

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.

Bulletin 415

June 2024

Kevin King, Editor

BIG SIR | Lew Chapman 510-912-5658



By the time you read this, I will be traveling in Western Europe with my 15 year old grandson Eli. Why do we travel anyway? We are hodophile's at heart. Hodophile is the term used to reference people who love to travel. It means "one who loves to travel." People love to travel for many reasons. It offers them a chance to escape the monotony of daily life, explore new cultures and ways of life, and gain new perspectives. Eli has all these reasons and more in mind, including being one-on-one with Grandpa and escaping his little brother for a while!

Activity Reports

As I mentioned at our last luncheon, my hope is to profile one activity per meeting so everyone has a good idea of what that activity is all about. In May, Gary McKae spoke about the Investment Group. In July, we hope to have Jay Muzio speak about our very active Wine Tasting Group and how you can get involved.

Member Profiles

As has been done in the past, we would also like to have one of our members tell us more about themselves. At our May meeting, we were supposed to hear from Grant McMicken, our new Assistant Treasurer, but he was not able to make the meeting due to health reasons. I hope to reschedule him for July. Thanks to Don Nicholson who filled in at the last minute and told us about the fun things he did in the early part of his life. In addition, we would like to have one of our members profiled in an interview for our newsletter. In May, we learned more about Ken Mahar. This month, we profile Brian Lemley. See the article about him elsewhere in this edition. Please let me know if you would like to be interviewed for the July newsletter.

Upcoming

June 12 is our annual Branch 95 picnic at Promontory Park. Unfortunately, I will not attend the picnic this year (as I mentioned I'll be traveling with my grandson to Europe) but planning for it is in good hands with Ron Wadsworth. Please contact Ron if you can offer any support to him in pulling the picnic together.

See **BIG SIR** next page

Gold Country Branch 95 2024 BEC Members- PBS denotes Past Big SIR

Big SIR Lew Chapman 510-912-5658	Little SIR Ron Wadsworth 916-417-1484	Secretary Terry Starkel 916-817-1524	Assistant Secretary Bob Carlson 916-817-1181	Treasurer Marshall Armstrong 650-438-7802	Assistant Treasurer Grant McMicken 530-306-2468
Director at Large David Chighizola 530-558-9336	Director at Large Ken Mahar 650-504-1393	Director at Large Bill Yeager, PBS 916-941-6632	Director at Large Hugh Thompson 916-276-5117	Director at Large Tim Irish, PBS 916-933-3466	Director at Large Jay Muzio, PBS 650-302-1902

BIG SIR continued from previous page

The next general membership luncheon and meeting is July 10th (back to our usual second Wednesday this month). It will be at the Cameron Park Country Club. The social hour begins at 11:00 am and the meeting starts at 12:00 pm.

LITTLE SIR | Ron Wadsworth 916-417-1484

By the time you receive this, it will be almost time for the annual Summer Picnic on Wednesday June 12th. It looks like again this year we will have upwards of 70 attendees, and let's all have good thoughts for good weather!

It's shaping up nicely as we'll have games, raffles and lots of good food and opportunities for us to meet new people and renew friendships!

See you there!

Now for some observations from Ron on my recent trip to Italy:

- Every three days there are as many people touring the Roman Colosseum as the 50,000 that used to watch the sporting events and gladiatorial combats there in 80 A.D.
- Traffic lanes are merely a suggestion in most towns, as cars, bicycles, Vespas and pedestrians all vie for the same spaces.
- Trains generally run on time (as well as up to 200 miles per hour!), so if you have 10 minutes scheduled between your arrival and your next connection departure, you better be ready to sprint, haul your luggage and hope you don't lose your loved one!
- When we see 200 year old buildings in the U.S. we "ooh and ahh". The Italians yawn and call those buildings the "modern era".
- Italy is beautiful and full of history and wonderful people!



Ron and Tami: Boat Tour along the Cinque Terra Coastline

SIR 95 - 2024 ANNUAL SUMMER PICNIC

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

**PROMONTORY PARK
2700 Alexandra Drive
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762**

11:00am - 3:00pm

**Catered BBQ picnic lunch, games
and many door prizes**

**June Birthdays**

Mike Bettencourt
Ray DiBasilio
Dan Koelzer
Stan Lemke
Brian Lemley
Dan Link
Jay Muzio
Dennis Windsor

**June Branch 95 Anniversaries**

11 years - Terry Privott

Membership

New or returning members: 3
Departing members: 0
Current number of members: 96

BRANCH HAPPENINGS/SIR COMINGS & GOINGS | Kevin King, PBS; HLM 916-337-9811

Meet our three newest members who were installed at our May meeting:



Mike Bettencourt (nicknamed “The Doctor”) first heard about SIR from a friend and was eventually sponsored by Ron Wadsworth. Mike is a retired, self-employed plumbing contractor. Among the activities we currently offer, he lists golf and pickleball as ones that he enjoys. He also listed fishing. Any chance of getting that off the ground again? He says “even though I’m retired, I do like to help others with my expertise in my craft.” Mike and his wife, Blenda, live in El Dorado Hills.



Wilfredo (“Wil”) Brunet learned about our Branch through “The Clipper” (shout out to our Publicity Chairman, George Alboff.) Wil worked in international banking for Société Générale in New York. Wil and his wife, Karen, have been spotted at our Thursday morning drop-in bocce. He lists chess, economic study, explore & eat, stamps and travel as other activities he enjoys. In fact, Wil tells me he led a chess group for EDHCSD. Anyone out there that wants to join Wil in creating a new chess or other activity? His banking experience naturally leads him to express an interest in a future Branch leadership position as Treasurer. The Brunet’s live in El Dorado Hills.



Jack Larson was sponsored by his neighbor, Terry Wild. During his career, he was a Collision Shop Manager managing Field Reps for an insurance company. He listed antique cars, breakfast club and golf among the activities he enjoys. He and his wife, Rossana, live in Cameron Park.



Pictured left to right are Wil Brunet, Mike Bettencourt and Jack Larson displaying their Membership Certificates following their induction ceremony.



David Tom, who joined our Branch in March and was introduced in the May newsletter, was officially sworn in at our May meeting.

IN MEMORIAM



Longtime member, Joe Lampich, passed away about 1:00 am on Memorial Day. He was in a rehabilitation facility in Placerville recovering from a surgery. Joe joined our Branch in July 2007. He was 77 years old. He is survived by his wife, Sandee. Joe’s memorial service will be held at Green Valley Mortuary 3004 Alexandrite Drive in Rescue on Wednesday, June 19th at 12:00pm.

GET TO KNOW YOUR FELLOW SIR - BRIAN LEMLEY

This article will be an ongoing feature of our SIR Branch 95 newsletter. We would like to include a member profile in the monthly newsletter as well as have a member speak about themselves at our monthly luncheons. In this way we will get to know about 20 members over the course of a year in a more detailed way. Let Lew know if you’re willing to be profiled in a future edition.

This month’s profile is about Brian Lemley based on an interview conducted by Lew Chapman.



Brian and his girlfriend, Sheryll, just returned from a trip to Europe on May 21st, and your profiler, Lewis, is leaving for Europe a week later, so the two of us had to scramble to find a time to conduct this interview and draft the article for the June monthly Member Profile. Brian and Sheryll started by taking a 14-day transatlantic cruise on the Celebrity Silhouette and spent the rest of their month-long trip in the Netherlands and Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden and Finland).

BRANCH 95 GOLF | Terry Starkel, Golf Chairman

916-817-1524

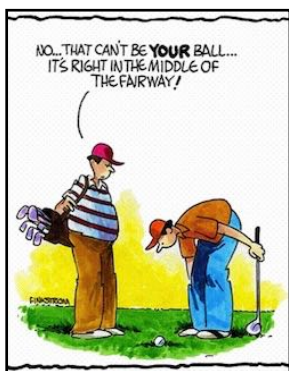


Here it is June already, the warm weather has finally arrived and hopefully with the warmer weather, the golf scores will improve. I know I play better when I don't have several layers of clothing on and feel like I have more flexibility and movement when I swing.

If you have not checked the [golf activities page](#) on the Branch website recently, you should take the time to do so. Kevin has done an excellent job of keeping it up to date and tracking the different competitions within the club. In addition to having the current leaders in the Gold Country Cup and Marksman of the Year, it also shows how many rounds you have played toward qualification for the Club Championship and has our schedules, rules and golf members photos (it is nice to be able to identify some of the newer players that you may not know yet).

Our next special golf format will be at Bartley Cavanaugh on Tuesday, June 25th. It will be a six-six-six format. You will need a partner and the first six holes are played normal, take the best score. The next six holes are played alternate shot and the last six are best ball. I will be sending out more information about this in mid-June.

We continue to add new golf members. Our latest addition is Mike Bettencourt. Mike is in addition to Scott Walberg, Bryon Loney, Stan Lemke and Bill Klump who have all joined us recently. We enjoy being able to play with a number of our members and to continue to develop the friendships that make the SIR golf group such a great group of guys.



A man and a friend are playing golf one day at their local golf course. One of the guys is about to chip onto the green when he sees a long funeral procession on the road next to the course. He stops in mid-swing, takes off his golf cap, closes his eyes and bows down in prayer.

His friend says: "Wow, that is the most thoughtful and touching thing I have ever seen. You truly are a kind man."

The man then replies: "Yeah, well we were married for 35 years."

SAND TRAPS

Terry Starkel, Golf Chairman
916-817-1524

Golf Director (Mather)
Dennis Petersen 916-817-1149

Golf Director (Wildhawk)
Ron Wadsworth 916-417-1484

#####

SIR Branch 95 Results 2024 Tournaments

May 7th - Empire Ranch
1st - Dan Link
2nd - Stan Lemke
3rd - Tim Irish
4th - Bob Carlson
Closest to the pin - Dan Link (#12) and Steve Crane (#16)

May 14th - Mather
1st - Jay Muzio
2nd - Steve Crane
3rd - Tim Irish
Closest to the pin - Tim Irish (#3) and Mike Bettencourt (#11)

May 21st - Wildhawk
1st - Dan Link
2nd - Steve Crane
3rd - Rick Willson
4th - Chad Barrow
Closest to the pin - Randy Hood (#3) and Al Gurevich (#7)

May 28th - Diamond Oaks
1st - Alan Bowles
2nd - Tim Irish
3rd - Marshall Armstrong
Closest to the pin - Bill Klump

State SIR provides members a number of individual and team tournaments throughout the year. See our [golf page](#) for a list of upcoming events.

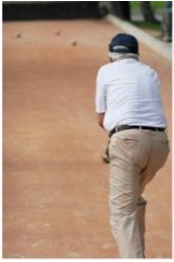
State SIR Officials

Branch 95: sirinc2.org/branch95/
State SIR: sirinc.org
State SIR Marketing: WeAreSIR.com
SIR Happenings (State SIR newsletters): sirinc.org/newsletters
SIR-Branded Merchandise: sir.ourproshop.com

State President
Dale Decker (Br136 - Sonora)
209-573-0833

Area 3 Representative
Jim Gragg (Br98 - Rocklin)
916-708-5154

BOCCE | Oli Bohlman 916-844-4067



Come join other members and their spouses/significant others at Promontory Park every Thursday at 9:00am for drop-in bocce. Note the time change due to the warmer weather. If you are not on the current email list and would like to be, contact Oli Bohlman at obohlman@sbcglobal.net. I look forward to seeing you out on the courts.

E-BIKING | Ken Mahar 650-504-1393



If you are interested, contact me at kmahar@comcast.net to get on the E-biking email list. I know that there are riders out there but, unless we see more of you join in this activity, I'm afraid it will have to be discontinued.

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



We meet the first Wednesday of every month at someone's home. All that's needed is a \$20 buy-in for a fun-filled evening with your fellow members and a chance to go home the big winner. If this sounds like something that you might be interested in, give me a call or email me at kmahar@comcast.net and I'll put you on our contact list.

CLASSIC CARS | Rick Talone 916-761-7222



Car enthusiasts meet the last Thursday each month at a predetermined starting location. They then drive their classic or special interest cars as a group following a specific route to a location to enjoy lunch with other group members before driving back as a group. To be put on the group's interest list, contact Rick at the number above or email him at rte88a@comcast.net.

DROP-IN BOWLING |

Rick Willson (916) 847-1452



Meets every Wednesday at FLB Entertainment Center in Folsom. Arrive at 12:45pm to get your shoes and pick out a ball. The cost of \$15 includes shoe rental and bowling from 1:00pm until 4:00pm. Come for one game or as many as you're up to. No advance reservations are required. Just drop in for some fun and exercise with your fellow SIR members. Give Rick a call or email him at rivereagle4u@gmail.com for more information.

PICKLEBALL | Dan Cockcroft, PBS

408-781-0714



We meet at 1:00pm on Wednesday's at Heritage Park in El Dorado Hills. Spouses/significant others are also invited to play. If you want to be placed on the email interest list, contact Lew Chapman, Ron Wadsworth or Dan Cockcroft. We will send out a reminder early each week to confirm play time.

Some useful pickleball resources include:

- [Pickleball Channel](#)
- [USA Pickleball](#)
- playtimescheduler.com
- [Places 2 Play](#)

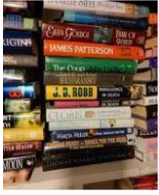
BREAKFAST & WALKING |

Norman Orrick 916-709-1693



The group meets at Denny's in Cameron Park each Thursday at 9:00am. We eat, discuss the week's events or whatever comes to mind. Sometimes we discuss a weighty subject, other times we might just tell jokes. After we eat and talk, those that wish, take off for a mile or two walk. We are looking forward to having new members to enliven our discussions. To receive a weekly reminder, send an email to 7norte@google.com.

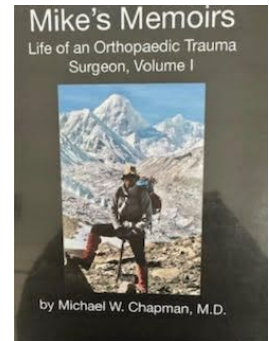
BOOK EXCHANGE | Lew Chapman, Big SIR 510-912-5658



As has been previously mentioned, the Book Exchange is now electronic...”because books are heavy.” See the SIR Branch 95 webpage for a link to the spreadsheet with the books that are available.

In the past I have often provided a book review of what I have been reading lately. Going forward I would like to open this column up to anyone else who has read a book they want to report on. Let me know if you have a title to recommend and would like to review.

This past month I have begun reading an unpublished work. It is by my brother Michael W. Chapman, MD and it is a memoir entitled: “Life of an Orthopaedic Trauma Surgeon.” Some of you may recall his presentation at our luncheon meeting in January 2023 about the history of the development of modern trauma care medicine in which he was a pioneer. His memoir is fascinating reading, especially if you are his brother. There is a great deal of personal family history, much I knew but a lot I had forgotten. I learned a much more detailed history of my grandparents and great grandparents. I confirmed I am ½ English and ¼ German and ¼ Swedish. My brother is a great storyteller and excellent writer. In parts it is really funny. Especially the chapters about the courtship of his wife Betty during medical school, and how he eventually won out over her other suitors. It also has a fascinating history of the development of downhill skiing of which he has been a lifelong fanatic.



I’m 200 pages into the first 750 pages of his memoir, and he has only gotten through about the first half of his life. This guy has a lot to tell. I really think that his reading audience is well beyond that of his immediate family and I am encouraging him to at least seek to self-publish his work. Stay tuned...a future national best seller? The cover photo is of Mike at the Mt. Everest base camp.

In the meantime, remember, SIR Branch 95 Book Exchange: no cost, no library cards, no late notices, no fines. Now electronic--to save my back!

INVESTMENT GROUP | Gary McKae 650-743-7249



We meet the last Wednesday of the month at Raley’s O-N-E in El Dorado Hills to discuss financial topics of interest to the group. We invite other members to join us. Give me a call or send an email to gmkae@sbcglobal.net to be added to our contact list.

A LIGHTER MOMENT

A man is speeding down a highway late at night when he gets pulled over by a cop. The officer comes up to the car and says, “Do you have any idea how fast you were going?” The man replies, “I’m sorry officer, I was rushing to a lecture about the negative impacts of alcohol abuse and the importance of staying within the law.” Intrigued, the officer asks, “Really? Who’s giving that lecture at this time of night?” The man smirks and says, “My wife.”

My wife told me she’d slam my head on the keyboard if I don’t wrap up this newsletter and get off the computer. I’m not too worried, I think she’s jokinlkjhfklij n,.nbziyoao78yv87dfaoyuofaytdf

BEST BURGER PURSUIT | Lew Chapman, Big SIR 510-912-5658



The goal of this activity is to find the best hamburger in Gold Country. We changed the name to Best Burger Pursuit ("BBP").

Our second pursuit for the best hamburger in Gold Country was held on Friday, May 24 at *That Dam Place* in Folsom. We had another good turnout. This time there were 14 of us. Judging by the conversation and camaraderie alone, we all were pretty happy with the outing. Given the size of our group, the food came out in waves. We are going to have to add "promptness of food delivery" to our evaluation form. I'm guessing for most restaurants/burger joints, getting 14 burgers all out at the same time is going to be a challenge. For this reason we ate in waves while the burgers/fries were still hot. Nevertheless, I think a good time and a decent burger was had by all (if not most) of us. All in all, the overall rating for the burger was slightly above average. Higher marks were given to the fries and onion rings. There was a less than enthusiastic overall response as to whether attendees would return.



At each outing I will pass out a rating form for us to fill out on the spot. I'll collect them and we will have a more quantitative ability to rate our experiences. I'll publish the scores in future SIR Branch 95 Newsletters for the benefit of all who may be on the hunt for a great hamburger.

Our June Best Burger Pursuit will be arranged by Dan Koelzer since I will be out of town. It'll be Friday, June 21, 2024 at 12:00 noon at the Main Street Taphouse in Placerville. Dan sent an email on 6/4 with additional details and requesting signups. If you didn't receive it and would like to attend, email Dan at dankoelzer@yahoo.com.

If you are interested in being put on the distribution list for BEST BURGER PURSUIT, please send me an email at lewpchap@gmail.com.

WINE TASTING GROUP | Jay Muzio, PBS 650-302-1902



The May wine tasting group met at Total Wine & More for a guided wine tasting led by John and Meghan, two of the store's wine specialists. The theme of the tasting was Viva la France, so all the wines were from six major French growing regions. The first wine was a Grand Cru Champaign from the Burgundy region. The next wine was a Sancerre from the Loire Valley, and that was followed by a lovely rosé from Provence. We then continued with red wines, the first being a Pinot

Noir from Burgundy, next were two offerings from Bordeaux, a mellow Merlot (left bank) and a beautiful Bordeaux Blend (right bank) in the classic style. Finally, my favorite, a Chateauneuf-du-Pape from the Rhône Valley.

There were 15 people in attendance this month and we all brought appetizers and desserts to complement the wine tasting.

Next month's tasting will be June 20th. The Alboffs' are planning a wine tasting and picnic at Boeger winery in Placerville. If you have not already joined the wine tasting group and would like to join, contact Jay Muzio at jaymuzio@gmail.com. Besides being able to sample a variety of great wines and have a wonderful meal, the Wine Tasting Group provides a terrific opportunity to get out of the house and socialize with your SIR friends. And, as a reminder, not all our attendees drink wine - some come with a wine-tasting companion and bring their own beverage of choice to drink. Why not come and check it and us out?

JUNE ACTIVITIES & EVENTS



4th, 11th, 18th, 25th - see golf [schedule](#) for course and check-in times



5th - Texas Hold'em; host varies; 6:30pm



5th, 19th, 26th - Drop-in pickleball; Heritage Park; 1-4pm



5th, 19th, 26th - Drop-in bowling; FLB Entertainment Center; Folsom; 1-4pm



6th, 13th, 20th, 27th - Drop-in bocce Promontory Park EDH; 9am



6th, 13th, 20th, 27th - Breakfast & Walking - Denny's Cameron Park; 9:00am



12th - Branch 95 Annual picnic; Promontory Park; EDH; 11:00-3:00



21st - Best Burger Pursuit Main Street Taphouse; Placerville; 12:00



20th - Wine Tasting Group; Boeger Winery; Placerville; 1:30



6th-7th; The APEX at Red Hawk Casino; Placerville; 10:00-4:00
24th-25th; Earl Anthony's Dublin Bowl



27th - Classic Car Group



Mondays and Fridays - e-Biking; various starting locations



26th - Investment Group; 6:00pm; Raley's O-N-E; El Dorado Hills

BOWLING | Ray DiBasilio, HLM 530-558-9727



SIR State Activities Chairman Mark Stewart stopped by Rocklin Lanes to say hello during our State SIR Championship Tournament. It was nice to see Mark and discuss future combination activities to include golf, bowling and bocce at a combination event. Wow - the Olympics of SIR!



Mark Stuart (left) with Branch 95 Bowling Activity Chairman, Ray DiBasilio, share a moment during SIR's State Championship Tournament.

Although the AMF Rocklin Lanes were in the process of remodeling, the tournament committee (Branch 112) and staff worked together to accommodate 76 SIR bowlers competing in the two-day event. \$500 was added to the prize fund by the SIR State Bowling Committee creating some incentive to become the best. High scores included a 277, 266, 258 and many more over 200 which made our bowlers smile. As of this writing, results are being tabulated and will be available on the [State SIR Bowling website](#) soon.

On June 6-7th we'll be close to home as we bowl our first SIR tournament at The Apex at Red Hawk Casino. The Apex has become a premier nonsmoking family fun center, with a sports bar, virtual games, four golf bays, three floors of car racing and 18 lanes of bowling. If you have not been to Red Hawk Casino, the SIR tournament will be a great time to stop in, look around, and say hi to some SIR friends. We'll be there 10:00am to 4:00pm each day.

Later in June SIR Branch 59 will host their tournament at Earl Anthony's Dublin Bowl. For more information about SIR bowling, the full calendar, and applications, check out our website at: <http://www.sirinc3.org/sirBowling/index.html>.

Striking up Friendships



Member Attendance

To maintain membership, a member is required to attend one-half of the regular Branch monthly luncheon meetings within the previous twelve consecutive month period, unless the Branch BEC has approved different attendance requirements (Policy 25; Bylaw 18).

SIR Non-Responsibility Clause

All activities arranged for, or by, or sponsored by SIR'S Inc. and its branches, are for the convenience and pleasure of the members and their guests who desire to participate. SIR'S Inc. and its branches do not assume any responsibility for the well-being or safety of the participants or their property in matters pertaining to said events or activities.

MEMBER PROFILE continued from page 3

Brian was born on June 4, 1955, so you might be reading this on his birthday just about the time this newsletter gets published. Happy birthday, Brian! Brian has been a member of SIR Branch 95 since October 2022. After seeing one of our promotional placements in a local publication, he spoke to Kevin King who suggested he come to one of our luncheons to check us out. SIR found Brian and he found SIR at a particularly profound time of his life. He was losing his partner, Betsy, whom he was caring for at home (Betsy died in March 2023). He also endured the isolation of COVID-19, and having the opportunity for social contact with a bunch of like-minded older guys was just what he needed. He couldn't believe it was true that a group of guys just get together to have a good time. He thought there must be a "catch" and that we couldn't possibly offer what our promotions claim, but he was pleasantly surprised to find out--it was true.

If this profile has a theme, for Brian it is that he is really fortunate to be in the place he is now at this time of his life. "I have a wonderful life, things have worked out well," he said. Read on to better understand why he feels this way.

Brian grew up in Monterey Park in Southern California. His parents bought a house there in the early 50s. He went to Catholic schools and attended the elite Don Bosco Technical Institute which is a Catholic boys high school combining college preparatory and technology education. His brother (who lives in Utah) went there as well. It is a very unique institution which actually combines 4 years of high school with 2 years of undergraduate college level education. He graduated from there with an Associate of Science degree in Electronic Technology.

His first job was at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena where he worked on NASA radio systems for deep space missions. He spent time using soldering irons and oscilloscopes to make sure big dish parabolic tracking systems would work. He was only 19!

During that time, he also started attending Cal State LA as an engineering major. A night job at an electronics manufacturing company changed his thinking. Hoffman Electronics was building navigational systems for navy fighter jets, and Brian worked on the test bench in quality control with introverted technicians. Brian, being the gregarious outgoing guy he is, could not see himself in such a work environment long term. This led to a decision to switch his major to Business with a minor in Marketing.

One day in his last semester in 1978 at Cal State LA, IBM came to campus to do some recruiting. Brian showed up in a white shirt and tie and got hired on the spot. He says he still likes wearing white shirts and ties!

Brian married his high school sweetheart, Joy, who became a fashion designer and had a glamorous job traveling the world. Brian spent the next 2+ decades at IBM as an account representative and IT consultant, selling mainframes and then leading teams providing customer support. He became the Team Lead for one of their major accounts, LA County, and contributed to projects like fire dispatch systems and other government operations. Meanwhile, his wife Joy got a spiffy new job at Santa Cruz Imports in the San Francisco Bay Area. So, much to Brian's boss's surprise, he asked for a transfer up north. He took a job in the San Francisco IBM office working with banking customers such as Crocker Bank and Wells Fargo. He supported the first ATM network at Crocker. They lived in the Marina District and spent weekends in Napa. Life was good.

Then...Joy lost her job. A number of things manifest simultaneously. They had discovered the Sierra foothills in and around Placerville/El Dorado Hills. They wanted to start a family. Brian could really work anywhere. So another move--to Placerville. Brian got a transfer to IBM Sacramento. Joy got her real estate license, and they started acquiring properties they could refurbish and rent. They apparently did quite a few of these.

In 1987, their daughter Kate was born. In 1989, their son Sam was born. Joy and Brian divorced when the kids were 9 and 11 years old.

But the kids did fine and both later graduated from Union Mine High School. They have gone on to have spectacular careers, which Brian is very proud of. Sam moved to North Carolina where his mother had relocated and graduated from University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill. He went on to get his PhD at University of Virginia and is now an expert in old English manuscripts. He now works at Carnegie Mellon where he is Curator of Special Collections, and is considered a world expert in his field. Brian will get him to come speak someday at one of our luncheons. Sam and his wife live in Pittsburgh, PA and have a son, Luca - Brian's only grandchild. His ex, Joy, moved from Raleigh, NC to Pittsburgh, to be close to their grandchild--haven't many of us done that? Brian travels to Pittsburgh to visit his grandson as often as possible--haven't many of us done that, too?

MEMBER PROFILE continued from previous page

Brian's daughter, Kate, attended Cal State Monterey Bay, and then went on to SF State and got a journalism degree. She is now a Corporate VP for Paramount and manages a worldwide team in on-line streaming service advertising. Until recently, she lived in El Dorado Hills, but she and her husband and their two pugs (dogs) just relocated to Laguna Niguel.

So back to the divorce. Brian described it as difficult. He admitted that things were messed up and he was at a low point in his life. On top of that, IBM offered him an "early retirement". But he says that he turned that around, like a Phoenix rising from the ashes.

A couple key things happened. He worked his way back into the workforce by going to Folsom Lake College and getting IT certificates such as A Plus, PMP, etc. He's got a whole string of them. He worked as a consultant for the State of California which he grew into an IT Manager role. The first job he had was as a data processing manager providing IT support to 150+ parole offices. He traveled up and down the state and loved the work. Very interesting background, right?

But Brian gets more interesting. What you have not heard about yet is his musical background. He is quite an accomplished musician and can sing too. This interviewer first heard his most recent band Neon Moon perform locally a couple years ago. Cover band rock and roll material, really well performed. Last summer he and Neon Moon played the Sierra Foothills Assistance League fundraiser which many of us attended. He started playing the guitar as a 6 year old boy. He got lessons, got good and formed and played in bands in junior high and high school. He got realllllly good, but life got busy, and so he put the guitar in the case under the bed after high school. He also was concerned that if he stayed on that path, he might never go to college and end up playing at places likethe Holiday Inn in Boise!

Then...this happened. He was taking those IT classes at Folsom Lake College, when a banner ad on their website from a rocker named Kurt Schifflet from "Stealing Dan" announced he was teaching a guitar class at night. Brian enrolled in this multi-genre music class. One thing led to another and, before you know it, he was recruited to "jam" with some guys in Elk Grove. This morphed into several successive successful bands which Brian loved performing in. The latest incarnation has been Neon Moon, which just broke up due to the needs of the other band members.

So back to the Phoenix rising from the ashes part of his life story. So, it's a few years after the divorce and Brian is retired from IBM and taking classes to restart his career. He goes to a class at The Learning Exchange titled "How to Find Your Soulmate". Turns out Betsy was in the class. So that's how he found his soulmate - in a class about how to find your soulmate. She asked him out. She lived in the Gold Hill area just outside Placerville. He rented out his house and moved in with her and that is where he still is. They had a wonderful life together for 20+ years. They traveled extensively across the US and to faraway places like Asia, Europe, Russia, etc. Sadly, a little more than a year ago (March 2023), Betsy passed away from a form of dementia. Brian cared for her until the end. Life is hard.

So back to the Phoenix rising from the ashes part of his life story - part 3. This is about the time Brian was trying to fill a gap in his life and found SIR Branch 95. Hey, we are exactly what he was looking for, a bunch of guys with some free time who are just looking to have some fun and develop friendships. Brian's daughter and her husband invited him to spend some time with them last Father's Day (June 2023). They decided to spend the afternoon in Placerville walking along Main Street and stopped at The Window Box antique store where he met the owner, and current girlfriend, Sheryll. Brian invited her to come see his band perform at the Lava Cap Winery's Summer Concert Series. She surprised him (and herself) and accepted the invitation. They have been inseparable ever since. Some fun stories about this, but in the interest of time (and space in this newsletter), you will have to ask Brian (or Sheryll) for the details.

Today, Brian is still working for the State of CA. He has worked his way up to a Regional IT Operations Manager position, and from what this interviewer can gather is a very high-level, responsible position. His department supports the California Correctional Healthcare Services which is part of the CA State Prison System. There are 10 state prisons in his area of responsibility, and he manages a great team of 50+ IT staff. CCHS is one of the largest governmental healthcare delivery systems in existence and is on par with systems like Kaiser and Dignity Health, etc. They built acute care hospitals inside of the prisons where every inmate in the system has an Electronic Medical Record (EMR) and can use tele-health services extensively.

So, as Brian said to me several times during our interview, it's a wonderful life. Things have worked out well. It's good to be a CalPERS employee racking up points toward retirement. It's good to see your kids succeeding. It's good to have a grandchild. It's good to have Sheryll. It's cool to love playing the guitar and performing. And, it's good to be a member of SIR Branch 95.

Thanks for spending time to help us to get to know you better, Brian—"Life is good."