

SIR CALL

br146sircall@gmail.com

April 2020

Published For Our Members And Friends

Sons in Retirement Branch 146 of Contra Costa



Big Sir's Notes

Brad Hatcher

Good news: March has brought us rain and we have all relearned how to wash our hands properly.

Bad news: Too many to count but here are the important ones related to SIR.

The bad news for us at Branch 146 is that the State SIR Board has directed all SIR activities and luncheons be cancelled, and they have not provided a timeline for the resumption of those events.

Now with the mandate from the Governor to "Shelter in Place" also with no end date, we must act accordingly. You received a note earlier that the April luncheon was cancelled. Effective now on March 23rd, we have cancelled the May Ladies Day Luncheon. We continue to monitor messages from State Sir, Contra Costa Health Services and policy from the Governor for actions that affect Sir Branch 146 activities.

Usual news: While the March luncheon was cancelled, the Branch Executive Committee was able to meet earlier in the morning on March 12th. Some highlights of the meeting follow. Our Treasurer reports solid cash balances in our Treasury. Little Sir and our Secretary attended a State training event and reported on it.

Our new ride program has received several volunteers who are willing to drive SIR members to our luncheon meetings. However, because of the uncertainty, we did not have any members asking for the service to attend the eventual cancelled March luncheon.

Our Activities Chairman reported that the Table Tennis activity is ready to start now that we have a location for those games. Let's hope it is not too long before play starts.

Since the March luncheon was cancelled, the BEC is looking into how Annual Luncheon Payers will be reimbursed. Ideas were discussed; however, the item was tabled since we don't know how many more luncheons will be cancelled.

WE ARE SIR – MAKE FRIENDS FOR LIFE

Luncheon

Cancelled until Further Notice

You will be updated by email as information becomes available.

Editor's Note

All activities are now cancelled until further notice due to the California state-wide Shelter-in-Place directive caused by COVID-19.

If you have deposits or reservations for events further out in the year, please check with the chairman of those events to see how they plan to deal with your deposit and the status of those events.

Stay healthy. Enjoy your extra time while "Sheltering in Place". I will continue to communicate via eblast e-mails as we learn information that concerns SIR Branch 146 operations. Stay safe.

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

Richard Hockenbrock

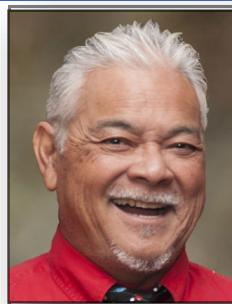
It is ironic that the speaker planned for our cancelled March luncheon was Ray Nassief, Senior VP of Operations & Ancillary Services at John Muir Health. On Friday, February 28th, I was in his office reviewing his presentation. Just a week later his organization was being asked to ramp up rapidly for the impending crisis that we are experiencing now. It was his counselling coupled with others on the BEC that led us to cancel the March luncheon along with his presentation. With all the news since that time, our SIR organization has no idea when things will once again return to normal or even what normal will be like.

Some of the speakers that we now have to skip might fill luncheon slots later in the year. Our April speaker, for instance, was to be Dan Borenstein, Editorial Director from the East Bay Times. His articles and knowledge on Bay Area shenanigans are always interesting. Our Ladies Day Luncheon, Timothy James, a professional Magician, would have performed his tricks as he intermingled with the audience. In June, if we are back to having luncheons, **Larry Kaye** helped me find Walnut Creek resident David Spitz who is the Strength Coach for this year's US Olympics.

While our activities have been changed and cancelled, Big Sir **Brad Hatcher** and I are committed to maintaining contact with the membership through emails and continued publication of the SIR CALL. While reports will be lacking results from nonexistent gatherings, we hope our chairs can find interesting articles to write to fill the spaces. These could include links to stories or videos on You Tube, or from newspapers or magazine articles. Photos and notes from places you have visited in the past could also be featured. Anything you think would be of interest to the SIR BR 146 family would be welcomed.

As we move into uncharted waters over the next few months, I will look to our fishing group to guide us ... hint, hint.

Be safe and stay well!



Membership

Ron Lew

We inducted four new members at our BEC meeting on March 12th even though we did not have our normal March luncheon. Their pictures will be shown under the "New Members" tab on our website after they attend the new members' orientation class when our luncheon resumes. We are saddened to lose 2 members, one passing away in February and one resigning from membership. We voted to place one member on Exempt Status pending a 6-month review. We currently have 291 members in Sir 146 down from 300 at year end. Please think about friends, neighbors, acquaintances and anyone who you may have met who may be interested in enriching their lives through fun activities and events when we start meeting again and renew making friends for life.

2020 Branch 146 Officers and Directors

Big Sir.....	Brad Hatcher
Little Sir.....	Richard Hockenbrock
Secretary	Jerry Kaplan
Assistant Secretary	Tony Greco
Treasurer	George Mon
Assistant Treasurer	Ross Abbott
Director 2nd Term	Milton Smith
Director 2nd Term	Brian McCarthy
Director 2nd Term	Ron Lew
Director 1st Term	Paul Beretz
Director 1st Term	Chuck Schreiber
Director 1st Term	Peter Plante

RAMP – Chair Members

Recruitment	Paul Beretz
Activities	Bob Lucido
Member Relations	Chuck Schreiber
Publicity	Peter Plante

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



Couples Dining Out

Bruce Borgman

How quickly our world has changed! At this writing I would have been reporting on our greatly anticipated event that was scheduled for March 23 at the Burma Unique restaurant in Walnut Creek.

The dinner was so popular that we actually had 86 diners signed up and had added a second evening, on Tuesday March 24th. The dinner was going to include an appetizer, the Burmese tea leaf salad, and five different unique entrees that would have been enjoyed by all. This would have been our most successful restaurant dinner in the seven years that we have had this activity.

Then, the coronavirus hit the news headlines, and it seemed that every day brought new ways for dealing with this crisis. Initially we thought we could still have the dinner, but the restrictions on our activities and social interactions worsened by the week and we received emails from several of our diners requesting to be excused and cancelling their participation. About 10 days prior to the dinner, we were down to 62 diners, still a good crowd, when we decided we would go ahead and cancel. Shortly thereafter, all SIR activities were cancelled and in fact the restaurant is now of course closed to all but take-out menu items.

I initially had actually considered that this might only last a week or two and that we would be able to have the dinner in April, but during this time of social distancing and restricted group activity it is now clear that this would not be possible. So, we have shredded all the checks from our diners, and are hoping to, perhaps, have this same dinner in May. Only time will tell if that is feasible.

I am optimistic that we will weather this challenge to our way of life and that we will be able to soon pick up our lives and activities as it used to be. For now, we wish you good karma, health and optimism so that we can continue to enjoy our retirement and all the good things, like dining out, that accompany these golden years.



Sir Testimonials

Paul Beretz

Because we will have no activity reporting for a while, this new section on Sir Testimonials was recommended by **Paul Beretz**. Below is a testimonial he submitted as to why SIR 146 is important to him.

If you have an interesting story to tell, let us publish it in a future SIR CALL. Please send your story to the email below. We can't promise we can print everything and we must reserve editing capability in case you get too wordy, but this does seem like something worthwhile where we seek testimonials on why SIR 146 is important to you.

Why SIR 146 is Important to Me

Paul Beretz

SIR has become so important to me since I joined in September 2016.

I was still partially employed (no more corporate, nor consulting responsibilities) on the faculty at St. Mary's College in a teaching capacity, but ready to "hang it up" and become a fully retired person which I did at the end of 2017.

If it wasn't for SIR since then, I would have had a big gap in my life, especially with my personality - wanting to be with and around people I enjoy and respect and having the chance to try new things in my life.

I only share this because I'm wondering what you/staff interviewed members about what SIR has meant to them for the next SIR Call? It might serve as a reminder and hope for "I can't wait until we get back to my real life" once COVID-19 is under control.

How I look forward to getting out of my cave and back into the SIR world!

*Editor's Note: Thank you **Paul** for writing this. How about the rest of our membership? We would like to hear from you too. Write back to us at this email address..*

br146sircall@gmail.com

Recently **Brad Hatcher**, asked, why do hot dogs come in packages of 10 but buns are 8 to a pack. Well, Big Sir, we have answers...

See Page 4 for a partial explanation.





Sunshine Brian McCarthy

Let us keep the following 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.

- Hugh Ferguson
- Joe Hunt
- Tom Boltz
- Vince Rettew
- Jim Saavedra
- Bill Stevenson
- Stan Stricherz

If you become aware of an ill Sir, please let me know by email at brimacc@comcast.net or phone (925) 324-2463 so that our SIR members can be advised. Also, if you need a ride to our luncheons or know someone who does please notify **Jerry Benoit** by email at gsb94598@gmail.com.



AREA 16 Fishing Report

Paul Dubow

As of St. Paddy's Day, all of us are on the sidelines anxiously awaiting the day that we can go outside, cast our lines, and get some nice fish.

Prior to the shelter in place directive, we were up to our usual activities. The one exception was trout fishing. After a dull January, trout fishing picked up in February, and then it died again in March. Perhaps the trout had advance knowledge of the Bay Area shutdown and they were already sheltering in place.

However, stripers and sturgeon fishing remained apace. **Tom Kostik**, **Mike Corker**, and **Joe Miscione** all ventured out to the Delta and landed stripers. In addition, they picked up some tasty flounder. **Rich Fiscina** of Branch 146 and **Mario Moratorio** each caught keeper sturgeon.

We cancelled our March meeting, where we intended to hold our annual auction of fishing gear and also cancelled the April meeting. We will hold the auction at the next meeting, currently scheduled for May 28. The meeting will be held at the Legends Bar and Grill at the

Diablo Creek Golf Course at 4040 Port Chicago Highway in Concord. The meeting begins at 8:30 am but members and guests are welcome to enjoy breakfast, beginning at 7:30 am

For further information, feel free to call branch fishing chair **Paul Dubow** at (415) 495-6504 or Big Fish **Ron Lew** at (925) 550-4166.

Photo By Pedro Contreras



Rich Fiscina displays a keeper sturgeon that he caught near the mothball fleet, while fishing on **Pedro Contreras'** boat the "Lone Wolf"

When hot dog buns were introduced, hot dogs were sold in varying quantities at the butcher shop. Not until 1940 were hot dogs packaged the way we currently see them in the grocery store. When manufacturers began packaging hot dogs, they chose ten 1.6oz links to the pack formula to meat to 1lb sales.

Sandwich rolls, or hot dog buns, most often come eight to the pack because the buns are baked in clusters of four in pans designed to hold eight rolls.

SIR Call Newsletter Group

Editor

Richard Hockenbrock

Co - Editors **Walt Busenius, Rob Melrose & Bob West**

Henry Thatcher

Photographer

Jim Barry, Jonathan Korfhage

Proofreaders

Ron Polivka, and Calvin Tucker

Internet Posting

Ron Plachy



Photography Group

Richard Hockenbrock

Since the library cancelled our photography meeting the day before we were scheduled to meet on March 13th, I've decided to post the video links to the You Tube presentation I was going to show at the meeting.

Unfortunately, I'm not able to scrub the commercials from the video like I would do if I were presenting them at the meeting; however, you can skip the commercial 4 seconds after the video starts at the beginning of each video by clicking skip ad.

The first video has the title "**Nikon's is Dying**".

The premise of this video is that Nikon transition to mirrorless cameras has gone poorly and Nikon is expected to report negative earnings for the foreseeable future. The video shows where Nikon made bad decisions in their camera developments. Left click: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74oWUeRb65k>

Video # 2 is titled "**Jpeg vs HEIF: Is Jpeg Dead?**"

This video explains why Apple switched from storing pictures on their new iPhones to HEIF instead of JPEG format. Left click: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URYoWZnXISg>

Video #3 is titled "**Canon EOS R5: 8K is REAL**" and is about the latest Canon 5R 8K video/still camera whose specs have been announced but the camera itself is not expected until the end of 2020. If the announcement is real, this Canon camera would move ahead of all the other manufacturers in terms of video capture. Left click: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iTtEZFU8I>

Video #4 compares all the current **Sony alpha APC cameras from the Sony A6000 vs A6300 vs A6400 vs A6500**. It is almost 30 minutes long but very informative if you are interested in Sony APC cameras. Left click: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SpYRJ5yjYDo>

This final link is to a music video by Don Henley titled "**Take A Picture of This**". I put it in this photography report because of the title but the words describe many of us; SIR members moving through the challenges of life. This is a moving country song introduced four year ago!

Left Click: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHTZwvgcGZQ>

Given that we will not be having meetings for possibly some time, let me know if these videos are of interest to you as I might continue providing them in future reports.

Email: RLHOCK@outlook.com

Cell: (925) 324-1713



RV Wanderers

Bob Lucido

Our next trip is scheduled for June if they let us out of our houses.

The site will be near the town of Manchester in Mendocino.

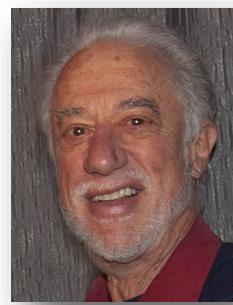
Part of the drive will be on Hwy. 1, but we will be careful and not wipe out too many other cars on the sharp turns.

We currently have eight couples that will join us.

Bob Lucido

(925) 899-0974

bobwendy3@comcast.net



Activities Coordinator

Bob Lucido

The State SIR organization is encouraging SIR branches to share activities.

The United Methodist church has given the OK to use their facility to play table tennis.

Unfortunately, because of the virus we will have to put it off until we get the go ahead from the State.

Kenneth Main from SIR 8 in Concord, Fred **Wachowicz** from SIR Branch 116 in Walnut Creek, and yours truly, **Bob Lucido** are scheduling a meeting to discuss sharing activities among our branches.

As you know, all meetings are on hold, so when this clears up we will set up a meeting and discuss how to post the activities.

Bob Lucido

(925) 899-0974

bobwendy3@comcast.net



SIR Happenings Newsletter

[http://www.sirinc.org/
sirhappenings](http://www.sirinc.org/sirhappenings) is the statewide SIR newsletter.

Click on the link to read the current issue. You may enjoy reading about the activities of other branches.





Travel

Milt Smith

As of this writing, March 21st, only SIR Day at the Races, previously scheduled for March 27th, has been postponed. No other travel activities have been postponed or cancelled.

We are closely monitoring them and will be communicating via email all changes as they come.

In all cases, those members who have signed up for any of these activities should have received an email from me regarding your event. If you have any additional questions, please contact me below.

Upcoming activities that are being closely monitored are the CHP Day Trip on May 13th, the Baltic Cruise in late May early June, and the Quebec City to New York City North American Treasures cruise set for September 28th.

It is important to note that we are looking into a day trip for the fall, AND with a POSITIVE OUTLOOK FOR 2021 we are looking at the Dalmatian Coast, Africa, the Holy Land and others. Let me know of any other interests.



Narsai David
KCBS Food and Wine Editor

Narsai David Cruise. Several SIR branches are putting this cruise together.

- Eight nights North American Treasures Cruise aboard the Crystal Serenity. September 28th—October 6th, 2020
- Quebec City to New York City
- On this hosted cruise Narsai will share his numerous years of expertise in California Cuisine.
- Port Stops: Quebec City, cruising the St. Lawrence, cruising the Bay of Fundy, St. John, Bar Harbor, Boston / Newport, NYC.
- Crystal Cruises is now all inclusive. All beverages, gratuities, enrichment classes.

- Double occupancy from \$3,683 pp to \$7,283 pp depending on cabin. Airfare not included.

This trip is filling fast so if you intend to go better sign up now by calling Alamo Travel at (925) 837-8742. Be sure to mention SIR Br. 146. Let me know, too.

It is not too late to sign up for the **SIR Branch 146 Grand Baltic Sea Voyage — Small Ship Adventure by Overseas Adventure Travel**

DEPARTURE DATE: June 6th, 2020

- Denmark: Copenhagen, Bornholm
- Poland: Gdansk
- Sweden: Visby, Stockholm
- Latvia: Riga
- Estonia: Tallinn
- Russia: St. Petersburg
- Finland: Helsinki.

Trip extensions available to Copenhagen and/or Stockholm from \$1,395 each.

Fourteen days from \$8,255 Includes international airfare from Sacramento. Fourteen days from \$6,695 without international airfare.

Call OAT (800) 955-1925 tell them you want trip GO-23630. Call me if you need for more information.

CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL DAY TRIP MAY 13TH.

We are filling up fast, so send me a check for \$67 per person, payable to SIR 146 to secure your place. Trip includes luxury bus ride, lunch, tour and time to visit the museum on site. Depart 10 am back by 5ish... Let me know if you need information.

What are we thinking about for 2021? Please let me know if any of these are of interest!

- Land tour of Israel and the Holy Land & Timeless Cultures
- Vietnam
- African Migration Kenya
- WWII European Battlefield Tours
- Hidden Gems of the Dalmatian Coast
- Morocco Sahara Odyssey – Suez Canal, Israel Egypt Jordan and the Red Sea

Milt Smith

(925) 285-2897

miltsmith549@gmail.com

You know you are getting old when a recliner and a heating pad is your idea of a hot date.



SIR 146 Hiking

Mark Curtis

**Until Further Notice all SIR
146 hiking activities are cancelled.**

Hopefully, we will be able to get out on one of the local trails in May. I will continue to explore hiking venues in the area, and if I find one that is moderate in intensity and interesting, I will forward that information to my hiking group email distribution list. I expect that the 1st hike we go on after this suspension will be a 6-mile loop trail in Redwood Regional park which is along the highway 13 corridor. If you want to receive email notification from me regarding projected hikes, please let me know via email or phone call.

Our last hike was Mount Diablo Falls Loop trail. There was very little water in Donner Creek tributaries. Those in attendance were **Christine Benoit, Jim Nelson, Pete Gates**, and yours truly. I've attached a couple of photos taken by **Christine** which demonstrate the severity of the single-track trail that we were on.

Spouses always welcome

Rain cancels

Dogs not allowed on this trail

Mark Curtis

Cell (925) 360-3449

Mocurtis1657@gmail.com

Hiking Group—Mount Diablo Falls Loop trail: Top Right Photo:
Mark Curtis, and **Jim Nelson**.

Bottom Right Photo: **Mark Curtis**



Photo by Christine Benoit



Photo by Christine Benoit

Have you ever wondered the sun lightens our hair, but darkens our skin?

The sun bleaches and destroys the melanin in your hair giving you lighter hair. Since hair is dead, the hair will stay that color until new hair comes in.

When sun shines on your skin, it destroys the melanin as well. Your skin cells make more melanin and your skin becomes darker.





Cycling Group

Larry Kaye

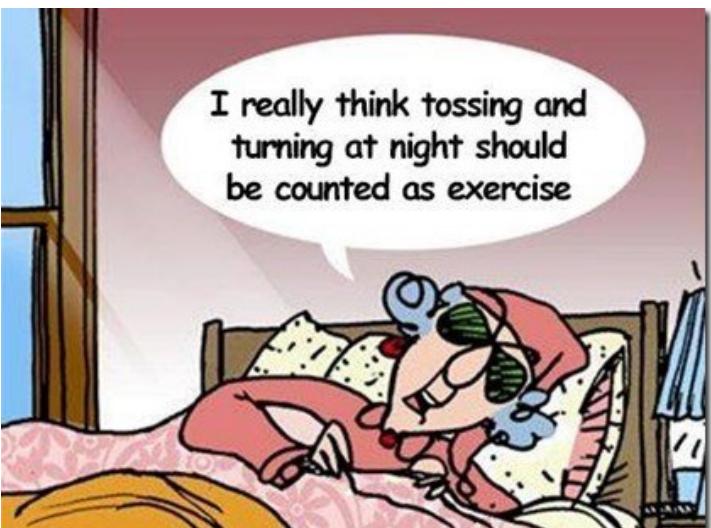
FEBRUARY 28TH: Today was to be a challenge for the Spandex guys from 146. We left Alamo earlier than normal to allow for the greater distance. We cruised thru Walnut Creek, experienced the bridges over Ygnacio and meandered thru Pleasant Hill. Going thru many streets and turns we entered the outskirts of Martinez.

Stopping to enjoy the restrooms at a park we regrouped. Off toward the County seat we headed. Pedaling thru Pacheco (ugly) we passed the old Shell refinery and entered town. The goal was to stop at State Coffee Cafe on Ward. We coasted into this Mecca and immediately downed some java and, of course, some belly bombs.

Using the facilities and resting for some time, we again mounted our steeds and took off. Traveling thru Pleasant Hill again and joining the Canal trail we headed toward the Iron Horse trail. Finally, it appeared, and we turned toward Alamo.

Going thru the CREEK, we stayed on the trail and after some miles the turn to our steel beasts appeared. Removing ourselves from our bike seats was best described as pure joy. 32 miles and over 1100 feet of climbing was left behind us.

Today's heroes were: **Moose, Bill Holly, Michael Wolfson, Bob Wilkenfeld, and Larry Kaye.** This was proof positive that with friends along one can do almost anything.



MARCH 11TH: The Benicia Bridge was no unsurmountable task today for the boys in Spandex. **Big Jim Nelson**, former fellow TRI guy led the boys today.

We rode from Martinez through the City and mounted the Bridge as a Peloton. Riding over this Bridge was an experience. Loud and dirty. The bike path was a help but it seems no one packs out their garbage. Into Benicia we went. Exploring the paths and back streets he mapped out. **Jim** took us to a great coffee house where we indulged in Java and assorted sweets.

After using the facilities, we regrouped and began the ride back. Cruising past Shell Oil, **Bob Wilkenfeld** remarked how the smell made him homesick for Chevron, his last home. In a line, we traversed town and back to our steel vehicles we went. A great ride and tour of our first State Capital. Two wheels, a tour guide and a bunch of Sir friends. All one needs for a fun day. Attending today were **Ron Lew, Bob Wilkenfeld, Bob Lucido, Roger Meyer, Bill Ross, Michael Wolfson, Jim Nelson, Ken Studer and Larry Kaye.**



Pinochle

Charlie Kahsen / Jeff Morrow



We meet on the 2nd & 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

Join the Slugfest State SIR Annual Bay Bridge Series



**SIR Day at the Ballpark
June 7, 2020, Sunday, 1pm
Oakland Coliseum, Section 106 (shaded)**

**INSTRUCTIONS: Make a \$55/pp check to W. Lee Moy. Include a self-stamped return addressed envelope to W. Lee Moy, 127 N. Helm Ave, Clovis, CA 93612.
Deadline May 5, 2020.**

**W. Lee Moy
State SIR Sports LeeHealthStudio@gmail.com
(559) 709-9851**

Mexican Train Dominoes Groups



Mexican Train Dominoes Group 1 (UNO) Jerry Kaplan

The Group One players met in March on "Friday the 13th" for our third Game Night of 2020 at the pleasant Concord home of **Corrie Oranje** and his wife, **Sue**. The hosts provided many delicious treats including a delicious Boterkoek (Dutch Butter Cake) that everyone enjoyed, especially with fresh whipped cream!

We had an almost full complement with 16 players vying for the top prizes. With a few regulars travelling and some staying away because of virus exposure concerns, substitutes **Tony Greco** and his wife, **Cindy**, as well as **Bob Lucido** and his spouse, **Wendy**, were able to join us and contribute to the fun evening as well as \$3 to the kitty.

Martha Plante, wife of **Peter**, took the \$19 first place prize with a low average score of 13.6 over 9 games played, followed by host **Corrie Oranje** (14.0). Third Place went to **Susan Kaplan**, spouse of **Jerry**, with an average of 15.3.

Two of our substitutes, **Tony** and **Bob**, came in last with very high scores but were given \$1 scratchers with the potential for a big win! (Alas, they lost there also). We all hope they are willing to come back again and play with us.

MTD Group One has 16 substitute players that we welcome whenever space is available. We contact these individuals when some of the regulars know they will miss a Game Night. Since almost all the substitutes already play as regulars in one of the other seven MTD groups in the branch, we try to invite first those individuals who do not play frequently.

Branch members who have not played before but would like to join us for a fun evening, please contact Jerry to learn how. The game is entertaining to play and easy to learn! Single SIRs as well as a SIR and his

Photo by Richard Hockenbrock



MTD Group 1 photo

Photo by Richard Hockenbrock



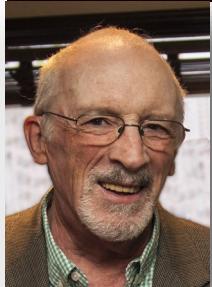
MTD Group 1 Winners: (L to R) : Host **Corrie Oranje** 2nd,
Martha Plante 1st, and **Susan Kaplan** 3rd.

Photo by Richard Hockenbrock



MtD Group 1: "Scratchers" **Tony Greco**, and **Bob Lucido**

Mexican Train Dominoes Groups



Mexican Train Dominoes Group 3 (TRES)

Jeff Baily

No Event



Mexican Train Dominoes Group 2 (DOS)

Ron Plachy

Like all activities, Mexican Train Dominoes didn't meet in March. We did, however, play on February 27th which was too late to make the March newsletter.

We were hosted in February by **Don** and **Etta Dotson** who prepared a feast from soup to nuts with added cake and ice cream on top of that. Take a look at the spread before the hungry mob attacked it!

Two of our regular substitutes, **Tony** and **Cindy Greco**, sat in for **Dick** and **Janice Woodman** as **Dick** was recuperating from his recent stroke. It sounds as though **Dick** will be fine if and when we ever get to play again.

After playing and feasting we had our three leaders: **Rich Ahlf** took 1st with a 13.4 average, **Ismini MacLean** was 2nd with a 14.1 average, and **Bill Cammerer** took 3rd place with a 15.0 average.



Mexican Train Dominoes Group 4 (El Quattro)

Jim Pope

No Event



Mexican Train Dominoes Group 5 (CINCO)

Dave Pierce

No Event



Photo by Ron Plachy

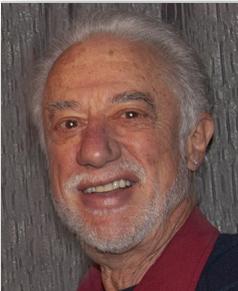


Photo by Ron Plachy

MTD_2: We also awarded the January stipends to our winners; left to right in the photo are: **Lynette Holly** 3rd , **Anne Plachy** 2nd , **Ismini MacLean** 1st

MTD_2: (Photo to left) Feast prepared by **Don** and **Etta Dotson**

Mexican Train Dominoes Groups



Mexican Train Dominoes Group 7 (Siete)

We played MTD just in time before SIR shut us down.

Dale & Mary Ellen opened their lovely house to host MTD Group 7 for March. Our winner was **Wendy Lucido** (first win ever!).

Our Scratcher was awarded with the highest average score to **Bev Colliers**, who did not win a million dollars on the ticket.

Bob Lucido

(925) 899-0974

Bobwendy3@comcast.net



Mexican Train Dominoes Group 6 (SEIS)

John "Moose" Kelly

I hope this email finds you all well and sheltering in place to beat COVID - 19. We were scheduled to meet at the home of **Bob** and **Jane West** on March 25th. Obviously, that did not occur. I am not sure we will meet on Tuesday, April 28th. But I will keep my tiles crossed and hope for the best. I will notify you as the time gets closer.

I hope you have been practicing your skills with your significant other or your spouse. If you have been practicing, then I hope you are still speaking to one another during this time after playing. Once we reconvene our MTD gatherings, I am sure you won't miss a beat. I look forward to resuming our time together but until then, be safe and stay well. And as SIR **Jerry Kaplan** always states: "Don't forget to tap that final tile"!!



WARNING

There is an email going around offering processed pork, gelatin and salt in a can.

If you get this email, do not open it. It's spam.

Just bought a book from IKEA





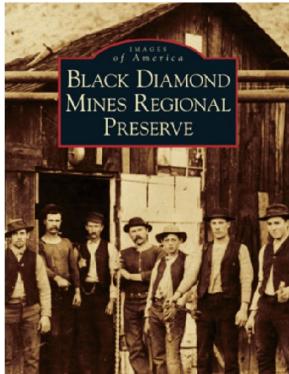
Explore & Eat

Black Diamond Mine Tour

May 18th 10:00 in Antioch



These mining operations were a colorful past history and an integral part of California's economic development after the Gold Rush and was instrumental in California's economic growth in the mid to late 1800's.



Coal Mining: From the 1860s through the turn of the last century, five coal mining towns thrived in the Black Diamond area: Nortonville, Somerville, Stewartville, West Hartley, and Judsonville. As the location of California's largest coal mining operation, nearly four million tons of coal ("black diamonds") were removed from the earth. The residents of the mining towns were from all over the world, and their life was characterized by hard work and long hours. Occasional celebrations and a variety of organizations and social activities served to alleviate the drudgery of daily existence.

Sand Mining: In the 1920s underground mining for sand began near the deserted Nortonville and Somerville townsites. The Somerville mine supplied sand used in glass making by the Hazel-Atlas Glass Company in Oakland, while the Nortonville mine supplied the Columbia Steel Works with foundry (casting) sand. Competition from Belgian glass and the closing of the steel foundry ended the sand mining by 1949. Altogether, more than 1.8 million tons of sand had been mined.

This is an outstanding opportunity to comfortably enjoy a walking tour of a mine in safe, well-lighted environment. Tour participants take a 1309-foot walk into the mine to see mine workings, ore chutes, the shifter's office, and ancient geological features. For safety reasons, you may tour the mine only as part of a guided tour. The tour will last about 90 minutes thru the mine.

After the tour we will proceed for lunch to the **Smith Landing Seafood Grill on the river at the Antioch Marina located at 1 Marina Plaza, Antioch. Parking is FREE at the entrance to mine. There are only 32 spaces available on this Private Tour so sign up early. Please make your check for \$5 per person (\$10/couple) payable to SIR 146 Explore & Eat and send your checks to: Jim Pope 385 Bryan Drive, Alamo, CA 94507.** Please send your name and name of your guest with your check. No cancellation refunds after May 11th. **Please get your checks in ASAP.**

We are looking forward to your participation!

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



Explore & Eat Historic Benicia State Capitol Tour



On Friday, March 6th, in Benicia, a group of 34 California history enthusiasts joined together to tour the Benicia Capitol State Historic Park and Fischer-Hanlon House. We toured both floors of the State Capitol building and the two-story Fisher-Hanlon House next door. We had enthusiastic tour guides who shared many aspects of early California history. One was dressed in period clothing and was a delightful docent. The other docent was a wonderful story teller.

The group included: **Clint and Bev Colliers, Loren and Marlene DeLaurenti, Don and Etta Dotson, Paul Dubow, Tony and Cindy Greco, Bill Holly, Richard and Rita Kincaide, Robert and Wendy Lucido, Earl Nevares and Anne Smith, Chuck Oldham and Marilyn McClaskey , Rich and Kim Pace, Ron and Victoria Polivka, Jim and Renie Pope, Don and June Seaton, Robert and Althea Soldano, Joe and Barbara Stengel, Henry and Barbara Thatcher, Lee Thomas and Barbara Rhodes, Charlie and Diane Walker, and Bob and Jane West.**

We learned of the four California State Capitals (Benicia was the third) and saw up close one of 12 remaining U.S flags with only 31 Stars (see picture below). We also saw several original desks for California State Senators and an early map of the West that many of the settlers used to get to California, Oregon and Washington state in the mid-1800s. After the tour we all moved to Sailor Jack's restaurant where we enjoyed a seafood lunch and a glorious view of the Bay and the new Al Zampa Bridge.

Henry Thatcher and Jim Pope, Co-Chairs (Photos from Henry Thatcher)



SIR 146 -- Explore & Eat

Historic Benicia State Capitol Tour

March 6, 2020 In Benicia

Page 2 of 3



Benicia Senate Room: Note 31 star US Flag



Benicia Assembly Room 1st Floor: Note hats in Senate and Assembly were used to vote, in the event a member had left room. A hat left up meant yes, down meant no.



Fischer-Hanlon House: Dining Room



Fischer-Hanlon House: 2nd Floor
"Main Bedroom"



Above: Sailor Jack's Restaurant where we enjoyed a seafood lunch and a glorious view of the Bay and the new Al Zampa Bridge.

SIR 146 -- Explore & Eat

Historic Benicia State Capitol Tour

March 6, 2020 In Benicia

Page 3 of 3



Photo : Bob West

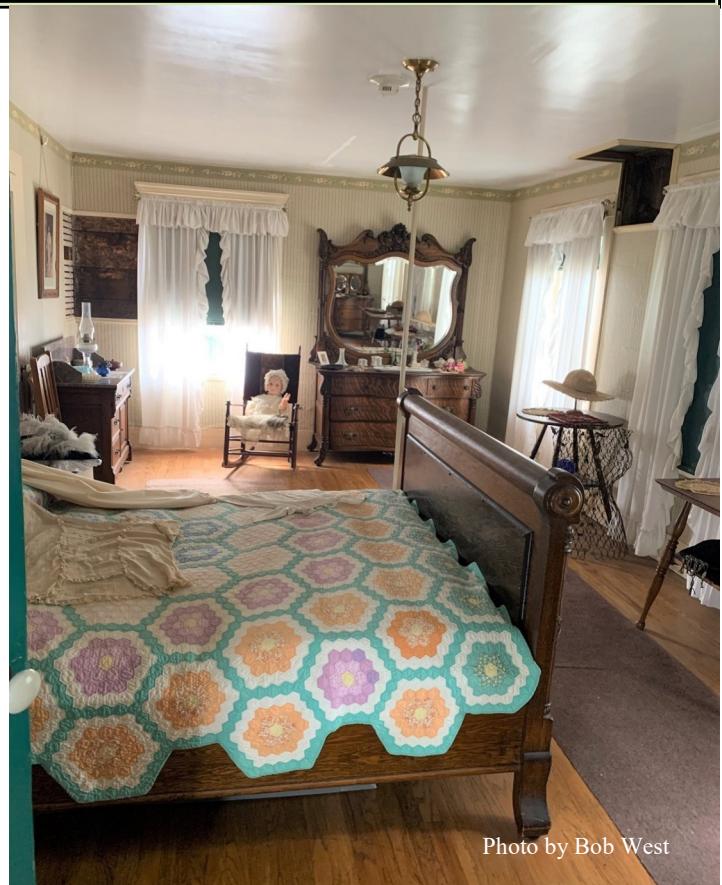


Photo by Bob West



Assorted Tools in Barn behind Fischer-Hanlon House



Photo by Bob West

Fischer Hanlon House 2nd Floor :

Above: Bedroom #2

To Left: Bedroom #3

Below: Bedroom #4



Cooking II

Bob Yolland

Ken Richter hosted an excellent lunch Monday, March 9th. His starters included a great Smoked Salmon and Caper dip, a warm Pizza dip with a little kick to it, sliced Salami, cheese and a variety of crackers. These were served with some very superb wines brought by each cooking member and lots of conversation.

For the entree **Ken** made a delicious baked Roast Beef sandwich on King Hawaiian Rolls with cheese, horseradish sauce, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce and poppy seeds. It was accompanied by a very outstanding Baby Spinach and Orange salad dressed with vinaigrette. For the final course, **Ken** created his ever-popular signature shake. This creation consists of blending Kailua, Rum, Galliano, Vanilla Ice Cream and some unknown secret ingredients. It tastes fabulous and goes down very easily. What a nice way to complete a meal. Thank you, **Ken**.

Our next April event's date is under review. We had agreed to move it to the first Monday, April 6th at **Bruce Borgman's**. Since travel plans have now changed, we may now go back to our regular second Monday, April 13th.



Cribbage

John Pearl

Due to the Corona-19 Virus pandemic and our membership in the vulnerable over 60 group, we canceled our March meeting.

No meeting until further notice.

John Pearl, Chair
mcpearl@astound.net



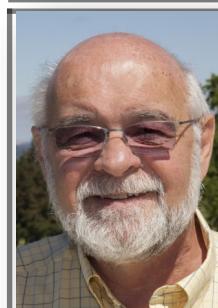
Table Pool



Bill Weinberg / Jim Barry

We meet every Monday at 11:00 am at Masses, 2721 North Main in Walnut Creek. No advance notice is necessary. Just show up and play. Cost is \$5 for as long as you want to play. This is a special rate that Masses gives SIR members. You can also play at other times during the week for the same \$5. Just tell them you are a member of SIR. We play mostly two man teams of eight ball, or a unique three-player game, called "Crazy Eights", depending on the number of participants. We usually play about 2 hours but not everyone stays for the final curtain.

Reported by **Jim Barry**



Wine Tasting

Rob Melrose

Our April Wine Tasting event was to be held at the home of **Larry and Ann Kaye**. That event has been **canceled** due to the health concerns caused by Covid-19. If we are cleared to have events our next Wine Tasting will be in July. I will keep the people on my distribution list updated.

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

Helvetica and Times New Roman walk into a bar.

"Get out of here!" shouts the bartender. "We don't serve your type."

Q; Why do we tell actors to break a leg?

A: Because every play has a cast.



Sir 146 MEN'S Hearts

Bob West

We were set to have two tables of hearts on March 19th, when we got the call to suspend all SIR activities. We will sorely miss our members during this necessary down time. It's unfortunate as with this isolation we miss our activities even more.

Activities have been suspended indefinitely, we will shelter in place, and look forward to the month that we can get together again.

We meet on the third Thursday of each month at Rocco's Italian Restaurant, located at 2909 Ygnacio Valley Rd. in Walnut Creek. We play from 12:45-3:15 pm with an optional lunch at noon. This is a Men's SIR 146 function with new members welcome.

Please call me at 925-518-8472 or email robertawest@aol.com if you have any questions or would like to be added to our group's email list.



Pickleball

Jim Burk

Branch 146 Sirs (some with their spouses) are now regularly playing this exciting and active game at the Activity and Recreation Center (ARC) of the San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church.

The ARC is located at 902 Danville Boulevard in Alamo and has three beautiful courts for playing Pickle Ball. Everyone is welcome to play there during any of the drop-in times on Monday thru Friday between 9:00 am and 1:00 pm. A player will pay \$5 per session. Each player will be allowed to get in as many games as the number of players that day allows using the traditional player wait list approach.

The instruction part of our Pickle Ball activity will be temporarily put on hold because of some business matters being discussed with the County. Once that is settled, we will hope to be back in business with the offering of instruction and will let you know accordingly. Please be aware that the "drop-in" pickle ball activity will continue to happen on Monday thru Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Call or email to learn more about the game and/or information about the facility where the Pickle Ball courts are available.

Jim Burk

(925) 946-1192

jimanneburk@sbcglobal.net



SongSirs

Bruce Borgman

The SongSirs had a good practice in early March and prepared their repertoire of Irish songs, which included "Danny Boy", "My Wild Irish Rose", "Harrigan", "Who Threw the Overalls in Mrs. Murphy's Chowder", and several others. We thought we would be ready to sing these wonderful Irish songs at one of the several Senior Living facilities, which had requested a performance around St. Patrick's Day. We had selected Byron Park, on Tice Valley Road, a large facility, which always is pleased to have us sing for them. It was scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, which would normally be our regular rehearsal and, thus, worked well in our schedule. We were also pleased to welcome a new member to the SongSirs – Sir Dennis “Rick” Tye, who clearly has had lots of experience in singing in groups and joined in our practice with gusto.

But how life has changed in such a short time. With the news of the coronavirus outbreak in China, and the spread of the virus to other countries, our lives were

up-ended. We became used to increasing restrictions on our activities as the weeks wore on in March. We heard rumors that the Senior Living facilities were restricting visitors and when we called the Activities Director she confirmed that, unfortunately, they would need to cancel our performance on March 18.

We decided to cancel the practice that day as well; and in the subsequent days followed the directive of the State SIR and our own branch to cancel all activities. I am confident that we will weather this interruption of our normal routine and will soon be able to resume our active lives. The SongSirs will return better than ever. In the meantime, follow the guidelines for social distancing and handwashing – and stay healthy!

(925) 932-3961

bgborgman@aol.com



Men's Duplicate Bridge 2 Bill Schultz

Ed Marlovits hosted three tables of duplicate bridge at our most recent gathering. There were eleven regulars and one substitute, **Ray Spears**. **David Steinberg**, **John Boyan** and **David Pierce** were the morning session leaders in that order. In the afternoon **John Boyan** and **David Pierce** tied for first place and **Ray Spears** was third. **Ray's** great second half earned him the title of come-back -kid for the day.

When the dust settled it was the same players from the morning, but in a different order. **John Boyan** was the overall winner followed by **Dave Pierce** and **Dave Steinberg**. There was one perfect six partnership on boards 13 thru 15 by **Jim Brown** and **Dave Pierce**.

No further games are now scheduled until the "shelter in place order" has been lifted.

Photo by Bill Schultz



Men's duplicate 2 winners: Above Photo: **Bill Schultz** handing winnings to **Ed Marlovits** out host standing in for **John Boyan** 1st, **David Pierce** 2nd and **Dave Steinberg** 3rd

Below photo: **Rich Ahlf**, **Bob Yolland**, **Dave Pierce**, **Dave Steinberg**, **John Boyan** and **Mark Curtis** enjoy some good weather on **Ed Marlovits** patio during the lunch break



Our SIR146 Theater Party on April 24th is cancelled.

The news from Lesher Arts Center is that the musical "9 to 5" has been postponed by Contra Costa Musical Theater until next fall because of COVID-19 and the precautions currently underway.

For the twenty-five Sir members and friends looking forward to this rollicking musical, we'll just wait a few months to see how the three downtrodden working girls in the musical deal with their pompous boss. I understand, it'll be worth the wait!

With your permission, I will shred all the checks received for this event, unless you notify me this week that you prefer otherwise.

Thanks to all of you for your patience as this situation has evolved.

After the current health crisis is over, and CCMT announces their plans for next fall, we'll plan to schedule a new SIR146 Theater Party, and hope you'll be ready to frolic! So, stay tuned!

Gary Schaub
gschaub1@gmail.com



Men's Duplicate Bridge 1 Dave Pierce

We (of course) cancelled our game in March (and presumably April) so I thought I would write about a yarborough.

Most of you know that a yarborough is a hand with no card higher than a 9. It's named after the second Earl of Yarborough. In the days of whist (from which today's bridge is descended), the Earl would bet 1000:1 that you would not be dealt such a hand. Since the odds are actually 1828:1, presumably he did well, assuming he played a lot of whist. Your chance of being dealt a yarborough in 24 boards is about 1 in 77. That means you should expect one 3- 4 times a year in our game .



Couples Party Bridge

Tony Greco

Larry & Linda Brown hosted our March 3rd event in Clayton. Traffic was the worst I've seen for a Tuesday evening on Ygnacio Valley Road causing several of us to barely arrive by 7:00 pm and some of us to be a little late. We all took it in stride as we ate snacks and sipped wine both before and after everyone arrived. At the end of play we were all treated to a delicious cheesecake and coffee.

With two regular pairs dropping out, getting enough players was a challenge. We appreciate our loyal subs **John & Kathy Kluesener** for subbing and **Dave & Joan Pierce** for subbing on short notice. And to make matters worse, my partner **Cindy** bowed out on the morning of the event. No, it wasn't the coronavirus! So, **Brad Hatcher**, half of one of our regulars who had dropped out, agreed to play and be my partner. Last thing he said to me at the end of the evening was "Never again". LOL.

Tony & Brad got off to a good start, grabbing first place with 1650 points after the first round. The "honeymoon" ended quickly with our point count for each remaining round steadily dropping with a last round point count of only 50 points. Rumors of a "divorce" were beginning to circulate. At the end of the evening, **Tony & Brad** were reported to be in Last Place; however, after an audit check a few days later, an error correction moved them into 3rd Place. Maybe the "marriage" can be saved! LOL. The most consistent point gatherers were **Dave & Joan** and **Larry & Linda** who finished first and second, respectively.

The official results are as follows:

- 1st PLACE with 4080 points - **Dave & Joan Pierce**
- 2nd PLACE with 3340 points - **Larry & Linda Brown**
- 3rd PLACE with 2510 points—**Tony Greco & Brad Hatcher**
- 4th PLACE with 2420 points - **Jerry & Linda Benoit**
(honorable mention only)

Next month's event scheduled for April 7th has been cancelled due to the ceasing of all SIR activities until further notice, in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

(925) 934-0395

almanorwest@sbcglobal.net



Couples Duplicate Bridge 2

Dave Pierce

Undaunted by the coronavirus and the bear market, all six regular couples gathered at **Joan** and **Dave Pierce's** while **Bernie** and **Joe** were contesting delegates in Michigan. **Ken** and **Elaine Richter** bid and made 6 NT on one board, and there were plenty of other challenging hands this evening. Once the votes were counted, **Cindy** and **Tony Greco** were first (60%), the **Pierces** were second (59%), and **Dick** and **Christy DeVoe** were third (54%). **Joan** served a delicious pumpkin pie (using **Cindy's** recipe), a rare treat in the spring. With so many events now being cancelled, we'll be bored, and looking forward to seeing good friends across the table in April.

Dave Pierce, 932-3877
dwp1@astound.net



Party Bridge

**Jim Pope &
Jim Stedman**

On Monday
March 2nd 12
players gathered at

SIR **Jim Pope's** home for party bridge.

Brad Hatcher finished first with 4170 points. **Jim Stedman** was second with 4070 points and **Bob Yolland** finished third with 4020 points.

For the six-month contest **Jim Stedman** is leading with an average score of 4883 points followed by **Rich Ahlf** with 4580 points and **Mike Whitaker** with 3890 points.

The date for our next game is unknown.

Please call **Jim Pope** at 925-699-6447 if you would like to join our party bridge group.



THIS IS NOT A JOKE:

Wash Your hands!





Poker Group 1

Dan O'Sullivan

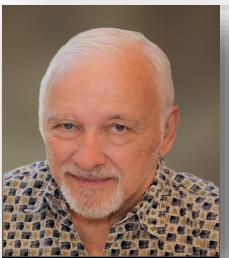
No Event



Poker Group 2

Bob Royster

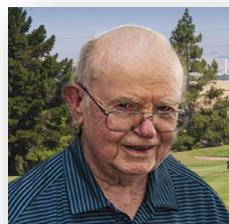
*Poker Group 2 meets on the fourth Monday of the month at various members' homes. Contact **Bob Royster** if you would like to join our group as a member or substitute.*



Poker Group 3

Sig Kalteis

*Poker Club 3 meets on the fourth Monday of the month. We usually play at my house. Contact **Sig Kalteis** if you would like to be on the list as a substitute.*



Poker Group 4

Rich Hanford

Poker Group 4 meets on the fourth Monday of the month at homes of the various members.



Poker Group 5

Bill Roberts

*Poker Group 5 meets the Wednesday prior to the SIR luncheon. **Bill Roberts** is the permanent host for our event.*



Old Money Poker

Group 6

Brad Hatcher

The game was held at the **Hatcher** home with a full complement of players. The wine and snacks disappeared almost as fast as some players discovered holes in their wallet. Some found new dollars to add to their cash reserves.

Our next game, when COVID-19 goes away, will be held at **Chuck Denney's** home – hopefully soon.

We are looking for both substitutes and permanent players to join in the fun.

Brad Hatcher

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



Poker Group 7

Bob Lucido

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



GOLF

Ed Marlovits



We were all set for our Hand Mashie Tournament Tuesday when it all came to a sudden halt. The golf committee had decided with much ambivalence to go ahead with Tuesday golf and we had twenty-three members scheduled to play. But on Monday the SIR organization decided to cancel all SIR events. Hard on the heels of that came the Bay Area and State-wide shelter in place shutdowns. So, while we were inconvenienced, let's be aware of the employees at Boundary Oak who are very likely to be losing their incomes.

Our April meeting and luncheon is very unlikely to be held. April play at Diablo Creek won't happen, and our May away golf at Rossmoor is in doubt. If golf were mainly about bad drives and missed putts, we would not be playing. Like the rest of SIR activities, golf is about strangers who have become acquaintances, and acquaintances who have become friends. The best we can do now is hunker down, stay safe and look forward to when we can get back out in the sunshine with friends.

On a brighter note, our last Tuesday golf was in a way a Super Tuesday. **Mike Roach** shot his age and **Don Rhodes** aced #12. No one saw **Don's** ball go in the cup and he was about to play a lost ball when someone saw a white object in the cup! We should also mention that a couple of Tuesdays before that, **Lew Thompson**, on his first day playing after surgery, had a round with four birdies and he came very close to shooting his age.



Golfers on March 10th at 9th hole turn: **Steve Lane, Max Hinke and Norm Baietti**

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.

vlaursen@astound.net

The good old days when restaurants were open.



Hang in there, those days will be back soon.

Area 16 Events

Mac User Group (MUG)



Max Burchett



Vern Laursen

The Mac Users Group (MUG) meets the first Monday of each month from 12 noon until 2:00 pm at the Thurman G. Casey Ygnacio Valley Library, 2661 Oak Grove Road, Walnut Creek, CA 94598.

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.

No meetings until further notice.

Area 16 \$ums Investment Group

No Meeting until further notice. Meanwhile keep an eye on the stock market and hope it recovers along with the virus victims.

Chair - **Tom Henry** - Br 174 tomhenry925@gmail.com

Co-chair **Dave Sutton** - Br 8 - davesutn@comcast.net

Computers and Technology



Derek Southern



Neil Schmidt

PCs

No meetings until further notice!

Chair - Tom Henry - Branch 174

tomhenry925@gmail.com

Co-chair Dave Sutton - Branch 8 -

davesutn@comcast.net

My doctor said now that I'm older
I need to install a bar in the shower



Four high school boys afflicted with spring fever skipped morning classes. After lunch they reported to the teacher that they had a flat tire. Much to their relief she smiled and said, "Well, you missed a test today so take seats apart from one another and take out a piece of paper." Still smiling, she waited for them to sit down. Then she said: "First Question: Which tire was flat?"