



Big Sir's Notes Richard Hockenbrock

Do you ever wake up in the morning and wonder what day it is? It has happened to me several times lately and I'm starting to believe I'm in that movie "Ground Hog Day" with actor Bill Murray where he keeps

living the same day over and over again. Of course, it's COVID and there is no getting around it. But now there is some hope on the horizon and if you read my eBlast sent out on Friday, January 22nd you already know the SIR state president **Stu Williams** and board are planning and hoping things will start returning back to normal beginning in June 2021.

Many of you have expressed to me that while Zoom offers the bare essentials of seeing each other on your monitor and hearing each other on your computer speakers, it's just not the same as meeting each other in person. It is why many of you have shied away from attending the monthly SIR meetings. Our last meeting was attended by only 52 members which is less than 20% of the membership. It is unfortunate that you missed an interesting speaker, Ms. Elena Mejia - Recycling Coordinator for Republic Services, the company that collects our garbage in Walnut Creek and associated towns.

I began the meeting by presenting **Brad Hatcher** with the newly designed Past Big Sir Pin. It was **Brad** who was Big Sir when COVID started in March. All expertly crafted procedures for our live meeting and lunch were tossed out the window and we were totally on our own. **Brad** maintained his cool and by July, we were up and meeting again via Zoom.

Also, at the January meeting, **Walt Busenius** presented **Jim Kohl** with the Presidential Award of a SENIOR CERTIFICATE for Jim reaching 90 years of age.

We were happy to welcome four new members who were officially welcomed into the branch at the monthly

BEC meeting. New members included **Rob McSpadden** sponsored by **Jim Burk**, **Don Shaw** sponsored by **Pierre Mebane**, **Bill Neuman** sponsored by **Paul Beretz**, and **John Wilson** sponsored by **Steve Dinning**.

We revived our birthday drawing program in January which had fallen by the wayside, another causality of COVID and Zoom. We had to draw four or five names to get our winner because they needed to be at the meeting to win. When it was all said and done, **Hank James** walked away with the prize which was a promise to give him a newly designed SIR baseball cap with the new rooster logo as soon as we complete the design and order it. Congratulations **Hank**.

You might recall that back in September and October 2020, over 9,000 SIR members were invited to participate in a medical survey titled "Perspectives on the Impact of COVID" conducted by a UCSF Medical Research team of which 2,426 responded to the survey. That research was published this past week and is available on the State SIR website at https://sirinc.org/ website or directly using here this link https:// vimeo.com/499933133. We hope to work with UCSF in the future to gain more public marketing exposure to SIR and demonstrate our willingness to contribute to medical research on older senior men which will benefit us all.

In closing this month, I want to thank **Clint Collier**, who took over for me as SIR-Call editor back in November. He has done a masterful job in sprucing up the SIR-Call, making it even more interesting to read. Especially noted are the abundance of jokes now populating many of the pages.

Zoom, Zoom... ZOOM Luncheon Meeting Thursday, February 11th

Breakout Rooms Gathering: 11:15am

SIR Mission Statement

The Mission of SIR is to enrich the lives of its members through fun activities, luncheons and events while making friends for life.



Little Sir's Corner Jerry Kaplan

Our Richard Big Sir Hockenbrock, in his column this month and through e-mail outreach efforts, is encouraging everyone to sign up and get their COVID 19 vaccine inoculations as soon as they can.

State SIR is optimistic that Branches may be able to meet once again in person as early as June. We all hope that we can get together and see one another in person and be able to shake hands and pat one another on the back!

Just as important as the luncheons are the many activities that Branch 146 offers and with a few exceptions that have been able to continue on line. Most members can't wait to sit down around a table and take a fellow member's money, whether in bridge, poker, cribbage, or Mexican Train Dominoes. We had an interesting speaker at the January 14th Zoom luncheon meeting, Ms. Elena Mejia from Republic Services who is a coordinator of the After company's Recycling Program. her presentation and a video showing how landfills have changed over the years, so many questions came up that we ran out of time. She has taken several of them back to her office and will respond to those shortly. I will send out an e-blast to the membership with those responses.

Our February speaker will be **Mr. Ben Lavender**, a Community Affairs Representative from the *Central Contra County Sanitary District*, who will tell our members how his agency handles the "bad stuff" from our toilets and wastewater. His presentation will include a virtual tour of the processing plant. (He promises we won't smell a thing!)

Many of the branch membership have learned how to use Zoom, including yours truly, and signed on in the last few months to an abbreviated luncheon get together, albeit without being able to share a glass of wine with friends and acquaintances. I hope to see many of you "virtually" at the February 11th Zoom luncheon.

Let me know if you have suggestions for other topics and speakers. And, don't forget: Old people love to give good advice; it compensates them for their inability to set a bad example.

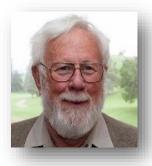
2021 Branch 146 Officers and Directors

Big SIR	Richard Hockenbrock
Little SIR	Jerry Kaplan
Secretary	Rich Lyon*
Assistant Secretary	Bob Wilkenfeld *
Treasurer	Ross Abbott
Assistant Treasurer	John Alexander
Director 2nd Term	Paul Beretz
Director 2nd Term	Brian McCarthy
Director 2nd Term	Peter Plante
Director 1st Term	George Mon
Director 1st Term	Henry Thatcher *
Director 1st Term	Bob Lucido

RAMP – Chair Members

Recruitment	Paul Beretz
Activities	Bob Lucido
Member Relations	Ed Brands *
Publicity	Peter Plante

Refer to branch directory, accessible under members only tab heading on our website, for phone numbers & email addresses. * *denotes a change*



Editor's Ramblings Clint Collier

February has always been one of my favorite months, it is after all my birth-month! That must be worth something! But other than that, there are two "quasi" holidays this month that gives one

the opportunity or excuse to celebrate. And at this point, one year in to this awful pandemic I don't know about you but I'm looking for any thing I can find to create a special day in one way or another.

The first of these is the Lunar New Year which falls this year on the 12th of February. Often called the Chinese New Year it is actually celebrated in numerous far eastern countries and cultures. We are closing out the year of the Rat and on the 12th will celebrate the start of the year of the Ox. No one in my family has any connection with the cultures that celebrate this new year but we find it a great opportunity to celebrate; normally we visit a Chinese restaurant for a small banquet. This year looks like I will be breaking out my wok and creating that close to home. The kids and grandkids love the tradition of giving out little red envelopes that are supposed to bring good luck and fortune for the new year. They get stuffed with money, in my case either See's gold chocolate coins and a little folding money. They seem especially welcome when they come from Dad/Granddad!

The second holiday is of course Valentine's day. Most likely evolving from the Roman festival of Lupercalia which occurred on the Ides of February it is a chance to recognize and celebrate those closest to us with a special day.

With this day in mind, I have accepted SIR-Call's first ever, and probably only, paid advertisement.

Deadline for submissions for the March issue is February 22th. Go have a great month and find some reason, any reason, to make it special!

Clint Collier — Editor SIR-Call Cell / Text: 925.457.1489 br146SIRCall@gmail.com

SIR-Call Newsletter Group

Editor Co-Editors	Clint Collier Walt Busenius, Rob Melrose,
	Bob West
Photographer	Henry Thatcher
Photographer Proofreaders	Jim Barry, Jonathan Korfhage
	Ron Polivka, and Calvin Tucker
Internet Posting	Ron Plachy

All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt. CHARLES M. SCHULZ Paid advertisement By Bey Collier

AND SO ENDS ANOTHER WEEK WITHOUT ME BECOMING UNEXPECTEDLY RICH.



Luncheon Chairman Rich Lyon

Dear Sirs !

Susan and I hope your holiday celebrations were a great time and we wish you a fun and safe New Year!

We're monitoring with anticipation that Contra Costa County is moving down the priority list for the COVID vaccine. Perhaps within a few short months we will have been vaccinated.

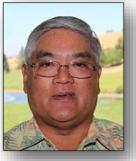
Until then we are playing it safe.

No contact online Branch activities are a way to regularly have fun and keep in touch with friends. The online "Luncheon" is another way to keep in touch and, the speakers have been very interesting.

If you haven't attended online, give it a try.

It won't be long until we are back to normal. In the meantime, play it safe and stay healthy.

Rich Lyon Luncheon Coordinator



Membership George Mon

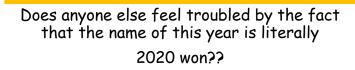
Four new members were approved by the BEC in January. We welcome **Rob McSpadden** sponsored by **Jim Burk, Don Shaw** sponsored by **Pierre Mebane, Bill Neuman** sponsored by **Paul Beretz** and **John Wilson** sponsored by **Steve**

Dinning. Our hope is that they find our branch enjoyable and have opportunities to participate in the many activities we offer and build lasting friendships within our membership.

We are saddened by the passing of 4 members in December and offer our prayers to the families of **Dave Wynstra**, **Bob Royster**, **Jim Meehan** and **Chuck Campbell**.

The 2021 membership count of 266 is down from 284 for 2020. No doubt the pandemic had an effect. Recruiting new members is essential for SIRs and is its lifeblood. Let's all do our part to get new members into SIRs

The SIR Call Directory has been updated. If there are any changes, please send me an email. Efforts will be made to update and publish the directory by the end of each month.





ANNIVERSARY

A Special SIR callout to **Don** and **Madelene Nunn** who have just celebrated their 70th Wedding Anniversary! **Don** is a Senior Honorary Life Member and for many years a cornerstone of our Branch. We join together in sending our congratulations and wishing them many more years of happiness together!

P. Hochenlooch







Let us keep the pictured Sirs in our thoughts and prayers. We look forward to their continued healing and return to good health.

Consider contacting a sick Sir to offer support and encouragement during his illness. A friendly call is usually welcome. Cards and letters are always appreciated.

One of the main ways we learn of a SIR who is having health problems is when they "opt out" of the monthly luncheon. Since the in-person luncheons have been cancelled (at least for the time being) and we all are "sheltering at home" this can be a great opportunity to connect with your luncheon buddies, your golf buddies, your poker or bridge buddies, etc. to see how they are

doing. If you learn that a fellow SIR is going through an illness, send me an email so that we can let the membership know. This way the membership of Branch 146 can keep the SIR who is ill in their thoughts and prayers.





Hugh Ferguson

Joe Hunt



Stan Stricherz

This is a difficult time but with the support of family and friends this journey will be easier.

Stay Healthy. **Brian McCarthy** brimacc@comcast.net

January SIR Branch 146 Award Ceremony Honoring James Kohl



Your Honoree's Committee consisting of **Doug Eisner**, **Jim Burk** and myself wish you a Happy 2021 – it will be better year for Sirs after we receive our vaccinations. We start off the new year with an award to our newest Senior Sir **James "Jim" Kohl**, who was born in Jeannette, PA. near Pittsburgh 90 years ago on January 30th. **Jim** joined our Branch almost 19 years ago and was sponsored by **Byron Lee**.

Jim married his Jeannette high school sweetheart **Freda** in 1952 just after he graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a Bachelor's degree in business administration. Then, right away upon graduation, **Jim** served 2 years in the Army as a first lieutenant in Korea from 1952 to 1954. Thank you for your service **Jim** and for being a brave American.

Jim and Freda have 1 daughter and 1 son as well as 2 grandchildren who live nearby in Brentwood and Davis. Sadly, Jim lost his beloved Freda in November after 68 years of marriage.

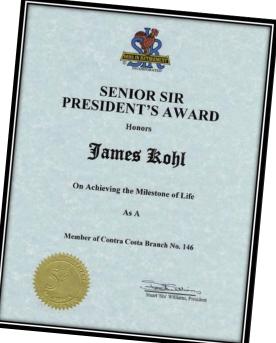
Jim became a certified public accountant in 1958 while working in Pittsburgh for Price Waterhouse. He was active in the Pennsylvania Institute of CPA's and received their distinguished Service Award in 1983. **Jim** was international secretary of the Institute of Internal Auditors in 1976. These are impressive professional credentials!!

Jim worked in Pittsburgh as assistant controller for Consolidated Natural Gas from 1962 to 1978, then as audit manager for Gulf Oil from 1978 to 1983. When Chevron acquired Gulf in 1983, Jim was first transferred to Houston, then Walnut Creek in 1985. He retired from Chevron in 1993.

During his lifetime, **Jim** has been forever active in his Church, fraternal organizations, and Branch 146 as a son in retirement. **Jim** and **Freda** joined St. Matthew Lutheran Church upon coming to Walnut Creek in 1985, teaching Sunday school, Audit Committee chairman and a member of Stewardship and Evangelism Committee just to name a few of his or their activities.

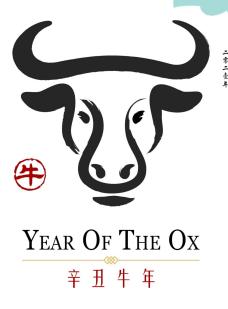
Jim is a lifetime Mason and Shriner. He is a past president of the Contra Costa Shrine Club. **Jim** has served on our Branch Executive Committee and has been active in the branch in other ways as well. **Jim** fondly remembers the days when he enjoyed travelling, playing golf and community service.

Jim, even though you cannot be with us today, we thank you for your military service and contributions to Branch 146. Congratulations on receiving this State Award honoring not only your longevity but your personal and professional lives. As a Senior Sir, you deserve our gratitude and appreciation.



Presenter was Walt Busenius at the January 14th Zoom Luncheon

from Our Members



2021 is a year of the Ox, starting from February 12th, 2021 (<u>Chinese lunar</u> <u>New Year Day</u>) and lasting until January 30th, 2022. It will be a Metal Ox year. The recent zodiac years of Ox sign are: 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009, 2021, 2033. An Ox year occurs every 12 years. The zodiac sign Ox occupies the second position in the Chinese Zodiac. The 12 zodiac animals are, in order: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig.

The Oxes' Personality: Diligent, Dependable...

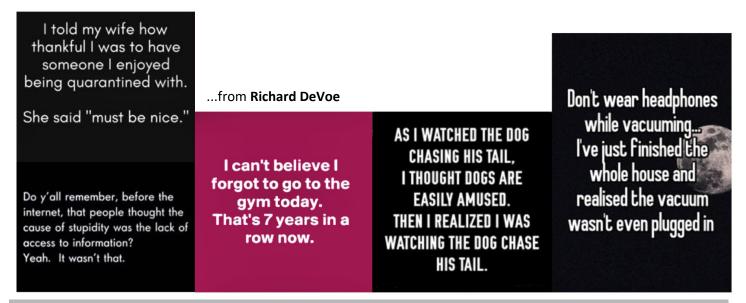
Having an honest nature, Oxes are known for diligence, dependability, strength and determination. These reflect traditional conservative characteristics. Women Oxes are traditional, faithful wives, who attach great importance to their children's education. For male oxes, they are strongly patriotic, have ideals and ambitions for life, and attach importance to family and work.

Having great patience and a desire to make progress, Oxes can achieve their goals by consistent effort. They are not much influenced by others

or the environment, but persist in doing things according to their ideals and capabilities. Before taking any action, Oxes will have a definite plan with detailed steps, to which they apply their strong faith and physical strength. As a result, people of the Ox zodiac sign often enjoy great success.

Oxes are weakest in their communication skills. They are not good at communicating with others, and even think it is not worthwhile to exchange ideas with others. They are stubborn and stick to their own ways.

The upcoming 2021 will be the year of the Metal Ox, and its message couldn't be clearer: Success will come to those who work hard. Really hard. "It's hard work, duty, discipline," Aren't you glad you are retired?



1.HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHOM TO MARRY?

You have to find somebody who likes the same stuff.
Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the chips and dip coming.

— Alan, age 10

 No person really decides before they grow up who they're going to marry. God decides it all way before, and you get to find out later who you're stuck with.

Kristen, age 10

2.WHAT IS THE RIGHT AGE TO GET MARRIED?

 Twenty-three is the best age because you know the person FOREVER by then..

Camille, age 10

3. HOW CAN A STRANGER TELL IF TWO PEOPLE ARE MAR-RIED?

 You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids.

Derrick, age 8

4.WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR MOM AND DAD HAVE IN COMMON?

Both don't want any more kids.

Lori, age 8

5.WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE DO ON A DATE?

 Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know each other. Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough.

Lynnette, age 8 (isn't she a treasure?)

 On the first date, they just tell each other lies and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second date.

Martin, age 10

6. WHEN IS IT OKAY TO KISS SOMEONE?

- When they're rich.

Pam, age 7 (Love her)

 The law says you have to be eighteen, so I wouldn't want to mess with that.

Curt, age 7

 The rule goes like this: If you kiss someone, then you should marry them and have kids with them. It's the right thing to do.

— Howard, age 8

7.IS IT BETTER TO BE SINGLE OR MARRIED?

- It's better for girls to be single but not for boys. Boys need someone to clean up after them.

- Anita, age 9 (bless you child)

8.HOW WOULD THE WORLD BE DIFFERENT IF PEOPLE DIDN'T GET MARRIED?

— There sure would be a lot of kids to explain, wouldn't there?

Kelvin, age 8

And the Favorite is.....

9.HOW WOULD YOU MAKE A MARRIAGE WORK? — Tell your wife that she looks pretty, even if she looks like a dump truck.

— Ricky, age 9

Wanna be an Editor? Look Weird?

Believe it or not, you can read it.

I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulaclty uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mnid Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mttaer in waht oredr the Itteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the first and last Itteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can still raed it wouthit a porbelm. This is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey Iteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

Amzanig huh?

Looking for something to do...

Activities are what makes SIR what it is. There are a great number of these listed in the following pages. Some are inactive at present due to the mandated shutdowns but many are enjoying comradery through Zoom to help us counteract the boredom.

If you can't find one that is just right for you... well, start a new one! Bob, our Activities Coordinator would love to help you!



Activities Coordinator Bob Lucido

I'm sure by now you're feeling like the activities are sleeping with the fishes, but don't give up hope, someone will send a lifeline in the future to bring life again to all our activities.

When we are able to restart our activities, I will send out an eblast, showing which activities are open to new members.

Bob Lucido 925-899-0974 Bobwendy3@comcast.net

I couldn't afford an Ancestry DNA kit, So I just announced that I had won the Lottery. I soon found out who all my relatives are.



Bocce John Kendrick

ATTENTION ALL BOCCE PLAYERS!

I am very sorry to report that the 2020 Bocce season has been cancelled. Our hands were forced on this issue because the Bocce Federation has suspended all play

this year at both the Newhall, and Baldwin Courts. As such, your Branch 146 BEC, in a special meeting on May 26th, voted to suspend all play for us at the Newhall Courts where we hold our Bocce activity.

In addition, our primary concern is for the health of our players and at this time it is not certain that we can provide a playing environment which will sufficiently protect everyone from the COVID-19 virus. We will make every effort to ensure play will resume in 2021.

See you then!

Under normal circumstances, we play the 2nd and 4th Mondays, through September/October at 8:30 am at the Concord Bocce Courts in Newhall Park, Concord, near the corner of Turtle Creek and Ayers Roads.

If you are interested in playing Bocce when we resume play again with your fellow SIR members and guests, please e-mail me <u>imkendrick23@gmail.com</u> and I will add you to the roster. This is especially important if you did not participate with us last year.

> Rain Cancels Play. Ladies are welcome. Come and join us. John Kendrick (925) 827-0585 jmkendrick23@gmail.com



Photography Group John "Moose" Kelly & Henry Thatcher

Our next meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 19th from 9 AM to 11 AM via Zoom Videoconferencing.

Our theme this meeting is "From the Mundane to the Extraordinary." We are requesting that you have roughly 5 or more photographs to share with fellow members. The Mundane picture being defined as an ordinary, unexciting photograph that one takes on a day in and day But taking that ordinary picture to the out basis. extraordinary truly shows different moods, different lightening, different emotions et al. You can forward your pictures to John (Moose) Kelly if you are uncomfortable using Zoom's sharing feature but you will tell the story.

We are also planning to show a video reviewing the new Samsung S21 Ultra 5G, S21+5G, and S21 5G Phone Cameras We are asking if you have the new Samsung S21 camera to take a few pictures and show the results at our February meeting. Please let Moose or Henry know if you will be sharing some Samsung S21 photos you have taken. Thanks in advance!

At our last meeting, we showed two videos on the new I-Phone 12 Pro. If anyone has purchased or received one as a Christmas Gift, then please let us know. We would be interested in showing the difference between the I-Phone 11 vs. I-Phone 12 Pro vs. Samsung S21.

For a photo capture challenge for our April Meeting, our February Photography Group Meeting we will be showing

I'm glad I learned about Parallelograms in High School math instead of how to do my taxes. It comes in so handy during Parallelogram season.

a video from the Great Courses "Fundamentals of Photography."

We will forward our final agenda of the subjects we will be covering along with the Zoom link roughly one week prior to February 19th meeting.

If you are not on our mailing list and would like to join the Photography Group or just want to come to our Zoom Meeting to see what the club is all about, please contact John "Moose" Kelly or Henry Thatcher. We will send you the agenda as well as the Zoom Meeting Link.

Be safe and be well and be sure to "Say Cheese"! Email John (Moose) Kelly at rollingstone911@yahoo.com or text/call at 610.517.0152 or Henry Thatcher at 1henrythatcher@gmail.com or text/call at 925.997.5032



Cycling Group Larry Kaye

Cycling Once a week with no drop rides. Exploring the entire Bay Area. Coed.

"The weather outside is raining". Time to take a look at your bike. It sits alone in the dark. Wondering where is my Dad? Its been faithful, giving you all its got. Yet, here it sits. After all the miles under its belt, like your car, it needs a bath?, a tune up? A good time to check your bike fit. Been too long without looking at the saddle. Is it still level? Is the chain in need of a bath? Did those rides in the country tilt the handlebars down? The downhills it took you on... did the brakes get scaled over?

Grab a bucket. Wash it. Love it. Treat it as you do your car. Look at the accumulation of road crap on the chain. Remove it. Get some rubber gloves on and dig in. Your bike loves you and like your wife, needs TLC.

Spring is really close. We hopefully will get the green light from Sirs to once again legally hit the streets. Gear up my Spandex friends and visit that lonely two wheeler sitting all by itself. Reintroduce yourself and caress its frame. The love will come back twofold.

Larry



AREA 16 Fishing Report Paul Dubow

2021 is worse than 2020 so far. Covid restrictions causing closures and access problems, lack of rain, and low water temperature have slowed us down.

Stan Wong spent two days on Lake Berryessa. On the first day, the wind

blew him off the lake. He was more optimistic on the second day. The weather was nice, there was no wind, and there was lots of bait in the water. But the result was no fish. A few days later, he tried his luck at sturgeon fishing. He had to stay put at one spot because of heavy fog. When the fog lifted, there were nearly a dozen boats nearby. He had no fish and he did not see any of the fishermen on the other boats catch any either.

Brion Beetz and **Carl Moyer** found a delightful spot to fish from shore at Point San Pablo near the east end of the Richmond-San Rafael bridge. Unfortunately, there were no bites but they were impressed enough by the site that they plan to return. There is a very good restaurant nearby.

Rich Fiscina of Branch 146, along with Ken **Bellinder** and **Pedro Contreras**, fished for sturgeon in **Pedro's** boat. Their task was hampered by the water temperature, which was a frigid 47 degrees. Although their fish finders showed sturgeon in the area, there were no bites. However, **Ken** managed to catch an eight inch striper, which he released.

Mike Browne of Branch 146 fished at Hidden Lakes in Martinez and caught quite a few small trout. **Phil Scimonelli** also fished for trout, making two trips to Lafayette Reservoir, but with no luck. He also made two trips to the Point Pinole pier, where he caught a few rock crab.

Harry Sherinian and Tom Kostik enjoyed a pleasant day on the Delta, fishing for stripers. They caught nine fish, including five keepers. One of the keepers, landed by Tom, measured 28 inches. On some trips on his own, Tom picked up both stripers and flounder.

Ron Lew of Branch 146 went out on the Delta and in the Bay several times in his boat. Although some of the trips involved no catching, on others he caught a few stripers and some rock crab. **Ron** reports that rock crab tastes much better than Dungeness crab, but they are harder to crack open.

At our Zoom meeting on January 28, guest speaker Aimee

Russell, the manager of the Fisherman's Warehouse Store in Fairfield, told us about her exploits catching shark and halibut in the Bay. We plan to have a seminar at **Aimee's** store after Covid restrictions are lifted so that she can give us pointers about how she rigs up for these fish.

We hope that you can join us at future monthly meetings. For the moment, the meetings are on Zoom and so you can watch from the comfort of your home. We join in breakout rooms of eight or nine fishermen and talk about fishing and life in general and then reconvene for group business and to describe our most recent trips. We are looking forward to a reopening so that we can publish our calendar. When we are able to go on official SIR trips, we hope to fish for salmon in the ocean and rivers, kokanee at Stampede Reservoir and Lake Berryessa, cutthroat trout at Pyramid Lake, bass in the Delta, and trout in both the local reservoirs and Sierra lakes, as well as on many other outings. Our next meeting is Thursday, February 25, at 8:30 am. If you wish to join us, please contact Big Fish Ron Lew at 925-550-4156 or branch fishing chair Paul Dubow at 510-504 -3566. Once we hear from you, secretary Brion Beetz will send you a Zoom invitation.



Fish bite twice a day... before you get there and after you leave.



RV Wanderers Bob Lucido

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

All our trips are on hold for now. If your interested in joining us when things get better, call or email me.

(925) 899-0974 bobwendy3@comcast.net



Travel Milt Smith

As you can imagine there is still considerable uncertainty about travel. I still have the same cruises available please take a look.

Additionally, please be on the look out for a travel related poll I will be

sending out in December. The purpose will be to help determine the general attitude and proclivity of our SIR members vis-à-vis travel. I have taken a look at two possible cruises for 2021 & 2022.

- A shorter cruise aboard the refurbished Ruby Princess (Princess Cruises) just to get your sea legs again; sailing from San Francisco round trip on October 17-24,2021 through the Pacific Northwest Coast. Ports of call are Astoria Oregon, Seattle, Vancouver, B.C. and Victoria B.C. No flying required! Pricing begins at \$1,734 for a Balcony Stateroom to \$1,494 for an Ocean View Stateroom. Prices are per person, double occupancy.
- The same cruise for nearly the same price is also available April 23-30, 2022.

Our friends at Travel Center Tours and Travel are holding space for us on each of these cruises.

How about the Panama Canal, for a bit longer cruise? Leaving Ft. Lauderdale Fl. for San Francisco on March 12-27, 2022 aboard the Ruby Princess, ports of call are: Cartagena Columbia; Panama Canal (new locks), Fuerte Amador (Panama City); Puntarenas, Costa Rica; San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua; Cabo San Lucas, Mexico; and San Francisco. Our friends at the Travel Center are also holding space for us on this cruise. These trips were presented to the BEC at the October for approval and if you have any interest at all in any of these please contact **Milt Smith** right away at <u>miltsmith549@gmail.com</u> or (925) 285-2897.

As mentioned in recent SIR CALLs, there is still extremely limited space for the Grand Baltic Sea Voyage June 5, 2021, as well as the Narsai David Cruise North American Treasures Cruise aboard Crystal Serenity in September, 2021. I also have some information about the 2021 – 2022 Broadway SF season...9 shows...more information to come.

fellow SIRs; as this new year begins we are seeing more interest in travel and the travel agencies are making significant efforts to offer travel opportunities for the end of this year and certainly for 2022. It is my intention to look at trips that could be of interest to members of our branch. To that end; I can use some help from a member or two who have an interest in finding trips and in marketing them to our membership. It is not a huge volume of work and can be fun if you have travel interests, including day trips. Our effort in getting back to the new normal will move along with the overall efforts to safely restart our activities.

Contact me at:

Milt Smith (925) 285-2897 miltsmith549@gmail.com



Pinochle Charlie Kahsen & Jeff Morrow

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

We meet on the 2^{nd} and 4^{th} Wednesday of the month at Rocco's Ristorante Pizzeria, 2909 Ygnacio Valley Rd, Walnut Creek. Optional lunch is from Noon – 1:00 and card playing from 1:00 – 3:00 pm.

All Sirs in Area 16 and their guests (including spouses) are welcome to attend. Introduction and training will be provided to those who have never played before, as well as those who last played many years ago.

If you are interested in joining our group, call one of us or send an email to both our email addresses and one of us will get back to you.

If you plan to come, please let us know ahead of time so we can let Rocco's know you plan to have lunch with the group.

Charlie Kahsen	Jeff Morrow
(925) 943-1750	(925) 944-7009
<u>cwkahsen@gmail.com</u>	jeffrey.morrow@gmail.com





Pickleball and Ping Pong Jim Burk & Ron Afdal

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

There is no change in our status regarding the two activies in question. Yours truly (Jim) has now received his first vaccination, and has his second scheduled for Friday, February 12. We are making personal progress. Ron and I will let you know in the March SIR CALL, the latest information we have at the time regarding the possible opening of Ping Pong and Pickle Ball. Realistically, it is beginning to look like mid-year at the earliest

Continue to stay safe and practice the protocols that we have learned to date, and keep alert for the proposed opening dates. Let's hope that this year brings an indication of dates for these two activities to open and that our interested Sirs will enjoy playing these sports on a drop-in basis.

> Jim Burk - Pickleball (925) 946-1192 jimanneburk@sbcglobal.net

Ron Afdal - Ping Pong (925) 825-4809 ronafdal@comcast.net



Due to Covid restrictions

Table Pool

Nothing Scheduled





Cooking Lunch & Wine Bob Spellman

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

Due to Covid Restrictions we had a

Zoom meeting in place of our regular gathering. Hopefully we can get back together next month.





A quick Quiz for you

- 1. Half of all Americans live within 50 miles of what?
- 2. Most boat owners name their boats. What is the most popular boat name requested?
- 3. If you were to spell out numbers, how far would you have to go until you would find the letter 'A'?
- 4. What do bulletproof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers and laser printers have in common?
- 5. What is the only food that doesn't spoil?
- 6. Which day are there more collect calls than any other day of the Year?

The answers are here someplace



Cribbage John Pearl

The SIR Branch 146 Cribbage group continues to play on-line with a third party app, and we have just completed Tournament No. 8. We have reached a high level of participation, with this tournament having 15 entrants, all well

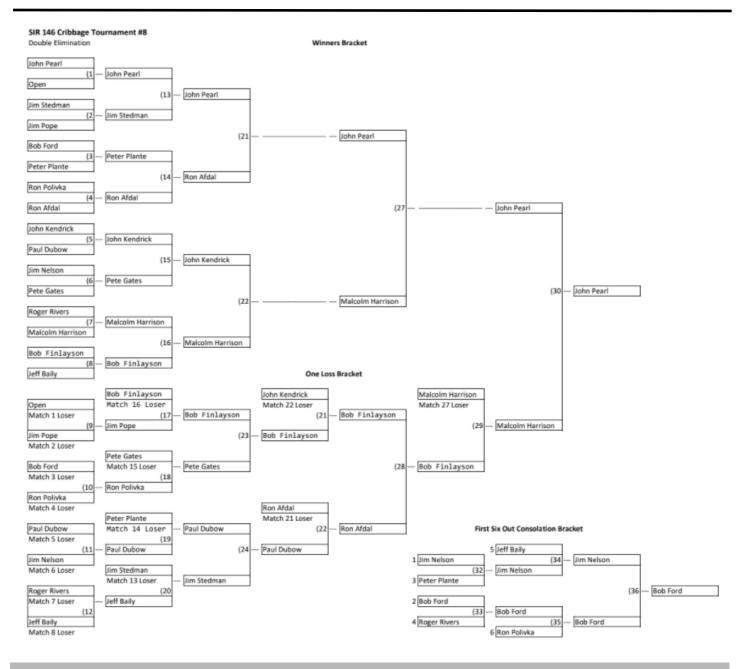
managed and facilitated by our Chief Technical Officer, **Jim Nelson**. **Jim** has set up a double-elimination format, and has also managed to include a Consolation Bracket, so there are a lot of opportunities to participate. We have had a lot of enthusiasm for this approach during the time when in-person events are prohibited.

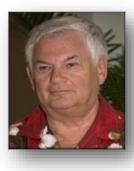
Our tournament results are **Malcolm Harrison** second place, and **John Pearl** first place. In the Consolation Bracket, **Jim Nelson** was second, while **Bob Ford** was first. The tournament had 35 matches, and over 100 games were played by the 15 entrants. I have attached the brackets of the completed tournament.

A good time was had by all, with lots of banter and some very close games, often won by just a very few points.

Tournament No. 9 will be starting soon.

John Pearl mcpearl@astound.net





Couples Dining Out Bruce Borgman

As of this writing, the general stayat-home order for the state has thankfully been lifted, and we are thus back to the purple tier of restricted activity in Contra Costa County. This means that restaurants will be able to open up

for outside dining. Of course, the weather at this time of year is not particularly conducive to outside dining, but many restaurants have heating devices which help keep the chill off. If you are anxious to resume your visits to some of our restaurants, which have survived the downturn in restaurant dining, I encourage you to give it a try. I would be very grateful if you would share your experiences with me so we can continue to plan a group dining activity. I do not believe that we are ready to consider another attempt to restart our Dining Out activity, but at least things are moving in the right direction.

The most important aspect of a return to normalcy in the next few months is of course getting the vaccine. Our Sir leadership is looking at ways to encourage and facilitate our members to signing up to get the vaccine. The rules on the rollout are a moving target as the health departments change which groups have priority in getting the vaccine. At this point, it appears that age is a determining factor in the priority scheme which is good for our Sir members and spouses. My own experience is that I was able to get an appointment as an over 75 age person for the initial dose through the Contra Costa Health Services website but cannot get an appointment for the second dose. However, my wife Sue who is younger than 75, is still waiting to get an appointment. I encourage all of you to either sign up with Contra Costa Health, or other healthcare providers like John Muir and Kaiser. It may be that as we consider starting our Dining Out activity that we would limit the diners to those who have received the vaccine. This has been a difficult period as we have been restricted from seeing our friends and family, and cannot enjoy many of activities we were used to participating in. But, things are looking up - stay well, and before too much longer we will be able to see you all again at a Couples Dining Out event!

> Best regards and wishes for good health! <u>bgborgman@aol.com</u>



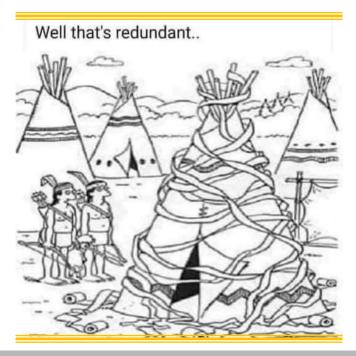
Explore & Eat Henry Thatcher & Jim Pope

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

We are looking forward to the time when we can re-start the Explore & Eat activity with a visit to the Black Diamond Mine or another activity that has been deemed safe. In the meantime we want to thank everyone for their past participation and to wish all Sir's a Happy, Healthy and Safe 2021!

> Co-chairs: Henry Thatcher 925-997-5032 and Jim Pope 925-699-6447

So, if a male can identify as a female, can a restaurant identify as a grocery store?





SIR 146 Hiking **Mark Curtis**

Until "stay at home" or "shelter in place" orders are lifted, I will not be publishing anything related to "group" Hiking activities, past, present, or future. I will, however, continue to walk

solo in the great trail system we have here in the East Bay; East Bay Regional Parks, Mt Diablo State Park, and Walnut Creek Open Space. If you have questions regarding my opinions on where you and your family and friends might go for an easy or challenging walk, please contact me via phone or email. For East Bay Parks, go to the website WWW.EBPARKS.ORG; all East Bay park facilities are referenced with information on their web site as to what is open, and/or, what restrictions are in place.

I've done quite a few walks in the past COVID window time frame. Most recent was on Ygnacio Canal trail starting at Valley Vista Rd by the Boundary Oak golf course heading west to Treat Blvd. with a loop back thru the neighborhoods to the parking area. I'm including one photo from that walk which shows a Green Heron sandwiched between 2 Snowy Egrets on a fence.

The other walk was on 01/22/2021, where I also took a photo of 4 guys who might potentially become members! We thought this rock formation in Black Diamond Mine (BDM) on the Black Diamond trail was particularly interesting, as you can see from this photograph.

Thank you for your interest and support.

Cell (925) 360-3449 Mocurtis1657@gmail.com





Due to Covid restrictions **Nothing Scheduled**

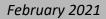
Nothing new to report. But, we will return our practices to and

performances when we're all immunized with a vaccine!

(925) 932-3961 bgborgman@aol.com

"OK, which one of you

just called me an asshole?"



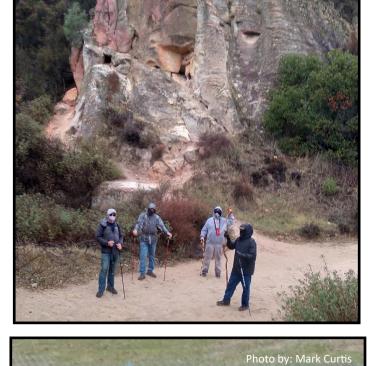


Photo by: Mark Curtis

Mexican Train Dominoes Groups



Mexican Train Dominoes Jerry Kaplan

The Group One players have not been able to meet at our monthly Game Nights but have been getting together via Zoom to see what we look like and chat about the world

situation.

On New Year's Eve, most all of the regular players signed on about 7:00 PM (this was the preferred time-not too late, since many of us are asleep before 10).

See photo nearby of those attending. Some brought a glass of champagne, others wore appropriate headgear celebrating the end of a crazy year, and others just were



happy to see some familiar faces and see how everyone has been holding up.

We are all looking forward to seeing one another in person in 2021 and trying to regain our skills in the game that brought us together on the second Friday night of each month for about the last six years. We continue to miss the fun as well as the different treats and super snacks that have been provided by the hosts each month.

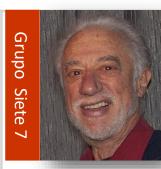
Thinking positively for the future, all Branch members who have not played before, but would like to join us – or another group - for a fun evening, please contact **Jerry** to learn how. The game is entertaining to play and easy to learn! We now have seven different MTD groups playing in the Branch with over 100 individuals participating.

Single SIRs as well as a SIR and Significant Others are always welcome.



All other groups Nada que reporter No hay eventos.

Try to remember, the greener grass across the fence may be due to a septic tank issue.



Mexican Train Dominoes Bob Lucido

We are continuing to meet on Zoom once a month to keep in touch.



Bob Lucido (925) 899-0974 Bobwendy3@comcast.net



Book Group John Pearl, Interim Chair mcpearl@astound.net

Five members of this esteemed group met on Monday, January 18. **Mike Farrar** continued his support by again being our Zoom Master –

thanks, **Mike**. We did talk about the recent "fireside" chat by our state president that suggested we might be meeting again in person, perhaps in June. Everyone in the group is working hard to get the Covid-19 vaccine shots.

At our last meeting or two, we decided we wanted to read a book, possibly a classic, by one of the best American authors of the 20th century. Lists of authors were generated and they and their books were discussed. At the end of the day, we decided to read *The Reivers*, by Willian Faulkner, and his last major work. This book was one of two for which he won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. He also won the Nobel Prize for poetry. He spent his life in Mississippi, and his home in Oxford is a museum, Rowan Oak, and is open to the public.

The general consensus of the group was that it was not an easy read. One member read the initial chapters and then restarted, and then liked it better. Comments included: "didn't like," "hard to follow," "difficult to start," "is this book different than others by this author?"

One member liked the book, describing it as a snapshot of the time, the early 1900's, in the south, particularly a small Mississippi town and Memphis. We saw the author as a "describer," as it was filled with his "pictures" of the places and people in the time. The automobile was just coming into view, and in the small home town of the main characters, the banker bought a new car, showed it off, and promptly parked it in a locked garage.

When the adults in the room left town, three of the young home town folks got the car out of the garage, and drove to Memphis, having adventures there and along the way. One of the three main characters was an eleven year old boy, who just happened to become a jockey during the climatic ending.

I summarized the book as being about a horse (probably stolen), his jockey (the eleven year old boy), and a twohorse race with serious money being bet in front of a large audience. This was supported by a large cast of well-described characters both in the home town and in and around Memphis, including a brothel, especially the owner, the actual owner of the horse, the local train system and manager, the parents of the eleven year old, and many more – a colorful group. The eleven year old boy got a major education on life during his four days on the road and in Memphis.

We recommend this book if one wishes to read a classic author and can settle in for a time in order to get started into the people and events. The times provide an historical backdrop for the book.

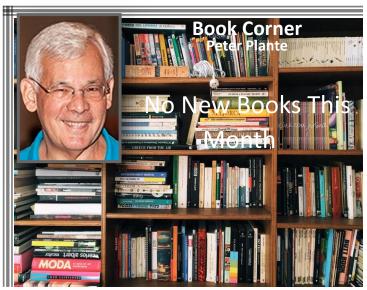
There is also a movie of the same name, starring Steve McQueen as Boon Hogganbeck, one of the main characters, driver, scoundrel, and obviously the most worldly, knowing the girls in the brothel. The movie is true to plot line, but is the Readers Digest version of the book. Several parts that are interesting are omitted, but the movie does tell the basic tale.

For our next read, we nominated *Plague*, by Alfred Camu, reflecting on our current time, *Interior Chinatown*, a local story by a local author, Charles Yu, *The Vanishing Half*, a current best seller, *A Promised Land*, by Barack Obama, and *News of the World*, a short book recommended by **Ann Gates**. Our first choice was Interior Chinatown, which we will review at next meeting, on Monday February 22nd.



Report edited by Paul Dubow

It's my wife's birthday tomorrow, she's been leaving jewelry catalogues all over the house, I bought her a magazine rack!





Men's Duplicate Bridge 1 Dave Pierce

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

If you have not read any of Victor Mollo's Bridge in the Menagerie books, you may be in for a treat. Mollo's stories involve personalities (including the Hideous Hog and the Rueful Rabbit) he's encountered in local bridge clubs (in England). The characters are fun, and the bridge hands are both very clever and very amusing. You can even read for free at https://www.bridgeshop.com.au/carepack/Bridge in the Menagerie.pdf

Dave Pierce 925.932.3877 dwpi@astound.net







Party Bridge Jim Pope & Jim Stedman

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled



Couples Duplicate Bridge 2 Dave Pierce

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

Dave Pierce 932-3877 dwpi@astound.net

Once you understand why pizza is made round, packed in a square box, and eaten as a triangle... Then you understand women

Men's Duplicate Bridge 2

Unfortunately, **Bill Schultz**, the leader of this group, recently passed and no new Activity Director has yet been determined. If you are interested in heading up this group, contact **Bob Lucido**: bobwendy3@comcast.net



Couples Party Bridge Tony Greco

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

Couples Party Bridge continues to be placed on-hold and will not re-start

until national, state, county and city governmental COVID -19 safety guidelines have been established for home based social activities such as bridge. Once guidelines are established and are considered maintainable and enforceable by Couples Party Bridge, a request to re-start will be submitted to Branch 146 BEC for approval.

Tony & Cindy Greco

(925) 934-0395 almanorwest@sbcglobal.net



MEN'S Hearts Bob West

In January, we had online matches of 4 games in 3 groups on 1/8 and 1/22.

January Summaries:

Bob Finlayson led all players with 4 wins. **Rich Lyon, Bob West, Steve**

Ybarra and Bill Vizza all had 3 wins.

Brian McCarthy and **Bob West** were tied for 1st in 2nds with 4 each. **George Sabbagha** and **Jim Nelson** each had 2 seconds.

Ray Bland, and **Steve Ybarra** each had 3 STM's. Note, **Ray** only played once this month. **Rich Lyon** was 2nd with 2 STM's. For this month, 3 of our STM's were on hold hands, which is 25% of the total STM count of 12, which seems high. **Ron Polivka, Ray** and **Steve** each had a STM on a hold hand. There were 137 STM's in 2020 in 222 games played, so in 61% of games someone STM. For January, the percent was 12 of 24 games or 50%.

<u>Lowest average score</u> was **Ray Bland** with 58, followed by **Brian McCarthy** and **Rich Lyon** with 69.

<u>Uncovered Passes</u> are where the person you pass to "Shoots the Moon". **George Sabbagha** had 3 uncovered passes followed by **Bill Vizza** with 2. Note, we had 6 uncovered passes on 1/8 but only 3 on 1/22. Perhaps the sheriffs had overindulged over the holidays, but now are on their new year's resolutions. Note, on average 12% of games played had an uncovered pass.

To clarify on uncovered passes, there are 2 ways to look at uncovered pass statistics. I have been quoting uncovered pass as a percent of games played but note there are an average of 10 hands in each game. So, if you divide by 10 actual averages of 12% of games having an uncovered pass, it is equivalent to 1.2% of hands played. However, since it only takes one run in a game to give the runner a material advantage, I focus on runs in percent of games played. But it is misleading to think an average 12% of our passes are run on, it is only 1.2%.

<u>Future Meetings</u>: Each online group plays 4 games on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month. Our next online games, will be Friday, February 12th and 26th at 1pm.

Please call me at 925.518.8472 or email <u>robrtawest@aol.com</u> if you have any questions or are interested in playing.



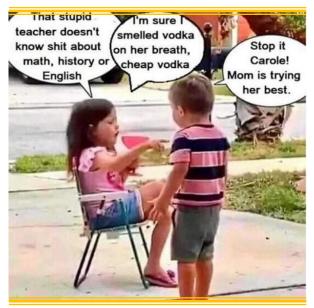


Cooking II Steve Ybarra

Until we get State SIR resumption clearance, the SIR 146 Cooking II activity is suspended.

> Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled







Poker Group 1 Dan O'Sullivan

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled





Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

Poker Group 3

Sig Kalteis

Due to Covid restrictions

Nothing Scheduled



Old Money Poker Group 6 Brad Hatcher Poker Groups

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

Poker Group Six is looking for new members when we resume play as

we have lost several members recently. We meet on the first Thursday of the month starting at 12:30 PM

Tel: (925) 935-1571 bhatcher1942@gmail.com



Poker Group 4 Rich Hanford

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled



Poker Group 7 Bob Lucido

Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled

Poker Group 7 meets on the third Monday of the month at Bob Lucido's

house at 6:30 pm.

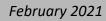
(925) 899-0974 bobwendy3@comcast.net

Answers to quick Quiz

- 6. Father's Day
 - γənoH .č
- 4. All were invented by women.
 - 3. One Thousand
 - 2. Obsession
 - 1. Their birthplace



Due to Covid restrictions Nothing Scheduled





Nine Hole Golf Group Verner Laursen

Our group tees off at 9:30 am at Diablo Hills Golf Course most Thursdays, except for the 2nd Thursday when we are scheduled to be at the Sir's meeting.

If you are interested in playing with us, please contact me and I will put you

on the list of players. On Mondays I will sent out an email asking who will be playing, walking or riding, and who plans to stay for lunch. On Wednesday I will send out an email setting forth pairings for Thursday morning. Thursday morning there may be adjustments based on who showed up or did not show up. Most of the time the lunch at the Greenery is better than our golf game.

vern.laursen@gmail.com

"The Governor has lifted the Stay-at-Home Order. The SIR State Board has announced the conditional Re-Opening of SIR Golf, provided the Branches get approval from their own BEC Board and include the attached resolution and protocols." SIR President Stu Williams 1/25/2021



GOLF Ed Marlovits

As far as golf is concerned the light seems to be penetrating the shade: a return to more normal SIR 146 Golf is imminent. Our Tuesday morning time slots at Boundary Oak have been carefully preserved so we can get back to normal SIR146 prize fund play as soon as we get

the ok. The golf committee has proposed to restart on February 16 and will present that to the Branch Executive Committee for approval.

Anticipating permission to resume SIR in-person events, **Mark Curtis** has lined up away golf slots for us at Eagle Vines in April and those first slots sold out as if they were tickets to a Rolling Stones concert. Away Golf events usually have a \$3 event prize fund buy-in, but for the April event, the normal prize fund will be utilized. **Mark** advises that Lone Tree and Dublin Ranch have been lined up as away golf venues as well.

Current Golf membership is at 70. That is the recent low for the group but there are signs of growth for golf and for Branch 146.

Is an argument between two vegans still called a Beef?

Thanks to Ed Marlovits

Area 16 Events

Mac User Group (MUG)



Mac



No report received for February. If you are interested in this group contact...

> Verner Laursen Vern.laursen@gmail.com Max Burchett Meburchett@astound.net

Area 16 \$UMS Investment Group

\$UMS Participated in another Branch 128 (San Ramon) Zoom meeting in Jan.

At this meeting we identified what the "experts" are recommending as investments for 2021 including specific stocks, Sectors, ETFs, and Mutual Funds.

In the round robin, each attendee then was asked to "recommend" at least one specific stock, Sector, ETF, or Mutual Fund to be tracked by the Investment Group during 2021. At the April, July, and October we will report on the performance of these "recommendations".

Looks like we'll be continuing to participate in these Zoom meetings for a while, so mark your calendar: 4th Wednesday at 1:30.



Chair - Tom Henry - Br 174 tomhenry925@gmail.com Co-chair Dave Sutton - Br 8 - davesutn@comcast.net



SIR Happenings Newsletter

https://www.wearesir.com/new-page

This is the statewide SIR newsletter. Unfortunately it is so out of date it is next to useless unless you are a historian. Click on the link to read a 2018 issue.





The next Zoom SIR Area 16 Computer & Technology (CAT) Group meeting will be Thursday, February 18th starting at 9:30 AM

The February presentation topic will be "DYI Home Security Systems". Most security devices are now wireless and easy to install. As a result, there are now several "Do it Yourself" (DYI) security systems available that can be customized for your house, ordered online and self installed. I am sure everyone has seen the SimpliSafe "masked-man" advertisements on TV. That is just one of several DYI security systems now available. Even ADT now has a DYI system. With many of the systems, you can choose to either self monitor or have it professionally monitored. The presentation will discuss various security system options and some of the top rated DYI systems.

To attend the Zoom meeting, individuals need to sign-up for the CAT's mailing list by sending an email to SI-RArea2CAT@gmail.com. A few days before the meeting, a Zoom web link that is needed to connect will be sent to members on the mailing list.

> **Computers & Technology Website** https://sirinc2.org/a16cat/



SIR State Information

https://sirinc.org/

This is the state SIR web page. is a wealth of information about SIR, SIR

training, and SIR merchandise you can purchase. The current can be found here: http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp? f=001SlqWGXFpiEd0HKEtSSxcGGTxyjBPX7yZNf0llC 5TE7 EuFiPlsOARkV1D1qKjsYVWKUf99ZM3k8m6BY1ovCRFZyV e1jONWeTt5zg7sAgPuvcfolbWn0tTl3Z4BL6S9Ui7Ql1THe AEOLskdO04-

Editorial Opinion

