce	Truman Howard	(925) 787-2565
Book Club - AM	Tony Fassiotto	(925) 820-1052
Book Club - PM	Paul Sheckler	(925) 820-5391
Book Club 3	Denny Hintz	(408) 896-1927
Book Exchange	Tony Fassiotto	(925) 820-1052
Bowling	John Monahan	(925) 837-1598
Bridge	Bob Colbourn	(925) 837-7460
Choral	Mike Thelen	(925) 829-4526
Cooking	John Noll	(925) 570-7073
Cribbage	Joe Santone	(925) 708-5416
Cycling	Bill Corbett	(925) 413-4607
Dine In	John Noll	(925) 570-7073
Dine Out	Jim Quon	(925) 829-2166
Fantasy Football	Dan Poulin	(510) 928-4519
Fishing	Pedro Contreras	(925) 837-4847
Friday Breakfast	Pat Wilson	(925) 487-3318
Genealogy	Marston Watson	(510) 234-1770
Golf - Couples	John Kent	(614) 216-4998
Golf - 9 Hole Group	Andy Rodgers	(925) 683-6272
Golf - Tues 18 Hole Group	Larry Feigenbaum	(415) 519-4034
Golf - Thu 18 Hole Group	Jim Briggs	(510) 331-4127
Hiking	Bob Turner	(925) 858-5224
Investing	Michael Levine	(925) 838-2016
Lunch in the Park	Mike Sorensen	(510) 928-4519
Movies	Michael Lee	(925) 864-8848
Met-Opera	Rich Vivrette	(925) 852-3453
Pickle Ball	Oskar Nadjari	(925) 586-5765
Poker 1	Robert Caviglia	(925) 830-1120
Poker 2	Ken Sterba	(925) 785 3539
Poker 3	Fred Pourmirzaie	(925) 381-2286
Poker 4	Sid King	(925) 699-5995
Technology User Group	Open	
Senior Fitness	Michael Lee	(925) 864-8848
Support Group	Michael Garcia	(925) 698-4997
Tennis	George Kibler	(925) 736-2854
Travel	Michael Lee	(925) 864-8848
Walking	Bob Henry	(925) 786-9979
Wine	Mike Sorensen	(925) 570-5035
BRANCH OPERATIONS & SUPPORT LEADERS		
Chaplain	Steve Kolda	(925) 683-2854
Luncheon Support Team	Danny Basso	(925) 519-1715
Photographer	Howard Stoddard	(925) 743-1998

SIR

Newsletter



Three Shastas
Branch 129
Redding, CA

NASCAR/INDY CAR Report by Barrie Lee
Nascar ran its last race of the year today in Avondale, AZ. IndyCar finished their season in September, in Monterey at Laguna Seca Raceway, with Alex Palou winning the championship for Chip Ganassi Racing. NASCAR'S playoff season starts with the round of 16 top drivers running three races to determine the round of 12. Three more races are run to determine the round of 8 and three more events are run to determine the final four. That last round of four competed in one final race in Avondale, AZ to determine the cup champion. So with Christopher Bell driving the only Toyota (20) for JGR he faced two Chevies driven by William Byron (24) and Kyle Larson (5) driving for RHR. That left the only Ford Mustang in the playoffs driven by Ryan Blaney (12) and representing Team Penske. A great young driver for JGR had a brake caliper explode and ruin his chances of continuing the race. The two RHR drivers were the fastest in qualifying and overall speed during practice and qualifying. They had the best pit locations and were consistently quicker in and out of the pits. Ryan Blaney had a major uphill battle to try and stay up to these two highly skilled drivers for Rick Hendricks. By the way, I find Mr. Hendricks to be one of the most incredible individuals I've ever had a chance to know. If either of his drivers had won, the championship I would have enjoyed his success. But Team Penske had a couple of good results this year with Joey Logano winning one race and Ryan pulling off three wins prior to today. With Austin Cindric driving the third Ford Mustang for Roger this year, his sophomore year in the cup series, things didn't go well at all. He showed speed and decent results in a few outings this year and will have to step up his efforts next year, driving the deuce for Team Penske. So I watched intently during the race, hoping that a miracle could take place in Arizona. My pacemaker can't take the abuse I seem to throw at it during any given moment. But I've been involved in racing most of my adult life and I get certain gut feelings that give me comfort in believing the way I do. No one thought Ryan

would make the final four, let alone moving out of the round of 16. But move he did. The 12 team had an off year even though he won the Coke 600 on Memorial Day weekend. He did win two races during the normal schedule and one more during the playoffs. But Team Penske struggled this year with a lack of power (Ford) and the aero package they used seemed to keep them afloat. Joey Logan won only one race and Cindric was never in the hunt. However, if you've ever been around the Captain, his motto is effort equals results. I've seen the highs and lows in auto racing, and it's like trying to truly understand life itself. We all have our own opinions and if you don't believe that, just ask me sometime. I saw Ryan Blaney and his teamwork wonders this past few week. They defeated the JGR machine and their Toyota stable, along with other teams that were determined to break through and win. Even the mighty RHR team with great qualifying efforts that allowed them great pit locations that really helped them advance during the race were not able to keep Ryan from moving past them to win the championship for Team Penske. This is only Rogers fourth Nascar championship with three drivers. Penske Racing was the name of the team when I was involved, and Roger only ran one car for many years. His major interest in racing is sports cars or Indy Cars. But his successes grew and so did his ability not to avoid adding more cars and drivers. He has competed in Formula One and built his own cars in England. He's won the CanAm series championship twice, the TransAm championship more than once, has competed in IMSA racing (endurance racing like the 24 hours of Daytona, 12 hours of Sebring, and others) including running Porsches this year and winning. He has won the Indy 500 nineteen times and the IndyCar championship several times again. I'm proud to say I know and have worked with one of the legends of the sport. The racing season has come to an end and just as in life we treasure our experiences and look forward to future events on all levels. Thanks for following my stories this year and I plan many new ideas for next year.

SIR Branch 129 Facebook page link. <https://www.facebook.com/socialactivitiesformen/>

SIR Branch 129 Private Facebook page link. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/401463741647384/>

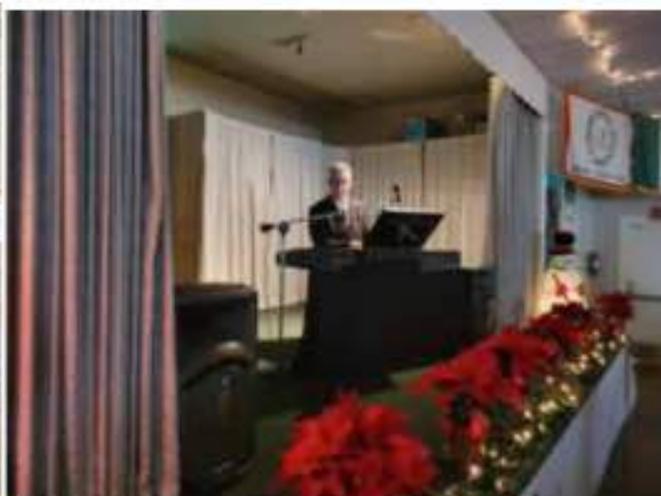
For more information on Zoom: Go to <https://sirinc.org/Zoom/LearningZoom.pdf>
State SIR Newsletter "Happenings". <https://sirinc.org/newsletters/>



Christmas Luncheon Review by Lee Lamp (photos from Gerry Dodge)

This year's Christmas Luncheon was a fantastic event (well, in my opinion anyway 😊). I loved getting to see many of you and chat briefly. If you attended and I missed out on greeting you please accept my sincere apologies and also my wishes for a wonderful New Year. We had a great turnout, although some last minute illnesses prevented some members from coming. Our entertainment, Pat Karch, was superb! I'd like to again thank the committee for their hard work. Dick Fyten, Chuck Spafford, and Don Paulsen pulled this together.

The menu was well prepared and the staff at Sons of Italy were outstanding.





BULLETIN

Website: sonorasirs.org
SONORA BRANCH #136

New Veteran Members:

Right to left: Michael Cunningham, John Marrs, Barry Schloffel, Robert Willhoite, Manuel Armendariz, Donald Herzer



2024 Sonora SIRs Officers and Directors: Big Sir Rick Bronner, Little Sir Mike Krom, Secretary Steve Holt, Asst. Secretary Gene Zanoni, Treasurer John Salmon, Asst. Treasurer Eddie Toews Directors: Paul Squeri, Raul Satana, Marty Martin, Stan Enos, Bill Burnes, George Cocores, Mel Kutsch, Jim Botto

Sonora Sir Branch 136 Annual Christmas Luncheon December 12, 2023





Wine Valley Press

SONS IN RETIREMENT
WINE VALLEY BRANCH #149



Tuesday morning coffee with members of Branch 149



Wine Tippers

Webpage & Facebook with Adrian Fenderson:
We are proud of our SIR #149 website. Note that there is a button that will be linked to a PDF of the new person application. Please look at our site and suggest any changes you would like to see so that we can make it very user friendly. We encourage all SIRS to keep up with what is happening between newsletters by signing up for Facebook and look at our SIR Branch 149 Facebook page. Also watch the Upcoming Events column and calendar on our website Home Page at www.branch149.sirinc2.org. Please send any happenings to Adrian.



Veteran's Activities with Del Fahlstrom: Veterans! "Attention on deck":

A new website is available, allowing you to make online purchases from the PX catalog. The website is: www.shopcgx.com. Also, RSVP to the Napa County Veteran's Office to attend a monthly orientation by Patrick Jolly. Learn firsthand about veteran's benefits for you and your spouse. Call 253-4558 to RSVP for the meeting scheduled each 2nd Tuesday of the month, located at 650 Imperial Way, Napa. For more information contact Del Fahlstrom at delcare@att.net or (707) 637-3933



Where am I?
SEND ANSWERS TO
DKWONDERFUL@GMAIL.COM

FIRST CORRECT ANSWER WINS A BOTTLE OF WINE



IT'S NOT HARD TO KEEP YOUR BALL IN THE FAIRWAY, AS LONG AS YOU'RE NOT PICKY ABOUT WHICH FAIRWAY.



Guiding excursion



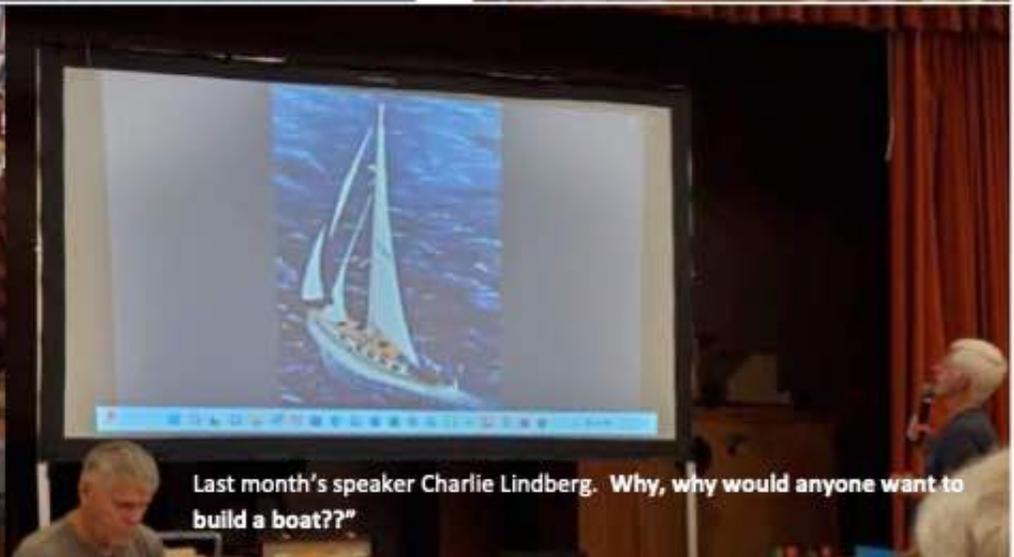
Neil Barker at the Farmer's Market



Ira Smith presenting Jim Prudhomme as our Monthly Sir Spotlight



Paul Larson receiving his Senior Award



Last month's speaker Charlie Lindberg. Why, why would anyone want to build a boat??"



Tom Cunningham getting his Senior Award



Our golf winners gathering for a glass of milk.



BULLETIN

SIR# 172 • Twain Harte, CA
Website: www.sirtecaln.org
PO Box 1143 • Twain Harte, CA 95383

January 2024

SIR# 172 TWAIN HARTE ACTIVITY GROUP NEWS

Group Chairmen have submitted planned event dates that will be covered by SIR Insurance

BIKE (Steve Happel, 532-7240)

Rides are planned for the **SECOND TUESDAY** each month



Our ride for January will be on Tuesday January 9. We will meet at Kohl's at 8:30 and carpool to Old Don Pedro Road for our ride. It is about 10 miles on asphalt with little elevation change for our county. Lunch afterwards in town



HIKE - Looking for a new Twain Harte Group Chair

Our "Easy Hiking" group disbanded and we're hoping it gets restarted.

Mike Clay, SIR# 77, branch Hiking Chairman conducts a "moderate difficulty" hike on most Fridays that is generally between 8 and 12 miles with shorter options possible. Call Mike - 588-1345.

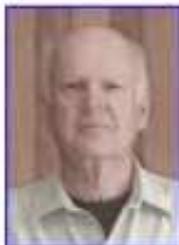


HORSESHOES (Richard Brandau, P: 209 352-4320)

Call Richard to get on his mailing list. Games are planned for the Last Thursday of the month at Tuolumne City Park, 18603 Pine St., Tuolumne



Horseshoes done for the season.
Come out to play in April 2024.



KAYAK (Dave Kenney, 650-867-4671)

2023 kayak trips are scheduled for the 4th Tuesday of the month.



Kayak outings are done for the year.
Good times at Pinecrest.



PINOCHLE (Bill Lewis, 209 604-6304)

Tuolumne County Senior Center, Sonora. Each Monday @ noon the card playing starts.

Having fun with Pinochle.



PROPANE (Bill Ferrera, 415 860-2248)



Bill Ferrera has graciously accepted the Propane Chair and will present information at future meetings



THEATER (Dave Tibbets, P: 209 532-2453)

Any member who wishes to be on the SRT Theater list, please send me an email asking to be added. My email is: dksvcs@att.net. You will then receive all information on each play and dinner as it becomes available.

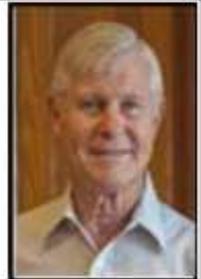


Cinderella

Thursday, December 14, 2pm @ East Sonora Theater

The Final SRT play of the 2023 season is, Roger's and Hammerstein's Broadway musical, "Cinderella." We have 40 tickets reserved.

This classic is presented with delightful music and should add a nice touch to our spirits during the holiday season. Any member can attend and bring guests. If you cannot attend the luncheon but, wish to attend the play, send your check to: Dave Tibbets 16200 Stine Ct. Sonora, CA 95370. Cutoff date, for me to have your check in my hand is November 30, 2023



Twain Harte Weather in January

<https://www.weather-us.com>

January, the same as December, is another fresh winter month in Twain Harte, California, with an average temperature ranging between max 52.7°F and min 35.8°F.

Temperature January brings an average high-temperature of a still fresh 52.7°F, showing a slight difference from December's 50.4°F. Twain Harte's average low-temperature in January is measured at a cold 35.8°F.

Humidity The average relative humidity in January is 66%.

Rainfall In Twain Harte, California, during January, the rain falls for 8.8 days and regularly aggregates up to 4.45" of precipitation. Throughout the year, in Twain Harte, there are 77.4 rainfall days, and 29.06" of precipitation is accumulated.

Snowfall

January through May, November and December are months with snowfall in Twain Harte. In Twain Harte, during January, snow falls for 2.3 days and regularly aggregates up to 5.28" of snow. In Twain Harte, during the entire year, snow falls for 16.2 days and aggregates up to 38.07" of snow.

Daylight

The average length of the day in January in Twain Harte is 9h and 53min. On the first day of January in Twain Harte, California, sunrise is at 7:17 am and sunset at 4:52 pm. On the last day of the month, sunrise is at 7:06 am and sunset at 5:22 pm PST.

Sunshine

In Twain Harte, the average sunshine in January is 6.2h.



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD SILVER LAPEL PIN

Presented by Paul Squeri to David Tibbets, Jerry Morrow & Tom Francis

SIR JIM QUON ON CONSUMER TIPS

■ When/If you dine at McDonald's, always ask for a receipt! Many people don't know this, but McDonald's gets secret shoppers all the time. The secret shoppers, also often referred to as "mystery shoppers" or "Gapbusters," are people who come in to rate their whole fast-food experience, including the quality of the food and service they get. These customers are actually paid to do this — and get reimbursed for the food that they order — therefore, they always ask for a receipt. McDonald's employees know this, so they are always on the lookout for people that ask for receipts to make sure that they deliver high service and receive great ratings. It's not always a guarantee, but there's a pretty good chance that if you ask for a receipt, you will get the fastest delivery, the freshest food, and the best customer service!



Source: <https://www.thedailymeal.com/>

■ Canned Corn Brands Ranked from Best to Worst:

1. Happy Belly Whole Kernel Sweet Corn (Amazon Private Brand), 2. Del Monte Fresh Cut Golden Sweet Whole Kernel Corn, 3. Libby's Whole Kernel Sweet Corn, 4. Green Giant Whole Kernel Sweet Corn, 5. Great Value Golden Sweet Whole Kernel Corn (Walmart), 6. Goya Golden Corn, 7. Del Monte Gold & White Corn, 8. Signature Select Whole Kernel Golden Sweet Corn (Safeway), 9. Kroger Sweet Golden Corn, 10. Simple Truth Organic Super Sweet Corn.

Read More: <https://sporked.com/article/best-canned-corn/>

■ Get the last drop of product from a bottle of Heinz ketchup:

Heinz bottles, especially the glass ones, are famous for having a special raised logo on the neck of all their glass bottles and most of their plastic bottles, too. Have you ever noticed the number "57" on your Heinz products? Although its origin lies in the term "57 varieties" the little 57s etched into your glass Heinz bottle have a completely different function. They have in fact been placed in a position on the bottle that's easiest to get ketchup out from. We're not kidding turn your ketchup bottle at an angle and hit exactly on the point of one of the 57s on the neck and you should have yourself a steady stream of tomatoey goodness.

Source: <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/uk/food/a562527/>

[how-to-get-ketchup-out-of-bottle/](https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/uk/food/a562527/how-to-get-ketchup-out-of-bottle/) Note: *I think it works better to hold the ketchup bottle in the left hand and 'slap' the logo against the palm of your right hand while holding the bottle at about 45° angle. This should produce nicely controlled amounts of ketchup on your plate or food items. I learned this method after over a dozen years working in restaurants in various capacities among other various types of jobs while I worked my way through school. That's why it took me 11 years to earn a 4-year BA.*

Best to Worst-Fast Food Onion Rings:

1. Culver's, 2. Jack in Box, 3. Fatburger, 4. Habit Burger Grill, 5. Whataburger, 6. Dairy Queen, 7. Carl Jr./Hardee's, 8. Sonic, 9. Counsel; 10. Burger King.

■ The Best and Worst Laundry Detergents:

The Top 3 Best/Worst per Results From Tests:

Top Plus Ultra Stain Release; 28¢/load; Overall Score: 84; Best for Stains and Hard Water.
Kirkland Signature (Costco) Ultra Clean; 11¢/load; Overall Score: 76; Best Value Persil ProClean Sensitive Skin; 37¢/Load; Overall Score: 75; Best for Sensitive Skin

Three Detergents to Skip:

Arm & Hammer 4-in-1 Power Paks Oxiclean; 16¢/load; Overall Score: 32; Worst Pods/Packs Sun Triple Clean; 8¢/load; Overall Score: 31; Worst Liquid Tru Earth Eco Strips; 39¢/load; Overall Score: 11; Worst Strips

Garbage Collection Service via ACI San Ramon:

Residents and businesses are required to separate all yard waste, uneaten food and food - soiled paper and place them in the **GREEN** cart or bin. Larger food producers like grocery stores and restaurants must arrange to donate surplus food to a local or regional entity. Enforcement is

coming. Penalties and fees will eventually be applied if organic material is found in the garbage. With minor behavior changes from all sectors, the effectiveness of reducing our city's climate impact is very high. Remember, if it was once alive, put it in the **Green Organic container!**

Source: ACI of San Ramon Newsletter, Fall 2023 issue.

Your Gas Stove in your Home May Be a Health Hazard:

Recent research has raised a new concern about gas stoves: Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂). It has long been known that the stoves can produce deadly carbon monoxide, but a new report suggests that they can also produce levels of NO₂ that are more than double the EPA's outdoor standard. That's worrisome: NO₂ can worsen asthma and other lung diseases, and it may increase the risk of asthma in children. To investigate, CR built an insulated chamber with a range hood and ventilation fan, and placed in it two typical gas stoves, one each from two popular brands. We then performed 24 tests to measure levels of NO₂ and other harmful gases. "Our tests found NO₂ at levels above those recommended by public health organizations, particularly when the ranges were used without ventilation and when a burner was set on high," says Ashita Kapoor, CR's associate Director of Product Safety. "This is an alarming concern." What can you do? If you cook on a gas range or cooktop, make sure your kitchen has adequate ventilation. That means using your range hood every time you cook even if you're just boiling an egg. If you don't have a range hood, install one. Opening windows and doors can also help. Thinking of switching to an electric smooth top or induction range or cooktop? See "Your Guide to Induction Cooking" on page 18.

Source: CR Reports, Nov. 2022 Issue

Computer/SmartPhone/Tablet Security:

If you often get asked to accept cookies when you go to a website and don't know what to do – Check to see if the website is secure by looking for the "lock" icon to the left of the URL. If the locked icon is showing, you can click "accept all cookies." If unlocked, click on "accept only necessary cookies" if that's an option. If not, reject all cookies. **Source:** AARP Magazine August/September edition, courtesy of Consumer Cellular

What do You do With your Old, Cold, Leftover Coffee?

You know that last bit of coffee that always seems to be left in the carafe? Don't just pour it down the drain – you can use it to fertilize your plants, both indoor and outdoor. [Coffee grounds](#) (and brewed coffee) are a source of [nitrogen](#) for plants, producing healthy green growth and strong stems. Coffee also contains calcium and magnesium – both of which are beneficial to plant health. To use coffee as a plant fertilizer, you'll need to dilute it. It should look like weak tea. If you aim for about 1/4 coffee and 3/4 water, or even a half-and-half mix, in your solution (depending on how strongly you brew your coffee), that's about right, but you don't have to be fussy about it. You can use coffee fertilizer on your potted plants, house- plants and in your vegetable garden. Coffee and coffee grounds are acidic and, while there are some plants that love an [alkaline soil](#) and won't do well with the addition of coffee, such as Lily of the Valley, Lavender and Honeysuckle, some plants absolutely thrive in an acidic soil. Here is a list, from [Gardening Know How](#), of acid-loving plants that thrive on a good shot of joe, though there are many more not included in this list: African violets, Blueberries, Azaleas, Phalaenopsis orchids, Amaryllis, Begonias, Cyclamens, Hydrangeas, Bromeliads, Gardenia, Hyacinths, Impatiens, Ferns, Roses

A good rule of thumb is to feed and water your plants once a week with a weak coffee solution. They'll appreciate the additional nutrients, as well as the water. And while we're here, let's talk for a minute about those leftover coffee [grounds](#) as well. They're a great source of nitrogen when added directly to the soil or placed into your compost pile (though some inconclusive [studies](#) argue against the efficacy of adding them directly to soil). Acid-loving plants such as blueberries, azaleas and rhododendrons will love them, as they raise the acidity level of the soil and serve as a mild fertilizer. Coffee grounds are also an effective natural deterrent to garden pests such as slugs, snails and ants. And, if you are a vermicomposter ¹, your worms will love them!

¹**vermicomposter:** Vermicomposting is the practice of using worms to turn your organic waste into nutrient-rich fertilizer. Deep beneath the earth, they thrive -- pink, slimy and insatiably hungry. They're with us all the time, rooting through our [gardens](#), digging through our [lawns](#) and consuming everything in their path. Aristotle called them the [intestines](#) of the world. The ancient

Chinese called them angels of the soil. Angels or intestines, worms are a tiny but formidable force, eating their way through organic matter and leaving a trail of rich humus in their wake. Why use worms? Well, for one, because they're cool. Not only are they slimy and neat-looking, but these amazing little organisms can also eat up to half their body weight in food every day. Using worms instead of a compost pile ensures faster composting and a rich, dark fertilizer. **Source:** <https://home.howstuffworks.com/vermicomposting.htm>

What Does Microwaving do to Plastic?

Plastics are spaghetti-like chains of carbon molecules, called polymers, which are usually derived from crude oil. To make plastics that are clear, cloudy, rigid, or soft, manufacturers add a cocktail of chemicals. Though there are [more than 10,000 of them](#), the most well-studied groups are: [bisphenols](#) (which include [BPA](#) and are often found in rigid products, like food storage containers and water pipes) and [phthalates](#) (which are typically used to make [more flexible products](#), such as food prep gloves or the plastic lining inside a milk carton). As Hussain found, microplastics and chemicals can build up in your leftovers over time—even when you're storing those plastic containers in the fridge. But microwaving wet foods in plastic delivers [an even bigger one-two punch](#): Heat speeds up hydrolysis, the process by which water molecules can essentially break chemical bonds apart. This supercharged reaction causes plastic containers to shed microplastics and nano plastics, as well as leach chemical additives (the bisphenols, phthalates, and more), into your food. And once those microplastics are ingested, it's possible they can degrade and also [leach chemicals in the body](#). In other words, heating plastic essentially makes it softer and more porous. If you've ever microwaved marinara sauce in a plastic bowl, you've seen the sunset red, impossible-to-remove stain it leaves behind. "Passages in the plastic can open up, so the sauce gets inside," says James Rogers, PhD the director of food safety research and testing at [Consumer Reports](#). The opposite exchange happens too: "If something goes in, something can also come out," he says.

Source: <https://www.bonappetit.com/story/can-you-put-plastic-in-the-microwave?>

DECEMBER 2023 CONSUMER TIPS

■ **Zelle:** I've been asked to talk about Zelle – what it is and what it can do for us.

What is it: Simply put, it is a specialized App that provides us a quick and easy way to send money directly between almost any U.S. bank accounts typically within minutes. With just an email address or U.S. mobile phone number, you can quickly, safely and easily send and receive money with more people you know and trust, regardless of where they bank. This App was developed in a cooperative effort among most of the U.S. banks and is embedded in the Mobile Banking App of almost all of the larger banks in the country. This means that if you do Mobile Banking from your local bank or many larger Saving & Loan Institutions and Credit Unions, you will most likely already have the App residing in your existing Mobile Banking App. Simply open your Mobile Banking App and look for a box or drop-down menu that shows the Zelle App. Simply click on the Zelle box or label.

Zelle - How it Works: Step 1. Access Zelle®. Find Zelle® in your existing mobile banking app. If you already have your banking app on your phone, there's no download necessary. If your bank or credit union doesn't offer Zelle® yet, just download the Zelle® app to get started. If your bank or credit union doesn't offer Zelle® yet, just download the Zelle® app to get started.

Step 2. Pick someone (you trust) to pay. Once you're enrolled with Zelle®, all you need is an email address or U.S. mobile phone number to send money to friends and family straight from your banking

app. From your kid's babysitter to your college bestie, Zelle® can be used to send money to almost anyone you know and trust with a bank account in the U.S.

Step 3. Choose the amount to send. Enter the amount you want to send. If your recipient is already enrolled with Zelle®, the money will go directly into their bank account, typically in minutes. If they aren't enrolled yet, they will get a notification explaining how to receive the money simply and quickly.

I have no experience or background in banking or finance but I have been using Zelle successfully for the last 2.5 years. I found it easy to understand and use without any learning issues. Both my sons were using it with their friends and some of relatives. Jordan, our youngest son worked at Costco. I would call him to ask him to bring things home (food, cleaning supplies, OTC supplements, etc.) from the store when Joyce began her Chemotherapy Treatments. I wrote him checks the first few times to reimburse him for these items. He requested that I pay him via Zelle. It worked so well that I introduced it to many of my friends. It is so much easier to split the bill up when we are out for a meal with friends and one person picks up the check and we pay him/her. It is super simple when you don't have enough cash on hand and we end up borrowing or owing our friends. Zelle eliminates all of that and it is super easy for them to receive their money.

On a local branch level, this can simplify payments we make for our dues, lunches, activities that require fees for member participation or attendance. Again, it's really quick, easy and handy. And, if you can't remember if you paid your dues or a fee/charge for something within our Chapter, there is a record of all your Zelle transactions similar to your monthly bank statements. I urge you to try it. It will make life easier for both you and our Treasurer!

Here's a link to an easy video tutorial on You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTZcPflq4w>. Click on it and it will be imported into your Browser for viewing. It will guide you through the entire process. It's fairly simple and easy to understand. If you have any questions or comments, you can call or email me or Dan Poulin.

Jim Quon
Askquon@yahoo.com
925 786-7866

■ **27th Annual Meyer Cookware Outlet Sale:** The Annual Meyer Warehouse/Outlet Sale is scheduled this year from November 30 through December 17, 2023, but only 10 AM – 6 PM, Thursdays through Sunday. As in the past, they have two warehouse locations – 525 Curtola Parkway, Vallejo, and 2001 Meyer Way, Fairfield. This is not a 'phony' sale. The prices and merchandise offered really are sale prices and the products and brands are not clearance or damaged goods. Most people become annual customers after they go the first time. For more info, visit: www.meyerus.com/sale. Meyer is the manufacture and distributor for many well-known national brands including Anolon, Ayesha (Curry), Bonjour, Breville, Circulon, Farberware, Kitchen Aid, Meyer, Rachel Ray and more. This annual sale is so popular that many folks go every year even if they're not looking anything specific in kitchen items.

■ **When Browsing/Shopping/Doing Anything Important on the Internet:** This is the time of the year for seasonal holiday shopping and looking up information such as the ratings for charities before making donations. You're better off if you use the full-page mode. Web pages designed for browsing using your Smartphone are mobile websites - smaller and often incomplete or more difficult to use. Check it out yourself. Go to any web page using your Smartphone. Then do the same on your PC or Apple Computer for a direct comparison. You may find that 'pull-down' menus and various options are missing on the more abbreviated, smaller sized mobile web sites designed for mobile phones. And for sure, the full-sized pages are much easier to read which makes navigating a lot easier. Photos, illustrations and video clips are so much easier to view using the larger, more complete pictorial presentations on the full-sized screen of a PC or Apple Computer.

■ **Why Are Cellphones Not Permitted For Use on commercial aircraft?**

We all know the routine by heart: "Please ensure your seats are in the upright position, tray tables stowed, window shades are up, laptops are stored in the overhead bins and electronic devices are set to flight mode". Now, the first four are reasonable, right? And mobile phones need to be set to flight

mode so they can't *cause* an emergency for the airplane, right? Well, it depends whom you ask. Here's an expanded POV on the subject.

Aviation navigation and communication relies on radio services, which have been coordinated to minimize interference [since the 1920s](#). The digital technology currently in use is much more advanced than some of the older analogue technologies we used even 60 years ago. [Research has shown](#) personal electronic devices can emit a signal within the same frequency band as the aircraft's communications and navigation systems, creating what is known as electromagnetic interference. But in 1992, [the US Federal Aviation Authority](#) and Boeing, [in an independent study](#), investigated the use of electronic devices on aircraft interference and found no issues with computers or other personal electronic devices during non-critical phases of flight. (Take-offs and landings are considered the critical phases.) The US Federal Communications Commission also began to create [reserved frequency bandwidths](#) for different uses – such as mobile phones and aircraft navigation and communications – so they do not interfere with one another. Governments around the globe developed the same [strategies and policies to prevent interference](#) problems with aviation. In the EU, electronic devices have been [allowed to stay on since 2014](#). Why then, with these global standards in place, has the aviation industry continued to ban the use of mobile phones? One of the problems lies with something you may not expect – *ground* interference.

Wireless networks are connected by [a series of towers](#); the networks could become overloaded if passengers flying over these ground networks are all using their phones. [The number of passengers that flew in 2021](#) was over 2.2 billion, and that's half of what the 2019 passenger numbers were. The wireless companies might have a point here.

Of course, when it comes to mobile networks, the biggest change in recent years is the move to a new standard. Current 5G wireless networks – desirable for their higher speed data transfer – have caused concern for many within the aviation industry. Radio frequency bandwidth is limited, yet we are still trying to add more new devices to it. The aviation industry points out that the [5G wireless network bandwidth spectrum](#) is remarkably close to the reserved aviation bandwidth spectrum, which may cause [interference with navigation systems near airports](#) that assist with landing the aircraft. Airport operators [in Australia](#) and [the US](#) have voiced aviation safety concerns linked to 5G rollout, however it appears to have rolled out without such problems [in the European Union](#). Either way, it is prudent to limit mobile phone use on planes while issues around 5G are sorted out.

Ultimately, we can't forget 'air rage.' Most airlines now provide customers with Wi-Fi services that are either pay-as-you-go or free. With new Wi-Fi technologies, passengers could theoretically use their mobile phones to [make video calls with friends](#) or clients in-flight. On a recent flight, I spoke with a cabin attendant and asked her opinion on phone use during flights. It would be an inconvenience for cabin crew to wait for passengers to finish their call to ask them if they would like any drinks or something to eat, she stated. On an airliner with 200+ passengers, in-flight service would take longer to complete if everyone was making phone calls.

For me, the problem with in-flight use of phones is more about the social experience of having 200+ people on a plane, and all potentially talking at once. In a time when disruptive passenger behavior, including "air rage", [is increasingly frequent](#), phone use in flight might be another trigger that changes the whole flight experience. Disruptive behaviors take on various forms, from noncompliance to safety requirements such as not wearing seat belts, verbal altercations with fellow passengers and cabin crew, to physical altercations with passengers and cabin crews – typically identified as air rage.

In conclusion – in-flight use of phones does not currently impair the aircraft's ability to operate. But cabin crews may prefer not to be delayed in providing in-flight service to all of the passengers – it's a lot of people to serve. However, 5G technology is encroaching on the radio bandwidth of aircraft navigation systems; we'll need more research [to answer the 5G question](#) regarding interference with aircraft navigation during landings. Remember that when we are discussing the two most critical phases of flight, take-offs are optional – but landings are mandatory.

Source: Doug Drury, CQ University Australia

■ **Trimming/Filing Thick Fungus Toe Nails:** Extra thick toe nails need to be filed down on a regular basis. It is most common to use a manual, straight, nail file. It's a slow and tedious job. A much faster, efficient and easier way is to use a portable, cordless, electric, rotary file. It really simplifies this regular chore. Check this one on Amazon: <https://tinyurl.com/ycy9wppa>. I've had this fungus condition for over 40 years. I used to use manual nail files. I graduated to a cordless, 2-speed, Dremel Tool. But High Speed was too powerful and Low Speed was not strong enough. Recently, I tried my wife's rotary nail file and it was perfect for the job! It's similar to the unit Amazon unit referenced above.

■ **Choosing Fruit at the Store:** Long ago fresh fruits were only available on a seasonal basis. Oranges were only available in winter. As time went on, researchers and farmers developed incredibly clever ways to ship produce around the world year-round, giving us lucky folks in the developed world access to most fruit whenever we want it. But as we've bred plants for storage and appearance, Pritts laments, we've lost a lot of flavor.

The American supply of strawberries, for instance, is grown almost exclusively in California. If you picked those berries at optimal ripeness, they'd spoil before they got to the East Coast. So, farmers harvest strawberries a little early, when they're hardy enough to withstand the shipping. Normal, wild strawberries wouldn't turn red off the vine, so farmers today use varieties bred to blush even after they're picked. But here's the problem: some fruits can't really ripen after they're picked. Strawberries, peaches, and many other fruits don't store starches, so they have to remain attached to the plant to produce the optimal levels of sugars. If you pick them too early, they'll contain some sugar, but no amount of leaving them on the counter will help them develop a better, sweeter flavor. That's why nothing compares to a tree-ripened peach. Other fruits, like apples and bananas, do stockpile starches, and can thus be ripened in storage. Bananas are exclusively picked green, shipped, and then exposed to ethylene gas at their destination to ripen them. Ethylene gas is a kind of chemical trigger for a lot of so-called climacteric fruits—it gets the ripening process rolling. Farmers and distributors can withhold ethylene until exactly the right moment, ensuring consumers get a perfectly ripe product. It also means these fruits will ripen on your kitchen counter, since they produce small amounts of ethylene themselves. Here's what to look for:

Watermelons

For all melons, you want the one that “feels heavier than it looks,” Ahern says. He admits that may be hard for someone who has little experience weighing produce in their hands, but the idea here is to select the densest melon. Pick a few up and see how they feel. The sweetest one will be particularly heavy for its size, since heft is a sign that the melon contains a lot of water. As they ripen, melons (and a lot of other fruits) accumulate water as they develop sugars and other aromatics, so a heavy specimen was likely ripened on the plant—which means lots of flavor.

You can also rap your knuckles on a watermelon to help you out here, since a nice hollow sound indicates more water content. Watermelons ripened on the vine will also have a large yellow spot where they were touching the ground. If the spot is white, though, it's not ripe yet. Do the same with cantaloupe, honeydew, and other melons

The same heft principle applies here, but the yellow spot and knocking tricks don't. Instead, look for a melon that has a little bit of give on the bottom (opposite the stem) where the flower was attached. Ideally, it should also be a little bit sticky at that end and have a nice aroma at the stem. Cantaloupes and Galia melons should have defined netting (that rough pattern on their skin), and, in general, the best melons will have the most intense color. Those that don't have a bright hue when ripe should simply be less green.

Oranges, grapefruits, and other citrus

Like a good melon, a nice citrus will feel heavier than it looks. A light piece of fruit either means it was picked before it was ripe or that it's been sitting around a long time, since it'll dehydrate as water evaporates through the skin.

Tomatoes

They say knowledge is understanding that a tomato is a fruit, and wisdom is knowing not to put one in a fruit salad. We're here to tell you that true enlightenment is realizing redness is not a sign of a ripe tomato. You could expose a bright green tomato to ethylene and turn it a juicy red. What you can't fake is the tomato smell, so bring one up to your sniffer and get a whiff of the stem end. If it doesn't smell like a tomato, it's not ripe. If it has a nice aroma, opt for one with a little give to it, but without too much smush, and definitely not any black specks or crinkly age lines, since those all indicate an overripe tomato.

Avocados

This trendy fruit actually can't ripen on the tree, making it a boon for both avocado farmers and you. Though they reach peak ripeness for only a brief time, you can tell by brushing the calyx—the bit that looks like a tiny stem. If the calyx comes off easily, the fruit is nice and ripe (though if there's brown underneath, it's probably overripe). If the calyx doesn't come off, it's not ready yet. You can also check out the color, which should be a deep green, assuming you're eating a Hass. If you want to squeeze it, you can, since a ripe avocado will have a little give to it, but Ahern doesn't recommend this because it'll cause bruising when the fruit does ripen.

One hot tip: try looking for ones at the bottom of the pile, where ethylene has a better chance of building up (just make sure they haven't been crushed by those on top). If you really can't find one, toss hard avocados in a paper bag, maybe even with a banana, to trap the ethylene and prompt ripening.

Pears

Pears are like avocados in that they're only ready to eat for a very short period of time. Buy them hard and as blemish-free as possible—any spots will turn brown once ripe—and let them sit on your counter until they start to change color (green varieties, unfortunately, don't change much, so it'll be harder to tell). Once ripe, they'll have a little give to them, though Bosc pears will be a bit harder than others. Ahern also says that although he prefers to buy local for almost everything, pears from nearby farms often just get tossed into a box. It's usually the fruit from pear-producing areas like Washington, which package their produce carefully, that often yield the best bruise-free pears.

Apples

Since apples are picked pretty much at peak ripeness and kept in cold, ethylene-controlled storage until they're ready for the grocery store, you really just want an apple that's as blemish-free as possible. With non-green varieties, you're also looking for a bright color.

Strawberries and other berries

Pretty much all berries are picked only when ripe, so for everything except strawberries you're basically making sure you don't have many rotten pieces. Turn the container around in your hands and take a peek at the bottom to make sure you don't see (or feel) mushy bits. With strawberries, the best indication is a pleasant odor—you can smell ripe strawberries from a distance.

Mangoes

There are tons of varieties of mangoes, but the ones we get in the U.S. pretty much universally start off green and turn yellow or red as they ripen. You're looking for as much color as possible, as well as a little give when squeezed, and a nice mango aroma.

Peaches and nectarines

The key here is smell, especially with peaches. Neither fruit ripens well off the tree, so don't bother buying rock-hard versions. They'll soften in your kitchen, but they won't develop any more flavor. If you can find a plump peach, make sure it's as blemish-free as possible.

Pineapples in, smell is key. A good pineapple will smell like one, and the skin should have a more yellow tint rather than pure green. Another good test: try to pull out the leaves at the top. If they come off easily, that's a good sign it's ripe.

Source: Sara Chodosh, associate editor at PopSci, the University of Girona. She is an associate editor at PopSci where she writes about everything from vaccine hesitancy to extreme animal sex. She got a master's degree in science journalism at NYU's Science Health and Environmental Reporting Program, as well as another one in data visualization from the University of Girona.

■ **How to Determine the Better Rated charities to Donate to:** Fortunately, there are websites that rate how much of their donated monies go toward their specific goals. This is the season for giving to programs that help public agencies and organizations achieve their specific performance goals. But to determine how much of your donation goes to work doing good for the those people that need the help. I use [CharityNavigator.com](https://www.charitynavigator.com) most frequently because their website is easy and fast to use. It Is The Nation's Largest & Most-Utilized Evaluator of Charities. **Guidestar.org** and **BBB** are two other sites that can be used but Charity Navigator is more comprehensive and easier/quicker to use. My Joyce used to do the bill paying, filing and handling the charitable donations at the end of the year but I've now had to take that over. Here are some ratings I found useful. **Association of American Cancer – 96%; American Cancer Society – 99%; American Cancer Association – not rated; ASPCA (National) – 99%; ASPCA OF North Carolina – 59%; American Heart Association - 99%; American Heart Society of Bismark – Not Rated; American Heart Society – 66%**. Note the name similarity among charities. Be sure to use the correct name when doing a charity search. The number shown is the total amount of donations used to do their charitable work, expressed in percentages.

■ **Top 10 National Chain Sandwich Shops in the U.S. listed in best to worst order:** 1 Jersey Mukes, 2. Publix Deli, 3. Au Bon Pain, 4. Jimmy John's, 5. Firehouse Subs, 6. Pret a Manger, 7. Potbelly Sandwich Shop, 8. Schlotzsky's, 9. Corner Bakery Café and 10. Atlanta Bread Company.

Source: <https://www.mashed.com/454734/chain-sandwich-shops-ranked-from-worst-to-best/>

■ **Good and Not so Good Frozen Pizza Ratings:** Editor's Choice: Red Baron Classic Crust Four Cheese Pizza; Best Tasting Crust; Amy's Cheese Pizza; For Cheese Lovers: Screamin' Scillian Bessies Revenge Cheese Pizza; Best Thin Crust: Trader Joe's Pizza Margherita; Cheesy In The Extreme:365 by Whole Foods Market Thin Crust Pizza, Four Cheese; A Little Bland: Newman's Own Thin & Crispy Crust Margherita Pizza; Soggy Crust: DiGiorno Four Cheese Rising Crust Pizza. Per the tasting panel, the first two were the clear winners and the middle two were just OK with the last three were at the very bottom of the ratings.

Source: Consumer Reports, Aug. 2023 issue

JANUARY 2024 CONSUMER TIPS

■ **A Bit of Trivia!:** Some years ago, we went to Tucson for a week of golf with our golf group. We had dinner at El Charro Café, the oldest operating Mexican Restaurant in town. I just saw a segment of Andrew Zimmerman's TV show, [Bizarre Foods: Delicious Destinations](#) and learned "The Home of the Chimichanga Our Legendary Tia Monica Flin, is well-known as "The Inventor of The Chimichanga." While frying her now famous El Charro ground beef tacos, she accidentally dropped a burro into the frying pan and when the oil splashed up she was about to lash out a common Spanish cuss word starting with "Ch" but because she was amongst her young nieces and nephews, changed it to "Chimichanga", the equivalent of "thingamajig." Thankfully for all of us, Monica was a controlled and creative cuss.

Source: Andrew Zimmerman TV Show

■ **Tell Your Spouse/Partner Where Important Things are:** Most of you are aware that my life partner, Joyce, passed away earlier this year. From my own personal experience, I recommend and urge you to share with your partner the location of important/critical documents and items, e.g. Trust Documents, Wills, Advanced Health Directives, Vehicle Titles, Safety Deposit Lock Boxes, Birth Certificates, Deeds, Passports, etc. Prepare those lists now – well in advance of when it may be needed. In my case, we thought we had more time before she passed but it didn't work out that way. This resulted in serious difficulties for me as the legal process required me to furnish some of these important documents. Fortunately, Our Financial Planner and Trust Attorney were helpful in furnishing some of these documents. And under the same idea, prepare lists of things and their location of items that are not in your wills that you wish to give to specific individual after death. You never know when or how quickly these items might be required.

■ **Trouble Sleeping? What you should know about Melatonin:**

Whether you're curious about melatonin or have already added it to your routine, there are important things to know. Anupamjeet K. Sekhon, MD, a sleep medicine doctor at Kaiser Permanente's Sleep Center in Fontana, California, answers some common questions about melatonin.

What is melatonin and how does it work? [Melatonin](#) is a hormone made by our brains. It regulates a person's circadian rhythm, the internal clock that tells the body when to sleep and wake. Melatonin isn't produced during daylight hours. But as the sun sets and a person's usual bedtime nears, their brain begins to make melatonin. As melatonin levels rise, levels of the stress hormone cortisol fall, and breathing slows. This tells the body that it's time to wind down and prepare for sleep. Synthetic melatonin is available without a prescription in gummies, pills, liquids, or patches.

Are melatonin supplements sleeping pills? The production of melatonin depends on the time of day and your internal clock. While melatonin may make you feel drowsy, it doesn't have the same effect as prescription sleep medication. For example, it doesn't force you into slumber soon after you take it. "Melatonin supplements tell our body that it's time to sleep, but they can't put us to sleep," says Dr. Sekhon, its effect depends on when you take it. So a dose of melatonin in the middle of the day isn't a fast track to an [afternoon nap](#).

When should people consider using melatonin? According to Dr. Sekhon, melatonin works best for 2 sleep problems:

Jet lag: When a person [travels](#), they can have trouble falling asleep because their internal clock is out of sync with the local time zone.

Delayed sleep phase disorder: People with this sleep problem fall asleep 2 hours after conventional bedtimes, usually after midnight. This makes it hard for them to wake up early. "In both of these cases, melatonin taken 2 hours before a desired bedtime can help people adjust their sleep cycles," says Dr. Sekhon.

Is melatonin safe? More research is needed to know the effects of long-term melatonin use. But short-term use seems to be safe. Melatonin isn't addictive, but it may interact with certain medications. So, talk to your doctor to learn if melatonin is right for you, especially if you're pregnant or breastfeeding.

Keep in mind that because melatonin is a supplement, it's not as strictly regulated by the Food and Drug Administration as other medications. To choose the right brand of melatonin, Dr. Sekhon recommends looking for the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) or Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) logos on labels. You can also look for the United States Pharmacopeia (USP) verified mark.

What's the right dose for melatonin? To learn how much melatonin to take, Dr. Sekhon says it's best to ask your doctor. But in general, she recommends a less-is-more approach. She suggests that adults start with a dose of 1 to 3 milligrams. For children, she recommends starting at 1 milligram and never using more than 3 milligrams.

Source: Kaiser Permanente Newsletter

■ **Need a New Home Printer? Consider purchasing a Monochrome Laser Printer!** The following is an excerpt from an article on modern technology tools that appeared in our local newspaper column. "We will start with the laser printer. I do think a modest (under \$150) black-and-white laser printer is often the best choice for home printing needs. They are fast, reliable and cheap to run. For a long time, I had a black-and-white Brother laser printer that I bought on sale for under \$100, purchased out of frustration with high ink costs and ink-jet nozzles that clogged up and made spotty prints. I also had a high-end ink-jet for fine photography work that used eight inks and could print on 13-by-19 paper. I figured that if I wanted a color document, I could just put some plain paper in my inkjet, and print my more mundane documents with the laser printer. What I discovered was I quickly adapted to only having black-and-white documents and I cannot remember when or if I actually put any plain paper in my photo printer. If you or any other readers are willing to give a laser printer a try, The Brother HL-L2300D is a modern successor to my very good printer of years ago. It sells for \$119.99. brother-usa.com. And what of a color laser printer? They are pricey and you will have four toner cartridges to maintain. This is not a good option for the occasional printer.

Source: Don Lindich, Sound Advice Columnist, San Jose Mercury News

Note: I've been using a Brother Laser Printer HL-2270DW for about the last 5+ years. It is the predecessor to the Brother Laser Printer mention above. I love it and it has been a Godsend on a number of occasions! Last week, I needed to print out over 200+ pages (Will, Advanced Health Care Directive and Family Trust originally filed in 2016) and another 175+ pages for the newly created updated Will and a new Survivor's Trust. My Trust Attorney is in Marin County and we were going over these documents page by page on the phone. It worked flawlessly even though I printed all those 400 pages on 2-sides. I've found single, standard Laser cartridges on Amazon (non-O.E.M.) for as low as \$25, each. I've also found High-Capacity Laser Cartridges for \$32. The standard cartridges are rated at 2,600 print pages. The High-Capacity cartridges are rated at 5,000 pages. The Standard Cartridges last me about 1 year in normal use. I used to spend 3X - 4X for my former Ink Jet Printer and I never had to fuss with the clogging of the ink jet and the laser is so much faster!

■ **The Local Dining Scene:** There have been some major openings and closures in the East Bay. Some are due to economic hardship brought on by Covid and others are simply the owners deciding to retire.

Chinese Cantonese Food places have become somewhat far and few between. Most Chinese restaurants now specialize in the Northern and Taiwanese cuisines. Gum Kuo, Dublin has closed after over 10+ years in business and has now become Grand Café. They are owned by the same family as Mayflower Restaurant. Fortunately, their menu remains mainly Cantonese style dishes!

China Village, Dublin, recently closed and is now Hong Kong Café. The previous business was mix of Cantonese and Szechwan cuisines. It's now Hong Kong cuisine which is pretty close to Cantonese. China Village had been in business for over 25+ years!

Albatross, Danville, was very popular and was one of my favorites in the Tri Valley area. It's now Tides, a family owned/operated featuring upscale fresh seafood. I'm sad that Albatross closed but I'm excited to have a real seafood restaurant in our local area.

Thai House, Danville, has closed after 20+ years in business. The owners have retired. This was the best Thai restaurant in the area! It is now Bungalow on Rose. It's Thai food but somewhat Westernized.

Fratello's Ristorante, Livermore has relocated to a different location on Railroad Ave. just a few steps down the street from Range Life. It was previously located across the street from Los Positas Golf Course and across the parking lot from, Cattlemen's Steakhouse. Their new site replaces a former Mexican Restaurant but I don't know the name and I never dined there, before.

DareDevil Dog, San Ramon, is a new Hot Dog house. I was drawn to it because they have Chicago Dogs on their menu and I happen to very fond of them. I tried their Chicago Dog but it was not nearly as good as any of the street carts or brick & mortar dog houses in Chicago. And at \$10, it's very expensive.

Myungrang Hotdog, Dublin, is a Korean Hot Dog franchise that recently opened in a small mall. There is no indoor seating. There is seating while waiting for your orders. Offerings include many varieties of Korean hot dogs with choices of cheeses, sausage types, toppings on top of breading. However, don't go here expecting a real hot dog. They're really a Corn Dog except they use rice flour for the coating with various condiments. I have no idea why they chose to call them Hot Dogs!

Zalla Kabab House has moved from their original site in the Danville Livery. It was a very small place and they have now taken over the site of Cafe Attila in the same mall as Three Brothers From China. The new location is much nicer, more refined and a much larger space. The food is primarily Persian. The menu is Kababs and other Mediterranean dishes.

Diablo Taqueria, Danville, is located just South of the High School on the East side of San Ramon Blvd. It has been a number of food businesses with none of them lasting very long. Now, Danville finally has a good taqueria. Very fresh and tasty. I liked their Burritos.

Big Apple Pizza, San Ramon, has taken over the former site of Domino's Pizza in the same mini-mall as New Moon Restaurant, CVS and Walmart Neighborhood Grocery Store. They offer both thin and regular pizza crusts. I liked their thin crust. Their Extra-Large size is \$42.

Pizza My Heart, Dublin is next door to Habit Hamburger Grill. It replaces a Mexican Fast Food place. It's in the same mall as Chucky Cheese. This place has a large, unique menu of different pizzas. The Big Sur is my younger son's favorite pizza. It has 40 Cloves of Roasted Garlic, Organic Tomato Pizza Sauce, Pepperoni, Sausage, Portobello Mushrooms & Green Onions.

■ A Relatively New Shopping website with many various lines/types of merchandise at Very Low Prices: If you like shopping for great buys, try Temu.com. They have a huge assortment of items at incredibly low prices. Shipping is free as long as your order equals \$10 or more. Everything they offer is from overseas, mostly from China. I've purchased Men's Diver Watches for less than \$15 and they turned out to be very nice and look/operate much better than other brands costing much much more. Shipping is prompt and returns for credit are not a problem. The only negative I have found is a lack of instructions or explanatory literature.

■ Do You Need an extra Burner or Hot Plate for table use? Consider purchasing an Induction Stove or Burner. These are what you see on TV featuring a famous Chef demonstrating the cooking of something live on the air. These have no live flame or hot electrical element. These require the use of cookware that contain iron. The surface of the burner will remain cool to the touch. It's only the iron pot/pan that gets hot. These burners are more efficient and the burner surface remains cool to the touch. These induction units are faster than electric or gas burners. They are AC powered and now cost well under \$75 and are very portable. All you need is an AC 110 V - 120 V outlet nearby.