



Branch 146

Sons In Retirement, Contra Costa CA

Call



Big Sir's Corner Richard Hockenbrock

The State SIR organization made a major move this month to uncover a pathway to opening more branch activities that have been on hold for over a year. Paralleling moves made by the county and the state of California, State SIR released a new COVID Protocol and a required Waiver Form that together will try to ensure that all members, and guests attending SIR functions are fully vaccinated. Equally important, these documents make it clear that there is no insurance to cover liability related to COVID-19 or any other communicable disease and participating in any future SIR event will be at the attendee's own risk and will hold every Branch harmless. At the May BEC meeting, our branch will discuss how these documents will be administered and recorded and move forward toward issuing instructions for doing so.

In a subsequent SIR State meeting that I attended via Zoom on April 26th, 2021, President **Stu Williams** laid out the justification for imposing the use of these new documents. You can watch the Zoom meeting at this URL address: https://youtu.be/h_BU1AcKGXU. (This video is 1 hour and 45 minutes long). You can also read and download the documents on the State SIR website at www.sirinc.org.

What all this means is that all the branches in SIR have the green light to move ahead with plans for reopening all indoor and outdoor activities beginning May 1st. You should, however, now consider your own personal risk tolerance in participating and hosting future events. While SIR is doing everything right by the county and the state, you must remember that none of the vaccines are 100% effective in stopping COVID. We want you to start participating again but at your own comfort level.

At the BEC meeting on April 8th, the BEC took action to return luncheon money of \$179.20 to each of the 74 SIR members who had pre-paid back in 2020. This was due to

the uncertainty of how many luncheons would still be served in 2021 and to avoid needing to track these pre-payments possibly into 2022.

COVID or not, we continue to add new members to our branch. Three new members were inducted in April, **George Saksa, Mike Davidson, and Randy Graham**. This brings our total headcount to 286.

At the April Zoom luncheon meeting, **Walt Busenius** from the Honorees Committee, presented **Dick Woodman** with the Branch Certificate of Appreciation Award. **John Wall** and **Sid Whalen** both received the Branch 20 Year Membership Award.

It has been tradition that the branch invites spouses and significant others to a special Ladies Day Luncheon twice a year. We held our last one hosted on Zoom in December and the one coming up in May will be the same. Remember at these luncheons, you get to select your friends who you want to relax and share your stories with. We refer to it as meeting as a Zoom table which is actually using a feature called Break Out rooms.

Steve Ybarra will once again be taking on the task of organizing this event. See his sign-up instructions on page 3. Also check out **Jerry Kaplan's** Little Sir column to learn all about our featured speaker who will talk about downtown Walnut Creek retail shops opening again.

Stay well and hope you get outside to enjoy the Memorial Day weekend later in the month.

Zoom, Zoom...

Zoom Luncheon Meeting
Thursday, May 13th

This is our annual Ladies Day Luncheon.
Instructions on how to register for this event
can be found on page 3 of this issue of SIR-Call.

Table Rooms begin at 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

Looks like we may be getting closer to seeing each other in person and having the opportunity to share a refreshing glass of something in the coming months. I hope that everyone who wants to be

vaccinated has been able to do so or has scheduled an inoculation in the near future. Boundary Oak is aware that our branch will soon be ready and willing to come back to their facility for luncheons. Our Big Sir **Richard H.** will keep everyone informed of the status in the upcoming months.

Our scheduled May Ladies Day Zoom luncheon speaker is **Ms. Tracy Dietlein**, the Senior Manager for Marketing at the *Broadway Plaza Shopping Center* in Downtown Walnut Creek. As everyone knows, the COVID 19 pandemic during the last 14 plus months has had a major impact not only on our shopping habits, but on the retail and dining establishments located in the area. After substantial investment in modernizing and expanding its property, Broadway Plaza suffered along with the rest of us. **Ms. Dietlein** will share with us some of the history of the Plaza (which opened over 70 years ago) and discuss what is in store for the center as the pandemic winds down and life tries to return to normal. In addition to several major department stores, other establishments run the gamut from a shop where you can sit in a Tesla and order one for delivery, to the new sleek Apple building, to an Amazon Bookstore where one can sit and try out a book over a cup of cappuccino.

All Sir Members and their wives or significant others are invited to attend the Noon-time talk on May 13th.

Our speaker at the April meeting, **Mr. Bob Doyle**, recently retired General Manager of the East Bay Regional Parks District provided a fascinating talk about how the park district has grown over time to become the largest urban park system in the United States. The 73 different parks in both Alameda and Contra Costa Counties cover over 125,000 acres, four times the size of the City of San Francisco. The set of slides he shared are available if you missed the talk. Please contact me.

If there are other topics you would like to see covered by future speakers – sports, health, travel, learning, etc., - please let me know and I'll see if I can locate someone in that area.

And most important, during April, three new members joined our branch—**Mike Davidson, George Saksa, and Randy Graham**. A warm welcome to all of you; we look forward to meeting you all in person, hearing some of your interesting life stories and telling you more about ourselves and the branch.

Everyone, stay safe but have fun where, when and how you can!

Mark Twain always had some interesting sayings -*Never regret anything that made you smile – and - Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been.*

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.

Branch 146 Ladies Day Luncheon

Once again our Ladies Day Luncheon will be a virtual event via Zoom. 

Make your Reservations now!

Like the Ladies Day Luncheon in December last year, we will be utilizing Zoom for our special luncheon in May where spouses and significant others are invited along with all the members of Branch 146. We will again set up multiple Breakout Rooms of ten to twelve couples and single SIRS to socialize in this virtual ZOOM environment. In advance, you will submit a request as to who you would like to sit and socialize with. This will be like we do at an actual Ladies Luncheon at Boundary Oak.

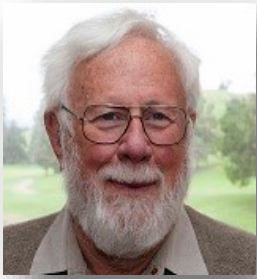
Each table (Breakout Room) will be assigned a table leader. We will ask the same table leaders who hosted in December 2020, to again volunteer to lead one or more of the tables this year. It will be their role to invite SIR singles and couples to join them at their table. An optimum table will have five or six couples to promote all around conversation. **Steve Ybarra** has agreed to handle the reservation process which will be as follows:

- **Step 1**—At your earliest convenience, send an email or call **Steve Ybarra**, (sybar@gmail.com, 925.676.7405) letting him know you wish to attend the Ladies Day Luncheon Zoom meeting. List your name and your spouse or partner's name and any other guests you would like to join you at a table. Single SIR members can either join one of these tables or ask to sit at a leaderless table of other

single SIR members. Provide email(s) for each person attending including guests. If a table leader has already contacted you to join them, then you just need to confirm with **Steve**, the leader's name, and your email address and that of your guest. **Steve** will assign your table number.

- **Step 2**—You will receive an invitation to join the Ladies Day Luncheon via Zoom a couple of days before the event. Seating at your table will open on May 13th at 11 am, so you may check in at this time or any time after. The table leaders plan to start discussions at 11:15 am so do not be late.
- **Step 3**—When you click on the Zoom link, you will enter a waiting room. You will then be let into the main meeting area. Immediately upon being let into the main meeting area, you should rename your picture according to the instructions that will be provided along with the invitation. If you have difficulty, one of the co-hosts will be able to assist you. Based on the name associated with your picture you will be automatically moved to your assigned room or table.
- **Step 4**—At 12 noon, we will bring everyone back in to the main room and the Big SIR will welcome you to the Luncheon and provide any announcements prior to the speaker's talk. We expect the speaker will talk 20 to 30 minutes including Q&A. After the speaker is finished, the Song SIRS will sing God Bless America and then the meeting will adjourn.





Editor's Ramblings Clint Collier

Today's ramblings are truly that, nothing to do really with editing SIR-Call, just my random thoughts.

From many appearances we are approaching some kind of end to this awful pandemic. Personally I think COVID will be with us for some time but it will be at a manageable level; another thing to worry about like the annual flu, too much cholesterol in my diet, which type of wine do I want with this evening's dinner? But one thing looks to remain, the so called COVID passport. More and more it looks like someone/everyone, is going to be asking me to pull out my record of immunization to "prove" to them that I'm somewhat "safe" to be around. I still remember when they gave me this little card, actually it isn't so little, it is just big enough that it doesn't fit comfortably in my wallet or any where else, and thinking of it more of a curiosity piece, a reminder of what we experienced in 2020.

Now it appears it will be one of my more important pieces of identification documents which raises the question of what to do with it. As I mentioned, too big to fit in a wallet alongside my driver's license and credit cards. For now and for what it is worth, I have taken a picture of it and put it on my cell phone although it remains to be seen if some entities will accept a picture so to be safe I also created a paper copy to carry. But the original is now in my passport alongside my now expired visas to Tanzania, China and Argentina.

And so... back to business...

Deadline for submissions for the June issue is May 27th.

Don't forget, we encourage member contributions so, if you have something you would like to say, send it in to br146SirCall@gmail.com, putting "Member Note" in the subject line, and we will try to get it out in the next available issue.

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SIR-Call Newsletter Group

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Internet Posting	Ron Plachy



Luncheon Chairman Rich Lyon

Dear SIR members,

The news of the lifting of some restrictions in Contra Costa County give hope that SIR 146 will likely have luncheons in-person sometime this year perhaps even in August or September. Much will depend upon Boundary Oak's ability to recruit staff as well as the State SIR insurance guidelines. There's is now light at the end of the tunnel!

The Branch needs someone who wants to meet our members by helping out with the Luncheon scheduling. The BEC decided to refund annual luncheon payers so luncheons will be a little simpler through the end of 2021. It would be great to get some one to initially assist and eventually to manage the Luncheon program. It's a great opportunity to collaborate with the branch leadership and to get to know each other.

In the meantime, play it safe and stay healthy.

Rich Lyon
Luncheon Coordinator

My COVID Passport





Membership George Mon

Three new members were approved by the BEC in April. We welcome **George Saksa** sponsored by **Ron Lew**, **Mike Davidson** sponsored by **Paul Kersis**, and **Randy Graham** sponsored by **Paul Beretz**. **George** lives in Concord. **Mike** and **Randy** are from Walnut Creek.

We had two guest that attended our April Zoom luncheon. They are **Stu Homer** and **Dean Mayer** both sponsored by **Paul Beretz**.

The 2021 membership count rose to 286 which is up from

March of 281.

As a matter of routine, the SIR Call Directory will be updated monthly to reflect our new members contact information, elimination of members who have resigned and known changes of current members contact information.

If there are any changes to your contact information, especially to your email, phone or address, please send me an email (gckk@comcast.net) so that we can update the directory with the most current information.

George Mon

Congratulations to **Carl Tichen** our April Birthday winner! Remember... you have to be Zooming to WIN!

Winners receive a sharp SIR cap, modeled by our leaders on their article pages earlier in this newsletter!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Jeff Baily
Robert Burley
Cass Buys
Tom Cranmer
Michael Farrar
Ross Hallberg
George Hatch

Bruce Kimmis
Joseph Lamanna
Sid Landman
Vern Laursen
Roger Meyer
Corrie Oranje
Ron Polivka

Vince Rettew
Don Seaton
Stan Stricherz
Doug Timmel
Sam Veneziano
Bill Vizza



Sunshine

Brian McCarthy



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

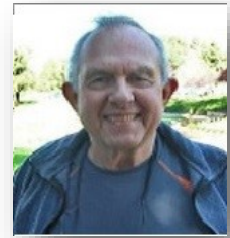
Consider contacting a sick SIR to offer support and encouragement during his illness. A friendly call is usually welcome. Cards and letters are always appreciated.

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.

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

Hugh Ferguson



Stan Stricherz



Ed Marlovits



Joe Hunt



Vince Rettew



April SIR Branch 146 Award Ceremony Honoring Dick Woodman



At April's monthly zoom meeting, I am pleased to present **Dick Woodman** with our branch's Certificate of Appreciation. This award is presented to members who have volunteered themselves in service to branch 146 during their membership. Dick is a living, breathing example of a member who has met this criterion.

Dick was born in Kansas City but graduated high school in Wichita in 1958. **Dick's** first taste of California came when he joined the Navy right out of high school and was assigned to an aircraft carrier, the USS Ranger, based in Alameda. Upon completion of his active duty, **Dick** was hired by a structural engineering firm. At the same time, **Dick** enrolled at Heald's Engineering College in San Francisco and received his civil engineering degree. Later, **Dick** earned an MBA from St. Mary's College in Moraga.

In 1965, **Dick** and two other associates formed JWD Group, a firm of architects, engineers, and planners. **Dick** was a principal in the firm until his

retirement in 2006.

Dick and his lovely wife **Janice** moved to Pleasant Hill in 1963, Lafayette in 1977, and their present home in Walnut Creek in 1988. **Dick** and **Janice** have a son and a daughter and two grandchildren.

Dick joined our branch in October 2007, sponsored by **Jim Todhunter** and immediately became active. Over the next 13 + years, **Dick** has stepped up, being a natural leader, serving as Assistant Treasurer and Treasurer during the time when our annual payers luncheon program was established. He also helped form and chair MTD II, as well as one of our successful cooking groups.

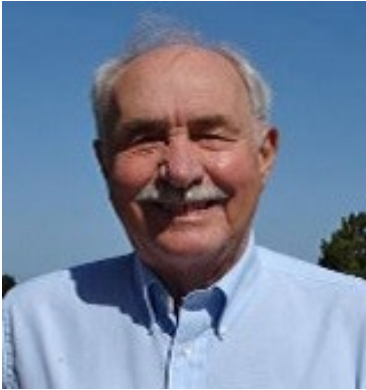
Dick has enjoyed travel, especially the many SIR trips taken with **Janice**, Mexican train dominos, golf and is a wine connoisseur.

Dick has an impressive lifelong resume. We thank him for his service to our great country and for his commitment to branch 146 over the years. Now, we recognize **Dick Woodman** with this Certificate of Appreciation and a heavy round of applause.

Presenter was **Walt Busenius** at the April 8th Zoom Luncheon



April SIR Branch 146 Award Ceremony Honoring John Wall & Syd Whalen



Today, we are also honoring **John Wall and Syd Whalen** for achieving the milestone of being members of branch 146 for 20 years. **John Wall and Syd Whalen** joined in April 2001. At the time, there was up to a one year waiting list. **John** was sponsored by **Stan Jackson** and **Syd** by **Dick Devoe**.

Let us talk about **John Wall** first. **John** was born and raised in San Francisco and a product of the San Francisco public school system. **John** graduated from UC – Berkeley with a BS degree in Economics in 1960.



John spent his entire career in the ever growing and expanding computer software business. More than 40 years ago, **John** and **Alma** moved to Walnut Creek. They have two children and 3 grandchildren. **John** is a modest person who really misses our monthly luncheons during this pandemic.

On the other hand, **Syd Whalen** was born in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada, attending primary and high school there. An interesting story, **Syd** survived a three story fall down an elevator shaft when he was 12 years old. Now, there is an instant conversation starter the next time you have an opportunity to chat with **Syd**.

Syd joined a chartered accounting firm out of high school. While working, **Syd** also attended Queens University, New Brunswick and obtained a chartered accountant's degree in 1960. In 1963 **Syd** and his **MJ (Margaret Jane)** decided to move to sunny and warmer California. In 1975, **Syd** served as the CFO of Kaiser Engineers and in 1983 **Syd** founded his own company Whalen and Associates. **Syd** has been a consummate professional throughout the years in his business and personal life.

Syd and **MJ** live in Alamo and have 2 children and 3 grandchildren.

Please join me in thanking **John Wall and Syd Whalen** for being 20-year members of branch 146. Both of you have done your part to make our community a much better place in which to live.

Presenter was **Walt Busenius** at the April 8th Zoom Luncheon



NOTES

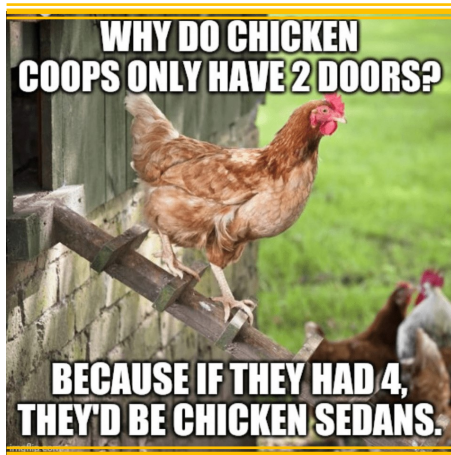
from Our Members

Get ready for...

寿司の友達

Check your newsletter next month for a new activity... if the BEC gives it its blessing. No details yet but if you enjoy....

Ready for some chicken jokes?



Groan...

The pastor of the little church up the road from me was surprised when an armless man applied for the job of bell-ringer. Before they could object, he just said, "Look, I know what you're thinking, but just give me an audition and I'll prove I can do this job." They agreed, and he started striking the bells with his face, which to everyone's surprise produced a beautiful melody. That is, until he went at it too hard, fell over the side of the belfry, and plunged to his death.

The ambulance crew pronounced him dead at the scene, and they asked the pastor for the gentleman's name. Trembling, the pastor admitted, "I don't know his name, but his face rings a bell."

After the funeral the pastor, feeling terrible about the whole thing, asked the man's brother — the only family member who turned up — if there might be anything the church could do for him. To the pastor's surprise, he said, "Yes. I'd like to try out for my brother's job, please. I feel as though it would please him."

The church agreed to this, especially since this sibling couldn't possibly suffer the same fate as he had two good arms. But at the very beginning of the audition, the new prospect dropped the mallet, clutched his chest, and died of a massive heart attack.

This time the police and EMTs again had to ask for the man's name, since he had no ID on him. The now severely traumatized pastor replied, "I don't know, but he's a dead ringer for his brother."



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 camaraderie through Zoom to help us counteract the boredom as noted by the Zoom icon to the right.

ONLINE

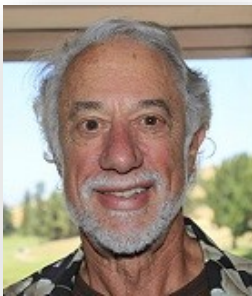


ACTIVITY

Some activities such as Hearts and Cribbage are played online, while others, like our book and photography groups have moved their activities online using Zoom. Look for this icon that designates these activities! Others like Golf, Hiking, RV Wanderers and Cycling have resumed outdoor activities. 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!



zoom



Activities Coordinator Bob Lucido

Clint Collier, our glorious SIR-Call editor, has proposed a new eating activity called Friends of Sushi or Sushi no tomodachi. 寿司の友達.

That is right, eating raw fish.

SIR members will meet either once a month or once every other month, to have lunch at a predesignated sushi restaurant to evaluate the quantity and quality of their "product," and to enjoy lunch together!

If it is not worthy, the group can chase the chef with chop sticks.

We will have to wait for the State SIR to open indoor activities to start this activity and others.

Bob Lucido
925-899-0974

Bobwendy3@comcast.net



Cribbage John Pearl

The SIR 146 Cribbage group continues to meet on-line using the "Cribbage Pro" app. This was "discovered" and suggested by our C.T.O, **Jim Nelson**. The rest is history.

We have just wrapped up Tournament No. 9. We played 36 matches between pairs, and 120 actual games, with 16 tournament players.

Our winners were **Bob Finlayson** in first place, and **Ron Afdal**, taking second place. Interestingly, **Bob** succeeded the hard way, playing through the "one-loss" bracket of our double elimination tournament to the final match, and had to play **Ron** twice to clinch the win.

The winners in our Consolation Bracket were **John Kendrick** in first place, and **Jim Stedman** in second place.

We are now starting our 10th on-line tournament, again with management and facilitation by **Jim Nelson**.

Thanks to all that participated and congratulations to our tournament winners

John Pearl
mcpearl@astound.net



Picked up a hitchhiker the other day.
He asked if I wasn't afraid he might be a
serial killer?
I told him the odds of two serial killers
being in the same car were
extremely unlikely.



Cycling Group Larry Kaye

March 31: With the sun promising warmth and the sky clear, the boys in Spandex set out a ride to visit Canyon. Its a little burg set in a pocket of heaven past Moraga.

Attending today were: **Moose Kelly, Michael Wolfson, Bob, I'm back, Wilkenfeld, Paul, Mr. Brisket, Brown, Ken Studer** (big birthday coming), **Roger Meyer, Jim Nelson, Bill Holly and Larry Kaye.**

What a ride. Smooth and nice. The bridge to Canyon..... still not done. CalTran is milking this job. We visited the olde Post Office and viewed the huge tree cover this Town has.

After a bit, the pedals turned homeward.

What a thrill riding with guys you really respect. All sorts of professions, all types of history and yet, we get along famously.

Thanks SIR for allowing us this respite in life. Another fun day. More to come.

April 13th: "Gusts to 40 mph, wind from the SW," or so the weather folks said. The Spandex guys listened, and we rode anyway. Off to the Dougherty Valley we flew. Wow. We all felt so strong. Speed was up and exertion was down. We must be in great shape. Or so we thought.

Finally reaching Peets in the Valley we stopped to imbibe of some Java. Being a group of smart well-educated guys, we realized something was not right. Once we remounted our steel rigs and faced South it was obvious. With the full force of the wind gusting into us we reached the understanding of what really had driven us here. WIND. Nasty WIND.

A team meet agreed that it was time to navigate away from this unseen wall. Danville was in the right direction and so we headed there. Crow Canyon road and its nasty climb was in our way but the reward on the other side was worth it. Reaching the outskirts of Danville, we headed downhill away from this constant blast. Hazy BBQ was our goal and we attained it. Lunch on the patio was wonderful and filling.

The mileage was short but as always, the warmth of the group was obvious.

Attending the ride was: **Paul Brown, Moose Kelly, Michael Wolfson, Bill Holly, Bob Wilkenfeld, and Larry Kaye.**

April 21st: The boys rode today as a united front. The destination was Deneca's cafe in Dublin.

It used to be a great spot for really good Java. Well, times change. According to **Michael Wolfson** the coffee was nasty. The consensus was the same. The ride into the wind was not too bad. As we crossed Crow Canyon, we met a tail wind. That gave us some respite. Tooling South we chatted and as always enjoyed the like comrade the Sirs group always has. Reaching the cafe, we enjoyed the outside tables and the facilities. Heading home we took the Iron Horse trail all the way. Flat as promised and not too busy early in the am.

One unlucky guy had a flat at the stop. He did not follow the rules we all have: Always carry a patch kit.

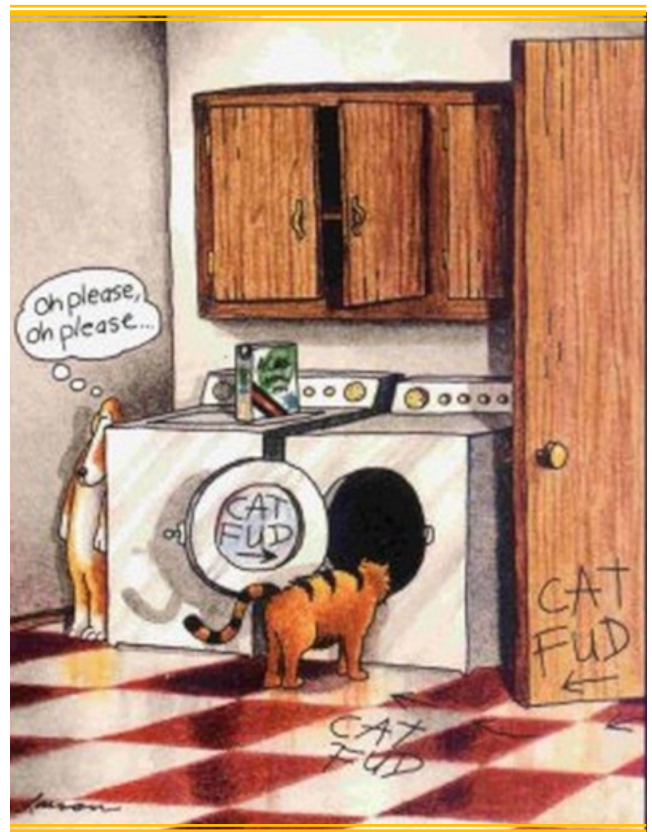
Cycling
Once a week
with no drop rides.
Exploring the entire Bay
Area.
Coed.

So, he called his mommy to come pick him up. A dollar for a kit makes more sense than bothering your Wife. A lesson learned.

Today's riders were: **Bill Ross, Bill Holly, Moose Kelly, Jim Nelson, Roger Meyer, Paul Brown, Michael Wolfson, Pat Hoy, and Larry Kaye.**

27 miles of fun.

Next week, it's the DELTA ride.





Photography Group
John "Moose" Kelly & Henry Thatcher

SIR Branch 146 photography group teamed up with SIR Branch 8 photography participants on Friday, April 16th, via Zoom. We had roughly 30 participants including one guest that attended the virtual meeting which was outstanding!

Our guest presenter was Sharon Wada who is an outstanding wildlife photographer and an underwater videographer. Sharon presented three segments to her discussion: 1) Seeing Familiar Places with Fresh Eyes. Ms Wada discussed different ways to look at wildlife beyond the norm in these familiar places. Her photos of eagles, otters, seals et al were striking and gorgeous. 2) Dia de Los Muertos in Oaxaca Mexico: A Night at the Comparsa. Our presenter discussed different ways to photograph male models outside a dimly lit church by twisting your body as you are shooting. The result were photos that were eerie but interesting. 3) Dia de Los Muertos in Oaxaca Mexico: The Power of Candlelight. Sharon presented different settings in a graveyard focusing on candles that may be slightly blown out but to capture the overall uniqueness of the people and graves within the picture. In all three segments, our presenter recommended different camera settings for the uniqueness of the situation. If you want to

check out her photos, then go to Sharonwada.com.

Our theme for this meeting was "Planes, Trains, and Automobiles" plus other forms of transportation. Our members were encouraged to present current or past photos aligned to this theme. Some of the photographs from Branch 146 shutterbugs are shown below.

Our final segment to our joint meeting was a presentation by **Meng Horng** from Branch 8. His topic was entitled "Photo Editing and Creation." **Meng** discussed composition techniques that went beyond the rule of thirds such as simplification, symmetry, and curved line. Our presenter also discussed the benefits of using a program entitled "ACD See Photo Studio Ultimate 2021." This program presented different ways to be highly creative such as putting yourself into the same photo three different ways.

If you would like to join a Photography Group Zoom Meeting to see what the meeting is all about, then please contact **Moose Kelly** or **Henry Thatcher**. We would be happy to send you the agenda as well as the Zoom Meeting link.

Our next meeting will be held on Friday, June 18th, via Zoom from 9 AM to 11 AM.

Be safe, 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



Photo by Mike Rothman

Arriving in Jackson Hole

Photo Group pictures continued from prior page



Photo by Roy Hodgkinson

Camaro Hot Wheels



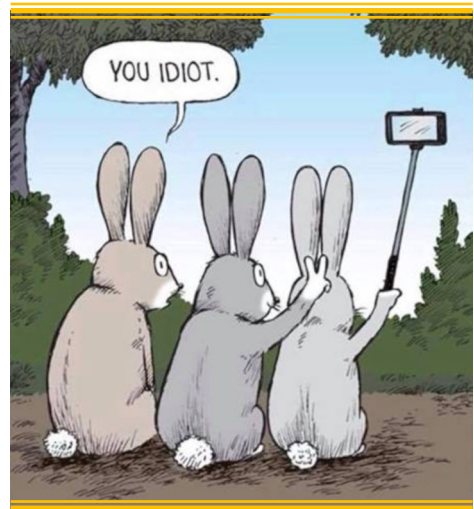
Photo by Bill Holly

White Pass Train in Skagway, Alaska



Photo by Moose Kelly

The Endeavor





AREA 16 Fishing Report Paul Dubow

T. S. Eliot wrote a poem in which he described April as the “cruellest month”. That may have been so in the good old days, but April 2021 has been the best fishing month in a long time.

The striper fishing has been terrific.

Karl Droese led a group of five fisherman fishing the Delta and lower Sacramento that included **Pete Gates** of Branch 146, **Stan Wong**, **Dick Thomson**, **Gordon Linebaugh**, and **Ken Fischer**. They came home with eleven keepers, with the largest one at nine pounds that was landed by **Gordon**. **Brion Beetz** fished farther up the Sacramento, near Colusa, and his group caught eight keepers. **Harry Sherinian** and **Tom Kostik** did not do quite as well because the wind forced them to limit their activity to Spoonville Slough, but they did retrieve one keeper.

San Pablo Reservoir has continued to be productive with rainbow trout. **Romano Gnusti** landed a six- and one-half pounder on one occasion, while **Alan Blavins** took three home for supper on another trip. **Martin Steinpress** of Branch 146 set out on his kayak in the reservoir but returned empty handed. Maybe next time!

Brion Beetz and **Stan Wong** fished the Bay for ocean perch and did very well, catching fish that averaged from two to three pounds. **Brion** also joined a group that sailed out to the Farallons. They caught 35 rockfish and **Brion** added a ling cod to the mix.

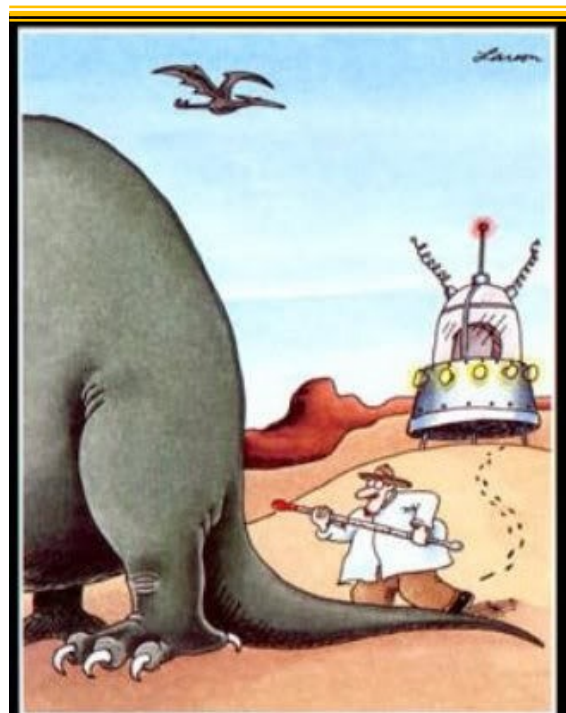
Phil Scimonelli continues to be the resident expert on the Pinole Pier. On one trip, he caught both a large halibut and a large striper within one hour of each other.

This month we have outings planned for sturgeon, black bass, and striper fishing in the Delta, trout fishing in Lake Almanor and San Pablo Reservoir, and halibut fishing in the Bay. Our trout trip to Los Vaqueros Reservoir was canceled because of high winds, but we are planning to try again this month. Most of all, we are looking forward to the delayed opening of the ocean salmon season on June 26 and we have quite a few outings scheduled for that fishing. (Salmon fishing opened south of Monterey this month.) We hope to resume our monthly breakfast meetings at the Legends Bar and Grill at Diablo Creek Golf Course in Concord, but as of now it probably will not be any earlier than June. In the meantime, we continue to meet on Zoom. Our next meeting is at 8:30 am on May 27. If you are interested in joining our group, and you can do so even if you have never fished or have not fished in

years, please contact Big Fish **Ron Lew** at 925-550-4166 or branch fishing chair **Paul Dubow** at 415-495-6504. We will then ask secretary **Brion Beetz** to send you a Zoom invitation.



Pete Gates (left) and friends with delta stripers 4-14-21



An instant later, both Professor Waxman, and his time machine are obliterated, leaving the cold-blooded / warm-blooded dinosaur debate still unresolved.



Travel Milt Smith

SIR activities are beginning to open up...we are looking at one cruise so far in 2022



PRINCESS CRUISE

We already have four couples interested in the **Fort Lauderdale to San Francisco cruise aboard the Ruby Princess sailing March 12-17, 2022** via the Panama Canal, ports of call, Cartagena, Colombia; Panama Canal (new locks); Panama City; Puntarenas, Costa Rica; San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua; Cabo San Lucas, Mexico; and San Francisco

Balcony Staterooms starting at \$3,824 pp. Ocean view at \$3,369

We will continue sign ups this month for this great cruise and set payment dates.

*All SIR travel is subject to the SIR state and branch and local government Covid protocols as well as those rules put in place by the travel agencies and cruise lines.

Be On the Look Out (BOLO) for more information via SIR Branch e-blasts and do not hesitate to contact Milt Smith with questions...miltsmith549@gmail.com 925.285.2897

Contact me at:

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



Bocce John Kendrick

As of April 1, 2021 and following the Bocce Federation guidelines, our 2021 Bocce Ball season is still on hold.

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.

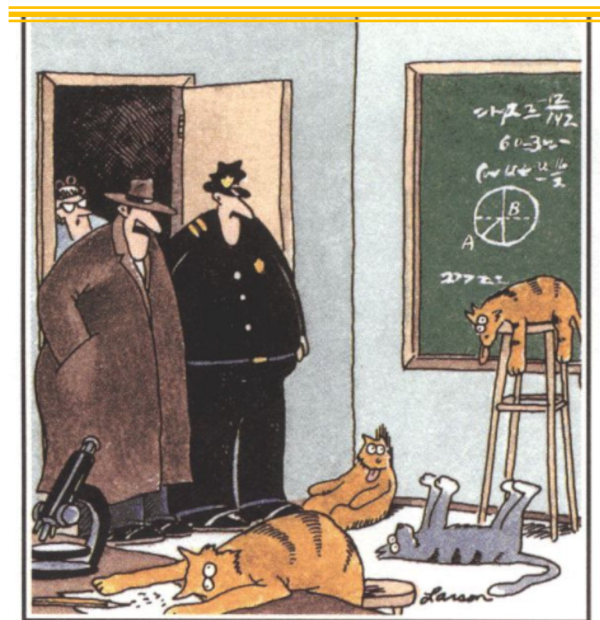
Under normal circumstances, we play the 2nd and 4th Mondays, through September/October at 8:30 am at the Concord Bocce Courts in Newhall Park, Concord, near the corner of Turtle Creek and Ayers Roads.

If you are interested in playing Bocce when we resume play again with your fellow SIR members and guests, please email me jmkendrick23@gmail.com 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



"Notice all the computations, theoretical scribbles, and lab equipment, Norm. ... Yes, curiosity killed these cats."



Pickleball and Ping Pong

Jim Burk & Ron Afdal

Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled

The County of Contra Costa has changed to the Orange Tier (Moderate) as of April 13, 2021, as it relates to the Pandemic. This means that Pickle Ball, Badminton, and Ping Pong are now able to be played indoors. However, they are only able to be played in a singles format. Thus, our gymnasium in Alamo has not yet opened to the public.

We will let you know when the Yellow Tier is achieved. Speculation would say that Tier will most likely be achieved approximately by June 15, 2021. That would allow doubles play.

Continue to stay safe and practice the protocols that we have learned to date, and we will inform you of the proposed opening dates and specific protocols when they are known.

Jim Burk - Pickleball
(925) 946-1192

jimanneburk@sbcglobal.net

Ron Afdal - Ping Pong

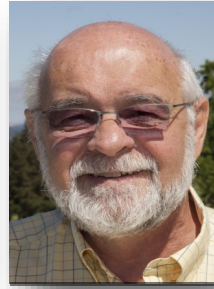
(925) 825-4809

ronafdal@comcast.net



Table Pool

Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled



Wine Tasting

Rob Melrose

Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled

If you are interested in joining us for an afternoon of wine and appetizers and are not on my list, please send me an email.

Rob Melrose

(925) 519-2185

RWMelrose@gmail.com



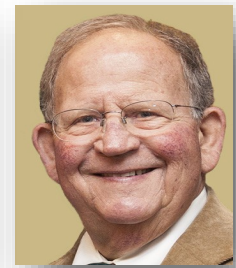
Cooking Lunch & Wine

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.





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 members a Happy, Healthy and Safe 2021!

Co-chairs:

Henry Thatcher 925-997-5032 and
Jim Pope 925-699-6447



Couples Dining Out Bruce Borgman

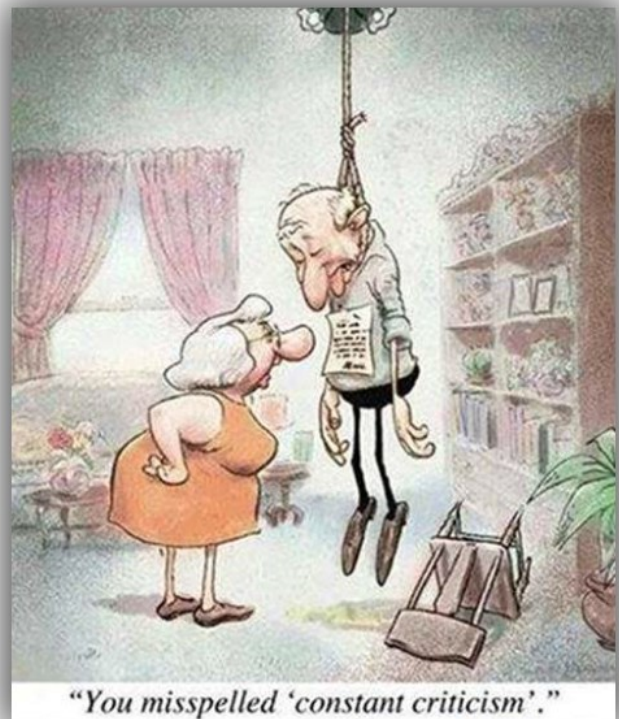
We continue to consider how to resume our Couples Dining Out activity and are anticipating guidance from our state and Branch 146 leadership about how to do that. Most importantly, of course, is

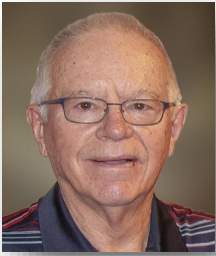
for all of us to get vaccinated and I hope that our Dining Out group is active in the pursuit of this goal.

I have been out of town for the last few weeks, and thus am not able to give you a personal update of the restaurant scene in our community. But, I see from the news that things are changing on a rapid scale and am sure that everyone is anxious to get out and socialize even it is with a smaller group.

We will plan to survey our Dining Out group in early May so look for this development in your inbox and plan to respond. In the meantime, stay well and we will get together soon.

Best regards and wishes for good health!
bgborgman@aol.com





SIR 146 Hiking Mark Curtis

We have been walking somewhere every Friday with between 3 and 10 people in attendance. The most recent hike was in Mount Diablo State Park (Ray Martz & Gene Schulting) where we did a version of the Falls Loop trail. The previous week was at Brushy Peak, part of EBRP (**Ray Martz, Jim Nelson, Bob Wilkenfeld, Earl Bates & Mike Browne**).

The Friday, May 14 hike will be at Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline which is a 4-mile round trip on a relatively flat and abandoned paved road, formerly Carquinez Scenic Dr. This trail is now referred to as George Miller Regional trail. For those that enjoy climbing hills, at the turn-around point, I/we will do a counterclockwise loop on Franklin Ridge. This addition involves an additional 2-mile loop and about 400 feet of climbing.

Directions to the trailhead are from Hwy 4 westbound, take Cummings Skyway, turn right on Crocket Blvd and right again on Pomona St in Crocket. Pomona St becomes Carquinez Scenic Dr. Proceed to the end of the road and park at the Port Costa staging area.

Spouses always welcome
Dogs on-leash allowed on this trail
Cell (925) 360-3449 Mocurtis1657@gmail.com



Photo by Mark Curtis

Brushy Peak at EBRP. (L to R): **Mike Browne, Ray Martz, Earl Bates, Jim Nelson, & Bob Wilkenfeld.**



Photo by Mark Curtis

Waterfalls on the Falls Loop trail in Mount Diablo State Park.



SongSirs Bruce Borgman

Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled

Nothing new to report. But, we will return to our practices and performances when we're all immunized with a vaccine!

(925) 932-3961
bgborgman@aol.com

I'm a better person when I'm tan and holding a margarita.

Mexican Train Dominoes Groups



Grupo Uno 1



Mexican Train Dominoes One Jerry Kaplan

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

We are all looking forward to re-starting our Friday Game Nights soon!

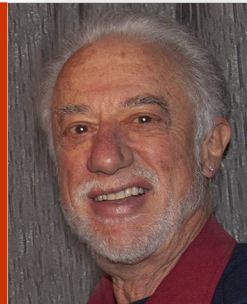
Thinking positively for the future, all Branch members who have not played before, but would like to join us – or another group - for a fun evening, please contact Jerry to learn how. The game is entertaining to play and easy to learn! We now have seven different MTD groups playing in the Branch with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

Single SIR members as well as Significant Others are always welcome.



**It's OK if you disagree with me.
I can't force you to be right.**

Grupo Siete 7



Mexican Train Dominoes Bob Lucido

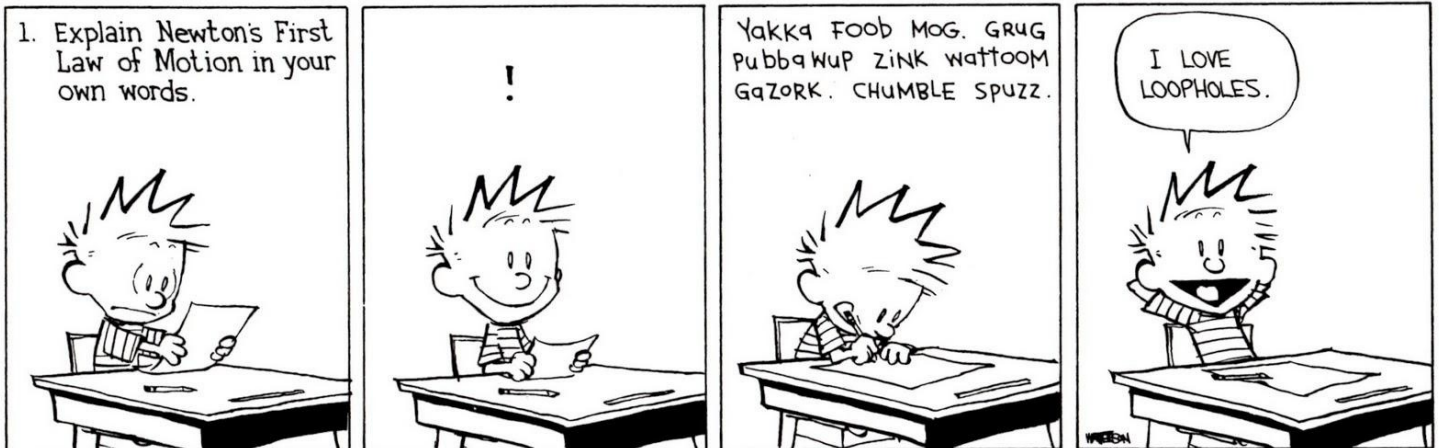
We are continuing to meet on Zoom once a month to keep in touch.



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

**All other groups
Nada que reporter
No hay eventos.**

I decided to stop calling the bathroom the "John" and renamed it the "Jim". I feel so much better saying I went to the Jim this morning.





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

The SIR 146 Book Group met on-line Monday morning, April 19th, on Zoom. Our Zoom Master continues to be **Mike Farrar**.

We discovered as part of our general discussion that all the members present today are vaccinated for Covid-19.

The discussion also included the recent six-hour PBS series on one of America's best-known authors, Earnest Hemingway. **Paul Dubow** and his wife have been to the Hemingway homes in Key West and near Havana, Cuba. Paul described the life in Cuba as he saw and experienced it (twice). The word I heard most from him was "depressing." The home in Cuba was called a "finca" meaning ranch, and it had great views, he said, along with Hemingway's fishing boat "Pilar," one of his favorite hangouts. His travels there reinforced in my mind the idea that in Communism, some are more equal than others.

We then moved to our "Book of the Month," *The Princess Spy*, by Larry Loftis, who has written several books about the spy business in World War II.

The story is about a young woman from Pearl River, New York, who decides she wants to contribute to the war effort, and through a chance encounter is recruited by an OSS agent to serve in Spain, which at that time was ruled by General Francisco Franco. She is assigned to the US Embassy in Madrid as a "code clerk" in the communications group, with "other duties as assigned."

She begins to make the rounds and meets a lot of the upper crust of society, including the Generalissimo himself, going to bullfights (and is wooed by one of the most famous bull fighters) and to long weekends at the fabulous country homes of some of society. She picks up bits and pieces which are relayed to the appropriate people. All in all, she has a great life.

Larry Loftis is not the first to write about her and the role she had in the war. Others have written on this subject, as she herself did. Much of the criticism of the book is about what may have been made up of her story, both by her and by other writers. It is a little hard to believe.

She does have a couple of close calls, but survives to marry very well and travel post-war Europe with her wealthy new husband. She does continue to work occasionally for the mysterious successor agency to the OSS, which President

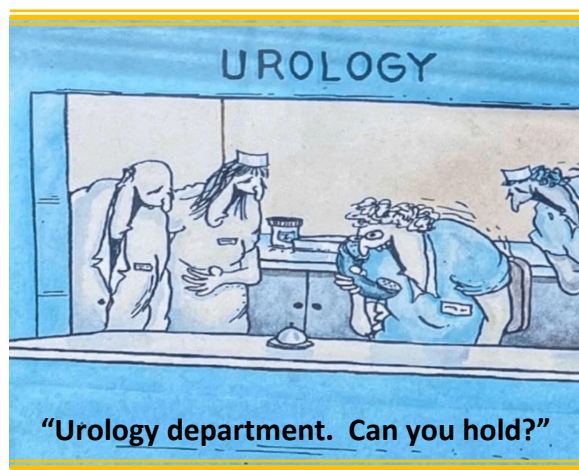
Truman shut down, but eventually became the CIA.

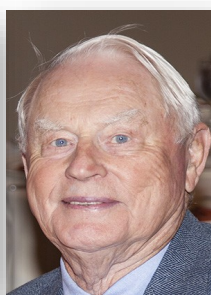
Her husband died early, and she inherited a lot of money. As the author put it: "However, her true story needed no embellishment. She's lived an extraordinary multifaceted life as a small-town girl, a model, a spy, a wife, a mother, a socialite, a fashion icon, and a celebrity."

Our group gave it grades ranging from C- to B.

Our next book is *The Body* by Paul Bryson, and we will meet again on May 24th, either on Zoom or in-person, rules permitting.

Report edited by **Paul Dubow**
John Pearl, Interim Chair





Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled

Pinochle

Charlie Kahsen & Jeff Morrow

We meet on the 2nd and 4th 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

(925) 943-1750

cwkahsen@gmail.com

Jeff Morrow

(925) 944-7009

jeffrey.morrow@gmail.com

Nine Hole Golf Group Verner Laursen

The SIR 146 golf group tees off at 9:30 am at the Diablo Hills Golf Course on most Thursdays. Exception is the second Thursday when we normally go to the SIR luncheon.

If you are interested, let me know and I will put you on my list. On Mondays, I will send out an email asking who is coming for golf, who is walking and who plans to stay for lunch. On Wednesdays I will send out an email setting forth the pairings for Thursday morning. Thursday morning there may be adjustments based on who did or did not show up. Most of the time the lunch is better than our golf game.

vern.laursen@gmail.com



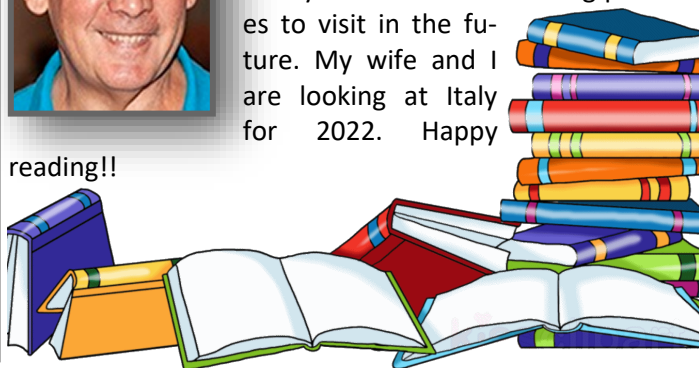
ELECTILE DISFUNCTION
The inability to be aroused by any of the parties standing for election.

Book Corner Peter Plante



I hope you have found some good reads during the last few months to take your mind to interesting places to visit in the future. My wife and I are looking at Italy for 2022. Happy

reading!!





Men's Duplicate Bridge 1

Dave Pierce

Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled

Bobby Nail was a Texan who won four ACBL championships and was second eleven times. Playing in a high-stakes rubber bridge game with a partner more at our level, in second seat he picked up 10 clubs to the AKQJ10 and three singletons. It boded of lots of money. Dealer passed, and Bobby made a tactical pass, hoping to avoid a sacrifice, or hoping to get doubled. Third seat passed, and Bobby's partner passed, remarking, "Bobby, every time I open three bare aces, I get into trouble."

Dave Pierce
925.932.3877
dwpi@astound.net

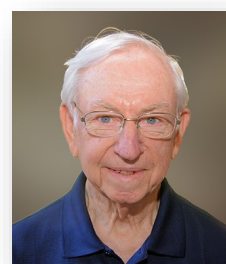


Couples Duplicate Bridge 2

Dave Pierce

Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled

Dave Pierce
932-3877
dwpi@astound.net



Party Bridge Jim Pope & Jim Stedman

Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled



Men's Duplicate Bridge 2 Dick DeVoe

New Activity leader! Click on his photo to contact him about activities.



Men's Duplicate Bridge 3 Mike Whitaker

New Activity leader! Click on his photo to contact him about activities.



Couples Duplicate Bridge 1 Dick DeVoe

New Activity leader! Click on his photo to contact him about activities.



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

Since our April report, we have had online matches of 4 games in 2 groups on Friday March 26th, and April 9th. April 23rd results will be reported next month.

Bob Finlayson won 5 games in the last two matches, followed by **Ray Bland** and **Bob West** who each won 3. **Brian McCarthy** gained 4 seconds. **Bill Vizza** had 3 "Shoot the Moons" followed by **Ray Bland** and **Ron Polivka** with one each. In lowest average score, **Bob West** led with 71, followed by **Bob Finlayson** with 73.

3/26 and 4/9 2021 Summaries

First Name	Bob	Ray	Rich	Bob	Steve	George	Jim	Ron	Bill	Brian	Frank	
Last Name	Finlayson	Bland	Lyon	West	Ybarra	Sabbagha	Nelson	Polivka	Vizza	McCarthy	Lucas	Total/Avg
Wins	5	3	0	3	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	16
2nd	2	2.5	0	0	1.5	0	0	2	2	4	2	16
STM	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	5
Avg score	73	76		71	94			74	86	84	100	82
Uncovered passes	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	5

In YTD wins, **Bob Finlayson** leads with 14 wins followed by **Ray Bland** with 10. **Bob Finlayson** won 50% of his games and **Ray Bland** won 42%. Lowest average score, is led by **Ray Bland** with 70.8, followed by **Ron Polivka** with 71.5. YTD "Shoot the Moon", is led by **Ray Bland** with 6, followed by **George Sabbagha** with 4. **Ray** "STM" in 25% of his games and **George** in 20%. YTD's 2nds, are led by **Brian McCarthy** with 13, followed by **Ray Bland** and **Bob West** with 8. The best "sheriff's YTD" are **Brian McCarthy** and **Bob West** with no uncovered calls.

Future Meetings: Each online group plays 4 games on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month. Our next online games will be Friday, May 14th and 28th at 1pm.

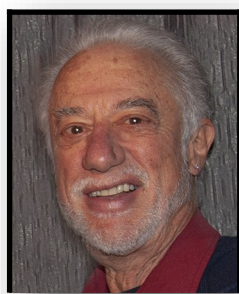
Please call me at [925-518-8472](tel:925-518-8472) or email robrtawest@aol.com if you have any questions or are interested in playing.



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



RV Wanderers Bob Lucido

The next RV trip, has not been scheduled yet but stay tuned for updates.

(925) 899-0974
bobwendy3@comcast.net



Poker Group 1 Dan O'Sullivan

Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled



Poker Group 2

Unfortunately, **Bob Royster**, 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

Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled



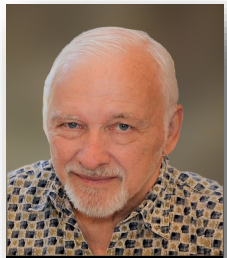
Old Money Poker Group 6 Brad Hatcher

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

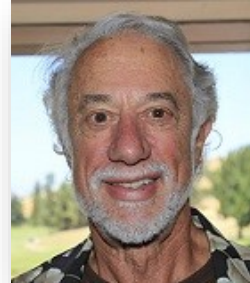
Tel: (925) 935-1571

bhatcher1942@gmail.com



Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled

Poker Group 3 Sig Kalteis



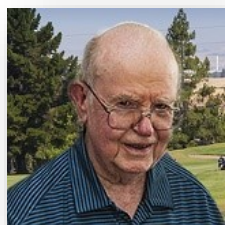
Poker Group 7 Bob Lucido

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.

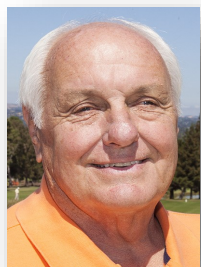
(925) 899-0974

bobwendy3@comcast.net



Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled

Poker Group 4 Rich Hanford



Due to Covid restrictions
Nothing Scheduled

Poker Group 5 Bill Roberts

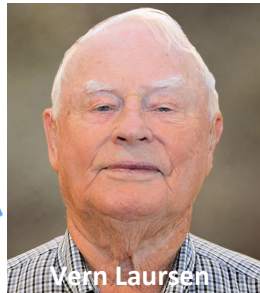


Area 16 Events

Mac User Group (MUG)



Mac



Max Burchett and **Verner Laursen** are the leaders and are available to help Mac, iPhone and iPad users with their questions. Please note that Mac users do not have problems. We do have suggestions on software and where to get the best deals on Mac related products. We will also demonstrate various software products. If you have or may have an interest, please contact us and we will put you on our mailing list. If you are on the list, you will receive an email from time to time about items that are of interest to Mac Users.

Please note that **Max** and **Verner** are here to help Mac users with problems and solutions and there are not formal meetings. They will inform members of new items of interest.

If you are a Mac user and want to be included, please let **Verner** know.

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

Computers & Technology Bill Phelon Chairman



The next Zoom SIR Area 16 Computer & Technology (CAT) Group meeting will be Thursday, May 20th starting at 9:30 AM. Our guest speaker on May 20th will

be **Chuck Joyce** from Branch 8. **Chuck** was an editor in San Francisco television. He started his career as a film editor at KRON (then, a NBC affiliate). He ended his career 43 years later as a digital video editor at KGO (owned by ABC and Disney).

Chuck will introduce you to a creative production tool called "Chroma Key". Your tv weather man stands in front of a blue or green screen. Then, electronically, the technical crew can place ANYTHING behind him. Voila! Now you can set up a green screen in your home and use these images in your own productions.

To attend the Zoom meeting, individuals need to sign-up for the CAT's mailing list by sending an email to Sl-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.

sirarea2cat@gmail.com
rphelon@juno.com
925.254.8338



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 state newsletter can be found by clicking here.](#)

There is also copies of the many forms SIR uses; in short everything SIR can be found here!

Area 16 \$UMS Investment Group

We will again join Branch 128's (San Ramon) Investment Group for their 4th Wed, May 26, Zoom meeting at 1:30 PM.

The topic will be announced. Zoom instructions will be sent out later to those on the email list. Contact **Dave Sutton** to be included.

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



Editorial & Opinion

