



Branch 146

Contra Costa County CA

Call

November–December 2024



Big Sir's Corner

With 2024 coming to a close, we can be proud that we have one of the largest, most active and fastest growing SIR Branches in the state. **Glenn Breslin** has done a wonderful job of communi-

cating with you to determine interests in travel as well as local activities to make sure we are matching interests to activities. **Jim Pope** is planning on having another session with new members next January to see if there are other activities we need to explore, especially as we bring in more younger members. Is there an interest in re-starting pickle ball, another bocce group, river rafting, a senior softball team etc.? Other branches have been amazed at the number of activities that we have and our participation in them—but isn't that why we all joined SIR, to get involved in activities?

This year we added 40 new members through November, but we lost 18 due to attrition, bringing our total now to 272. Thirty of you reached out to friends or acquaintances and then about our activities and invited them to join. About 90% of our guests who were

considering joining did so. That says a lot about our saleability, which is essentially our activities and the quality of our people! Two of our new members have committed to becoming members of our BEC. Thank you to **Bob Wilkenfeld** and the committee he heads that looks at succession planning. Hopefully in 2025 we can continue our growth and the “youthenizing “ of our Branch.

Thom Degnan, Jim Pope and myself have agreed to work with the State to help find ways to reverse the general decline in membership in the existing state branches of SIR. More than half of the state's branches are declining in membership and more than half have less than 100 active members. Our Branch 146 experience is that when



men hear about the activities a program like SIR offers, there is an interest and, in many cases, that translates to joining. We need to find a better way to inform our neighbors across the state as to the existence of SIR and its benefits.

Boundary Oak is “home” for Branches 146, 116 and 8. Together we met with Mike Ash, the manager of Boundary Oak regarding luncheon menus and quality. Management is very aware of the benefits they receive from the three branches. They struggled this

Activities for you...

- [Reserve for Ladies Day](#) Page 3
- [Have you sent in your dues?](#) Page 6
- [Calendar of Events](#) Page 14
- [Take a Hike!](#) Page 21
- [Need a good read?](#) Page 19
- [Electrifying news](#) Page 17
- [Need a trip?](#) Page 15

Ladies Day Luncheon
Thursday, December 12th, 2024
Boundary Oak 11:30

Devil Mountain Chorus Quartet

A reservation is required!

To make yours and choose your entrée go to page 3. (click Here!)

year because they lost their head chef, and it took a while to replace her. That is now solved and they have agreed to hold costs to the same level as last year and are open to suggestions that we may have for meals such as theme days like St. Patrick's day, October fest, 4th of July picnic day etc.

You need to help reduce **George Mon's** workload by returning your 2025 dues checks and indicating whether or not you want to take advantage of the 10 lunches for the cost of 8 by prepaying for the 8 lunches at \$36 x 8, \$288. However, those of us who do select that option need to remember that we still have to select a meal and reserve a chair at the table. If for some reason you decide not to come, you still have to inform the lunch-bunch as they will have reserved a meal for you and we have to pay the full cost of that meal.

John Kluesener
Big Sir, Branch 146



Little Sir's Corner Bob Ford

To wrap up the year a Quartet from Devil Mountain Chorus will cheer us with some holiday music. We start off the new year with Holly Reese who will be talking to us about fall prevention. I

hope to see you all at the Holiday Luncheon.

Bob Ford
Little Sir, Branch 146



Membership George Mon

Two new members were approved for membership in November.

Robert "Trubador" Mason lives in Danville with his wife **Cecilia**. He worked in Product Development for Dupont and worked for

REI after retirement. **Robert** is sponsored by **Eric Finson**.

Norman "Norm" Azevedo lives in Walnut Creek with his wife **Mary**. He was in Planning, Budget and Phone Tariff for AT&T. He enjoys traveling, gardening and skiing. **Norm** is sponsored by **Clint Collier**.

[The 2025 Dues letter](#) was sent out in mid-October along with a return envelope for your convenience. So far only 71% of the membership have responded.

Reminder: If you have not paid your 2025 Dues yet, please do so now so that we have an accurate count of our membership. See the Reminder Letter attached in this Newsletter that has where to send your check.

It is important to grow our membership to keep our branch vibrant and active. So, please tell your friends

and family members about what Branch 146 does and maybe you can sponsor a friend too.

We have a goal to invite at least 50 guests to our luncheons for this year. We would like to encourage them to become members. So, when you see them at the luncheon, reach out and voice the good things about being a Sir.

The 2024 membership count is 273.

If you want to sponsor a new member, please go to our website www.sir146.com and go to the Members Only tab to see the Sponsors Role. The member application is in the Members tab.

The Membership Directory is located on our website and is updated monthly.

It is important that any changes to your contact information, especially to your email, phone, or address, are sent to me in an email (gckk@comcast.net) so that we can update the directory with the most current information.

George Mon
925.830.1604 gckk@comcast.net

SIR Mission Statement

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



Ladies Day Luncheon
Steve Ybarra

The Ladies Day Holiday Luncheon will be held on Thursday, December 12th, 2024. The cost for this event is \$39 per person. Doors open at 10:30am so SIR members and their guests can socialize until 11:30am which is when the luncheon will be called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance. Reservations, using the form below, should be sent to **Steve Ybarra** and received by Friday, December 6, 2024. Please make checks payable to SIR Branch 146 in the amount of \$39.00 per person.

Steve Ybarra
sjybar@gmail.com



SIR 146
December Ladies Day Luncheon
 Thursday December 12th, 2024

Salad

Seasonal Salad

Entrées

Seared Marinated Bistro Fillet

Caramelized Shallot au jus

Mashed potatoes

Seasonal Vegetables

—or—

Pan Seared Farm Raised Salmon

Confetti Rice Pilaf

Seasonal Vegetables

—or—

Manicotti

Seasonal Vegetables

Dessert

Red Velvet Cake

For the Ladies Luncheon events you need to use this reservation form.

The 'click to reserve' menu will resume with the January Luncheon.



SIR 146 Ladies Day Luncheon

Thursday, December 12th, 2024

Number of Tickets _____ at \$39 ea. Amount Enclosed \$ _____ We are sitting with: _____

Use this form to list yourselves and the guests at your table (if any) along with their choice of entrée. Check the "Total Paid" box if you are paying for them, otherwise they will be assigned to your table when their payment is received.

Type in the requested information and print this page, or just print this page and fill your information by hand then cut along the dotted line and send it with your check made payable to SIR Branch 146 to:

Steve Ybarra
 142 Leonard Dr.
 Concord, CA 94518-1213.

#	F Name, L Name	Beef Fillet	Salmon	Vegetarian Manicotti	Total Paid
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

*There will be no tickets sold at the door the day of the event!
 Reservations must be received by December 6th.*

PUT THE JANUARY LUNCHEON ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW



THE CLUBHOUSE
AT BOUNDARY OAK

SIR 146 January Luncheon Thursday, January 9th, 2025

Salad

Boundary Oak Green Salad:
Mesclun Greens, Dried Cranberries, Candied Walnuts,
Blue Cheese Crumbles, Poppy Seed Dressing

Entrées

Chicken Piccata

Herb Marinated Chicken Breast, Garlic and Herb Rice
Pilaf, Seasonal Vegetable, White Wine Lemon Caper
Sauce

—or—

Cod Piccata

Herb Marinated Cod Filet, Garlic and Herb Rice Pilaf,
Seasonal Vegetable, White Wine Lemon Caper Sauce

—or—

Vegetarian

Creamy Tomato Tortellini : Five Cheese Tortellini in a
Creamy Tomato Sauce, Seasonal Vegetable

Dessert

Tiramisu

Lunch Reservation required!

To confirm your attendance and select your choice
of entrée, simply click on the desired menu entrée!
Clicking will generate the appropriate email to send
to the attendance group.

2025 Officers and Directors

Big Sir.....	Bob Ford
Little Sir.....	Thom Degnan
Secretary	Don Shaw
Assistant Secretary	John Rexroat
Treasurer	Mike Rothman
Assistant Treasurer	Tom Amann
Director 1st Term	Mike Davidson
Director 1st Term	Jim Crites
Director 2nd Term	Mark Curtis
Director 2nd Term	Randy Graham
Director 2nd Term	John Alexander
Director 2nd Term	Don Rhoads

RAMP-Chair Members

Recruitment	Randy Graham
Activities	Glenn Breslin
Member Relations	Edward Brands
Publicity	John Alexander

Refer to the Branch Directory, accessible under
the Members Only tab heading on our website, for
phone numbers and email addresses.

Norm Baietti	James Passaglia
Jack Baldassari	Henry Thatcher
James Baldrige	George Trabert
Randall Becker	Gene Voelkel
Gary Brown	Ted Ford
Walter Busenius	Clifford Tong
Doug Eisner	Frank Terzuoli
John Gray	Joe Herger
Mac Mcallister	Jeffrey Slusarz
George Mon	Mark Raaberg

Birthdays



Editor's Ramblings Clint Collier

The Holi-Daze are in full swing. Halloween and Dias de los Muertos are memories, Thanksgiving is coming on like a freight train, my wife keeps asking how much money she can spend on Black

Friday, the invitations to Christmas parties are coming in and Christmas? I'm not sure I'm ready to go there yet, I'm still reading about Hanukkah! And, through it all, SIRCall editing beckons like Dicken's ghost of Christmas's past.

We have something new for your SIRCall enjoyment this month! Check out the article from SIR member Mark Curtis of our hiking group. There is a link to a video of the hike. You can walk along from the comfort of your chair by just clicking on the link button. Give it a try! And, although it is not yet Easter, there is an "Easter Egg" hidden somewhere in this issue. If you can find it (hint, an "Easter Egg" is a programmer's name for a hidden link or activity that activates when you click on it.) I think you will enjoy the results... thank you, Frank and Larry, and all of your who have served our nation, for the inspiration.

On a more whimsical note, don't miss the report from the SIR Book Group. They did not have a "read" to re-

port on this month so we have a special guest columnist filling in for them.

SIRCall will come early next month with the Christmas holiday, plan ahead for it. We will need your input for the January issue by noon on December 15th.

Lastly, to close out the year I have paid attention to that ghost of Christmas past and have chosen to reprint the first end of year Parting Shot that I did when I became your editor. As I said then, find a child, a grandchild, someone you care about and read it. It is timeless.

With that I will sign off wishing you a



Clint Collier—Editor SIRCall
925.457.1489 br146SIRCall@gmail.com



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 member to offer support and encouragement during his illness. A friendly call is usually welcome. Cards and letters are always appreciated. If you become aware of a SIR member who is ill please let me know by email at brimacc@comcast.net or by phone 925.324.2463 so that our SIR members can be advised. *Stay Healthy.*



Pat O'Keeffe



Tom Boltz



Norm Baietti



Richard
Hockenbrock



REMINDER

If you have not paid your 2025 Dues yet, please do so now so that we have an accurate count of our membership

BRANCH 146 MEMBER'S NOTICE – 2025 Dues

2025 Annual Dues are now payable.

The Branch Executive Committee has approved dues for the year 2025.

Annual membership dues are \$35 per member for 2025.

These dues will be waived for Senior SIRs who have reached 90 years of age prior to January 1, 2025, and for Honorary Life Members (HLM).

If you elect to pay an annual amount for the luncheons, the cost will be \$288. You will get 10 lunches for the price of 8.

Please return this portion along with your name and check to the address below.

By renewing your membership, you **agree to abide by the Sir Branch 146 Regulations** (see Branch Information tab on our website www.sir146.com)

- | | |
|-------|--|
| _____ | (A) If paying dues only = Make a \$35 check made payable to: SIR Branch 146 |
| _____ | (B) If paying dues + annual lunches = Make a \$323 check made payable to SIR Branch 146 |
| _____ | (C) If Senior Sir or HLM + annual lunches = Make a \$288 check payable to Sir Branch 146 |
| _____ | (D) Optional: Anonymous <u>Donation</u> [\$50] [\$100] [\$200] [Other _____].
Please add your donation to the amount above and make check payable to Sir Branch 146 |

Comments: _____

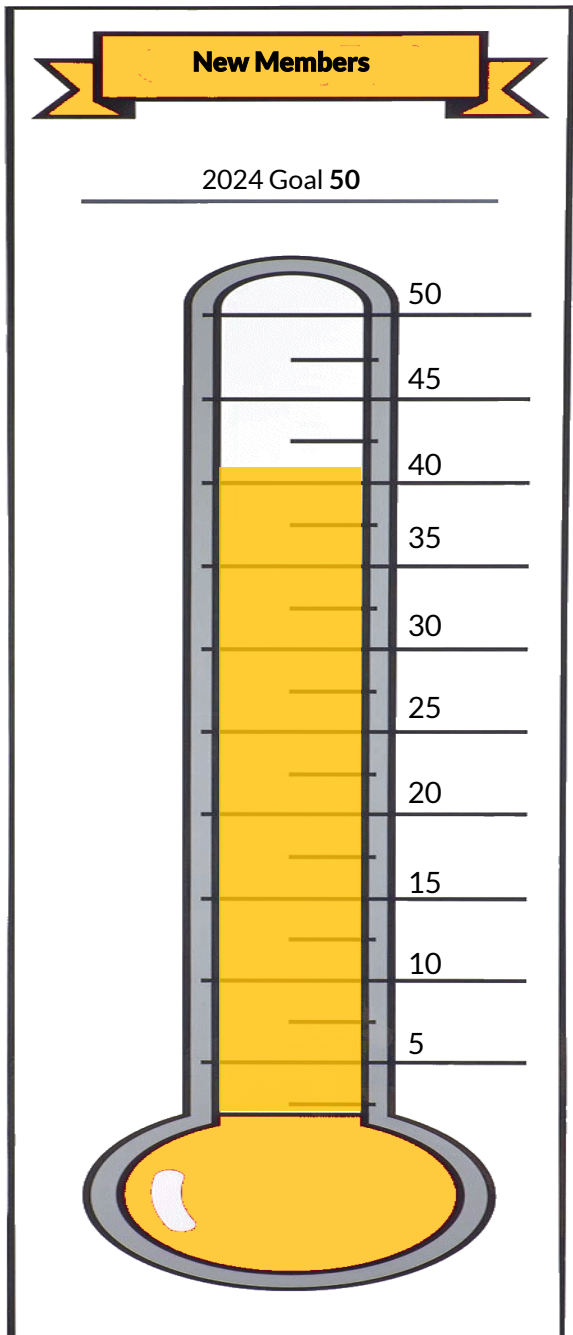
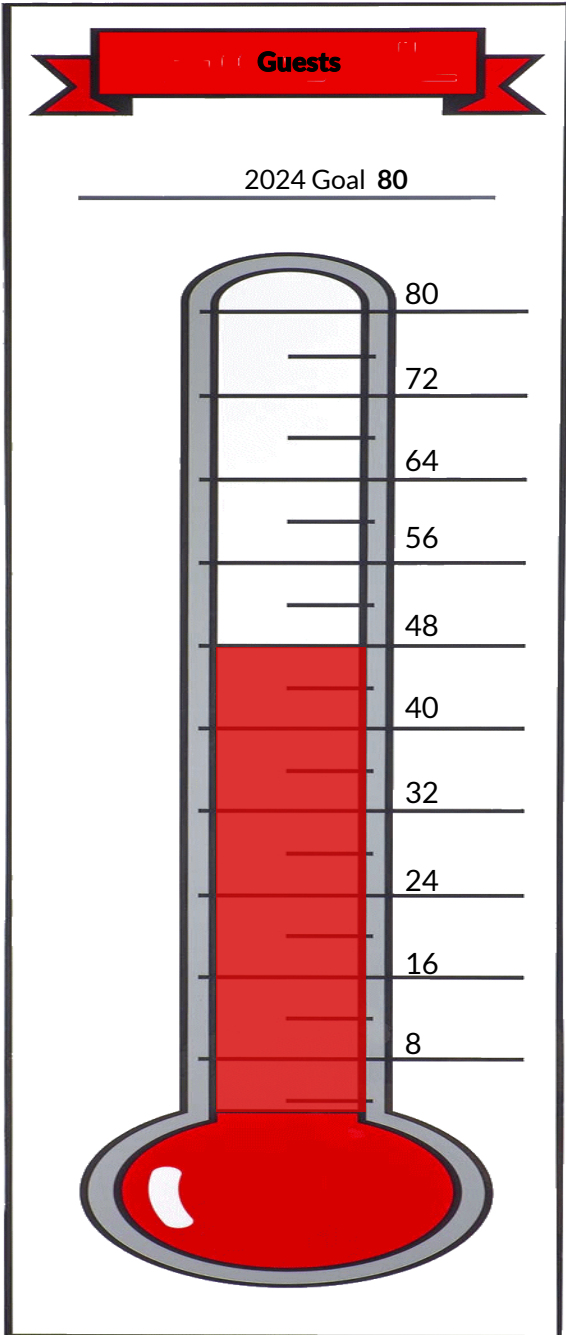
Mail Check to:

George Mon
2484 Paddock Drive
San Ramon, CA 94583

Membership starts with



You are the key to new members to keep SIR vibrant



NOVEMBER

MEETING

Photos by Henry Thatcher



Welcoming Crew

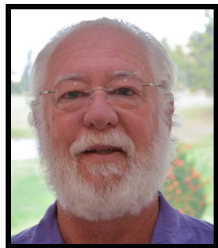




Norm Azevedo



Pat Tidmarsh



Tom Stucker



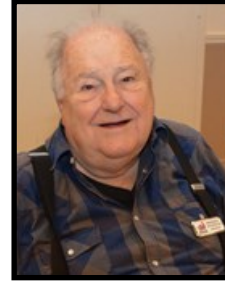
Celebrating 90 years!
Senior SIR Presidential Award
presented to
James Baldridge
by Big Sir **John Kluesener**



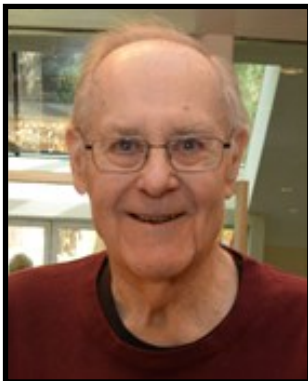
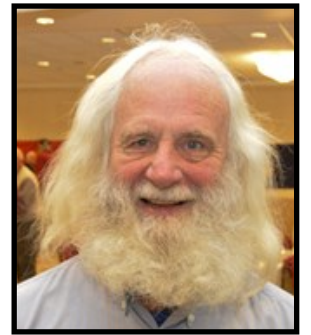
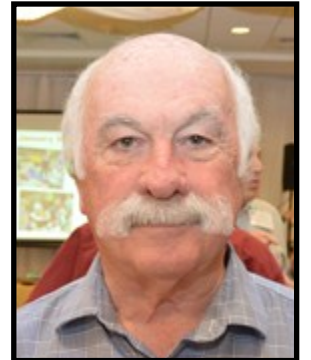
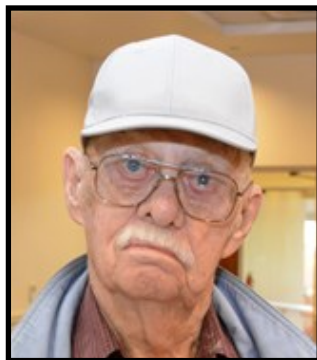
Ken Soult

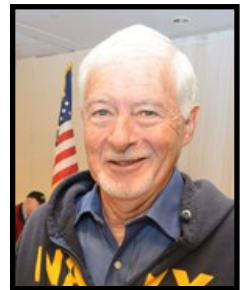


A salute to our SIR recruiters



Make Friends for Life







Looking for something to do...

Activities Coordinator
Glenn Breslin



2nd Annual Holiday Happy Hour Celebration

If interested, please contact me at glennbreslin@gmail.com in advance so that I can reserve a seat for you.
The restaurant will reserve up to 20 seats.

- **Date:** Wednesday 12/18
- **Location:** Il Fornaio Restaurant
- **Address:** 1430 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Walnut Creek, CA
- **Time:** 3:30 Arrive for Cocktail Hour. Food starts at 4:00.
- **Price:** Each couple will order separately and pay with their individual couple check.
- **Menu:** [Order your food and drinks off the Happy Hour Menu, when at the restaurant](#)
- **Number:** Limited to 20 people
- **Interested:** Contact glennbreslin@gmail.com

Glenn Breslin
SIR146 Activity Chair
925.788.6520 glennbreslin@gmail.com

SIR Activities!

Here is a list of the activities that are available in SIR Branch 146. Click on the link of the activity that you are interested in to retrieve a PDF file explaining the activity as well as contact information

Artificial Intelligence	Men's Duplicate 2	Explore and Eat	Uno	Pinochle
Birding	Men's Duplicate 3	Sushi no Tomodachi	Dos	Poker:
Bocce Ball	Men's Party	Dixieland Musician	Tres	Group 3
Book Corner	Chess	Fishing	Cuatro	Group 4
Book Group	Cooking:	Golf—9 Hole	Cinco	Group 6
Bridge:	Cooking II	Golf—18 Hole	Seis	Group 8
Beginning/Refresher	Lunch and Wine	Guitar	Siete	Song SIRs
Couples Duplicate 1	Cribbage	Hearts	Ocho	Table Pool
Couples Duplicate 2	Cycling	Hiking	Nueve	Theater
Couples Party	Dining Out	Mexican Train	Diez	Travel
Men's Duplicate 1	Couples Dining Out	Dominoes	Photography	Wine Tasting

SIR Branch 146 Activities Calendar December 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2	3	4	5	6
9:45am – 3:00pm Men's Party Bridge 10:00am Hiking 12:00pm Table Pool at Masses	9:00am Golf 4:00pm Couples Party Bridge	1:30pm SongSir Rehearsal W.C. Presbyterian Church 6:30pm – 10:00pm MTD 8 Ocho	9:30am Nine Hole Golf–1 12:30pm Poker Group #6	10:00am – 2:30pm Men's Duplicate Bridge 2
9	10	11	12	13
10:00am Hiking 11:30am – 1:30pm Cooking II 12:00pm Table Pool at Masses	9:00am Golf 4:00pm – 7:30pm Couples Duplicate Bridge 2	8:30am Birding Location TBD monthly 1:00pm – 2:30pm Guitar Group 1:00pm – 3:00pm Pinochle at Rocco's	10:30am – 1:30pm Book Corner 11:30am – 1:30pm Ladies Day Luncheon	12:00pm – 3:00pm Hearts Rocco's in W.C. 12:30pm – 2:30pm Chess Pleasant Hill Sr Ctr 6:45pm – 10:00pm MTD 1 Uno
16	17	18	19	20
10:00am Hiking 12:00pm Table Pool at Masses	9:00am Golf 12:00 noon SIRCall articles due.	11:00am Lunch and Wine (LAW) 1:30pm SongSisr Rehearsal W.C. Presbyterian Church 6:45pm – 10:00pm Couples Duplicate Bridge 1	9:30am Nine Hole Golf–1 7:00pm – 10:00pm MTD 5 Cinco 11:30pm Sushi No Tomadahi Mikinui, Concord	10:00am – 3:00pm Men's Duplicate Bridge 3
23	24	25	26	27
10:00am Hiking 12:00pm Table Pool at Masses 1:00pm Poker Group #3 1:00pm – 4:00pm Poker Group #4	9:00am Golf		9:30am Nine Hole Golf–1	12:00pm – 3:00pm Hearts Rocco's in W.C.
30	31	Jan 1	2	3
10:00am Hiking 12:00pm Table Pool at Masses	9:00am Golf	1:30pm SongSirs Rehearsal W.C. Presbyterian Church 6:30pm – 10:00pm MTD 8 Ocho	9:30am Nine Hole Golf–1 12:30pm Poker Group #6	10:00am – 2:30pm Men's Duplicate Bridge 2
				



Travel Glenn Breslin

GOOD NEWS !!! Based upon both the SIR Multi-Branch travel questionnaire results and the related member interview input, these travel destinations have been chosen for future SIR Travel in priority order.

SIR Travel Destinations

- Australia/New Zealand: [LINK HERE](#) for more information
- Vietnam: [LINK HERE](#) for more information
- Japan/Korea: [LINK HERE](#) for more information

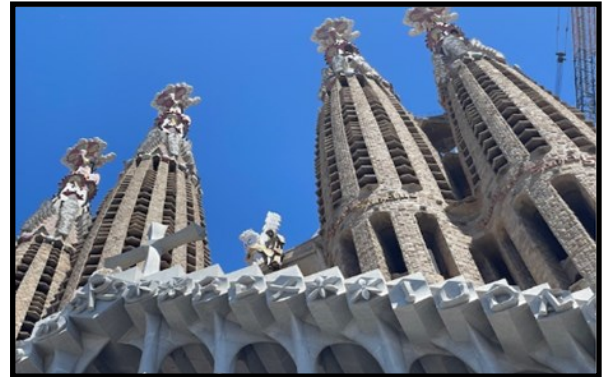
All these trips will be orchestrated by Overseas Adventure Travel (OAT). The next step is to reach out to interested SIR members to choose the start and end travel dates for each of these trips.

SIR Travel Plan:

- **Done** September - Obtained SIR Travel Questionnaire results from SIR146 and other SIR Branch members. Narrowed down to 5 in-common destinations.
- **Done** October - Interviewed everyone that chose the 5 in-common destinations.
- **Done** November - 3 SIR Travel Destinations selected from the above 5 in-common destination. See above numbered list.
- **To Do** December - Work with SIR members that choose these future SIR travel destinations to pick the start and end travel dates for each above numbered trip.
- **To-Do** December - Publicize these trips to SIR146 and other SIR groups

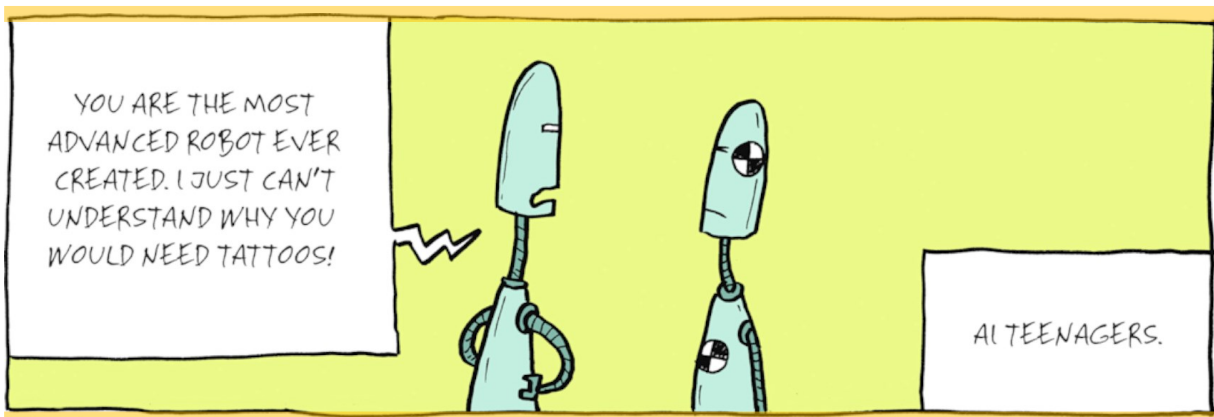
Travel Quotes:

- “A journey well shared is a journey well enjoyed.”
- “There is an unspoken bond you create with the friends you travel with.”
- “A journey is best measured in friends rather than miles.”



Glenn Breslin

925.788.6520 glennbreslin@gmail.com





Theater Glenn Breslin

Theater Events at the Leshar Theater

Please find the upcoming Tribute Concerts at the Leshar Theater, Walnut Creek. If these experiences interest you, then I look forward to having you join this group. All pertaining information is below.

The ABBA Concert Experience (Tribute Performance)

- **Date:** Sat., January 18, 7:30pm
- **Price:** \$58 per ticket – discounted group rate
- **When Are Tickets Available:** Look for the email announcement in late November.
- **Desc:** The ABBA Concert Experience reigns supreme as the eight-piece production performs all the greatest hits of one of the world's most beloved Super-Groups of the 70's. From the smash stage musical Mamma Mia to all the music chart favorites that made this group famous, you'll hear the music and see) all the costumes, and lights of the original ABBA shows, duplicated to near perfection.
- **Optional Dinner:** An optional dinner will be scheduled at 5:00pm—before the performance
- **Ticket Distribution:** Leshar Lobby between 6:45 and 7:10pm on Sat 1/18 – before the show

Eagles Tribute Performance

- **Date:** Tue., February 4, 7:30pm
- **Price:** \$62 per ticket – discounted group rate
- **Tickets:** I will provide you with the best seats available, after you send a check made out to SIR146 and mail to Glenn Breslin, 3480 School St., Lafayette, CA, 94549
- **Desc:** America's premier Tribute Band to the Eagles. This band has been delighting sell-out crowds across the country with a catalog of music that encompasses the classics and deep cuts from the Eagles' music. Their ability to recreate these iconic studio sounds does not go unnoticed; but what really sets them apart is their ability to recreate the Eagles' LIVE experience. Get ready for an unforgettable night of live music as these talented musicians and vocalists bring to life your favorite Eagles hits.
- **Optional Dinner:** An optional dinner will be scheduled at 5:00pm - before the performance.
- **Ticket Distribution:** Leshar Lobby between 6:45 and 7:10pm on Tue 2/4 – before the show

Shows at Leshar Theater – Walnut Creek

- Location: Leshar Theater, 1601 Civic Dr. Walnut Creek.
- Parking in Adjacent Parking Garage.

Please reach out to me should you have any questions or comments. My contact information is below. I look forward to sharing these SIR-Theater experiences with you !!

Glenn Breslin
925.788.6520 glennbreslin@gmail.com



Cycling Group Larry Kaye

October 18th: “Look out for the winds”. All the weather stations issued a caution. What the heck, we are seasoned SilR Spandex guys who cares? So... Off we rode. Today’s ride was to San Ramon for visit to Katy’s Cafe. **Ron**

Lew, Roger Meyer, Moose Kelly Bill Holly, Larry Kaye and my niece’s husband Steve Reid. Great ride. No wind. Java was good, snacks were yummy. Then we headed North. Yikes. The winds had begun. Not too bad but enough so I cut the ride short. Into the wind we rode Northwards. Usually in this direction we could squeeze out 15- 16 MPH. Not today. Slowly we rode. The wind rose and we bent into her. Alamo was in our view and the sighs were loud. The steel vehicles awaited and the winds. Who cares anymore.? If you wear spandex at our age you really stand tall. Age? Just a word.

October 21st: Today was an off-schedule ride day. A couple of guys joined. **Bob Wilkenfeld, Phil Lee, Bill Holly** and **Larry Kaye**. A Blackhawk reverse ride was the trip. After climbing the steep hills we enjoyed a long downhill. The return was thru a trail in the back of the back of Danville- Alamo. Fun side trip. Returning to the start which was my home we enjoyed homemade cookies and hot java. What more could you ask? Exercise is the cure. Get off your duffs.

October 29th: Today was **Bob Lucido’s** birthday. So? you ask. Well... we decided to test his new age number. It was Mt. Diablo day. See what the olde guy has left. **Bob Lucido, Bill Ross, Jim Crites** and **Larry Kaye** joined the crew. The temperature on the Mountain was 37’. Holy So what we asked? Let’s show the Mountain what the Spandex guys are made of. Up we went. The climb as always has its challenges wind cold etc. Today was nice. Cold yes but scenic as always. We climbed and then we climbed some more. Bob hung in there. We all panted, hyper ventilated, cursed the roads grades but eventually it appeared. Our goal. As we dismounted at the Junction station you could hear the sighs, both from the bikes as well as the guys. Once again, we did it. Bob was happy as a clam and wished he had the birthday cake to devour but. We used the facilities and headed down. Funny. It takes half as long to descend as to ascend. Physics 101. Back to our cars and home to our loved ones we went. Smiles all around. Happy Birthday **Bob**. Great way to show your stripes.

Age? Who really gives a crap about what the number is?



10/29 Photo (L to R): **Jim Crites, Larry Kaye, Bob Lucido** (Birthday boy) and **Bill Ross**, our attending Doc.

November 1st: It was cold. Period. 8 guys showed up. **Bob Wilkenfeld, Pat Hoy, Elmer Bricca Jim Crites Roger Meyers, Larry Kaye, Eric Finson** and **Phil Lee**. At the Moraga rest stop **Elmer** and **Eric** bailed due to an issue. Into Orinda we flew only to lose **Bob Wilkenfeld** due to a mechanical goof and with him **Pat Hoy** to accompany **Bob**. So with four guys left we went to Geppetto’s for Java and warmth. Then off for the second and hardest part of the ride. We climbed and climbed up to Sundown in Orinda Country Club. Ouch. Then a great 3 mile downhill. Back to the flats and eventually our cars. Great ride. Lots of climbing. Getting old is not for sissys. Staying in shape as we age is for life. .

November 5th: Holy cow. Today’s ride included 13 of the 14 men of the spandex. A record. **Bill Holly, Bill Ross, Eric Finson, Roger Meyers, Jim Crites, Jim Nelson, Elmer Bricca, Ken Studer, Bob Wilkenfeld, Moose Kelly, Tom Alberg, Thom Degnan** and **Larry Kaye**. The ride was The George Miller trail along the Straits. We chose a perfect day. Cool, no wind, sunny and just fantastic. After climbing for 4 miles, we joined the road towards the coast. The backroads today were busy with cars. A change from past rides. We explored the Town of Port Costa and took in her sights. Then after some more climbs we entered the George Miller trail. No cars. Wonderful. Climbing about 1500 feet we finally made it to State Street Coffee and enjoyed some caffeine. From there it was a back road to our cars and homeward we went. Today we met **Tom’s** new Black electric rocket, **Ken’s** new electric steed and the talk was what stimulated us to move towards electric. Age

Continued on the Following Page

Cycling continued from previous page

works in strange ways. If you wish to bike into these later years sometimes one must adjust. Age is cruel but one does not have to give in to her limits.

November 8th: With the sun promising to come out, four of us headed down the road. **Eric Finson, Tom Alborg, Bill Ross and Larry Kaye**. We were doing the famous Blackhawk loop today. Always a fun yet challenging ride. The day was super and the ride as always, a treat. Nothing special. Back to town **Eric** took off and the rest of us enjoyed a cup of Java for our efforts. The increasing appearance of E Bikes within our group points towards the desire to continue our pursuits of health. Age does take a toll on your endurance. It does not stop us from wanting to stay healthy. To maintain the state of our fitness we **MUST** keep exercising. The results of stopping that endeavor is obvious when you just look around at your peer group. Keep sweating. It's what a body needs.

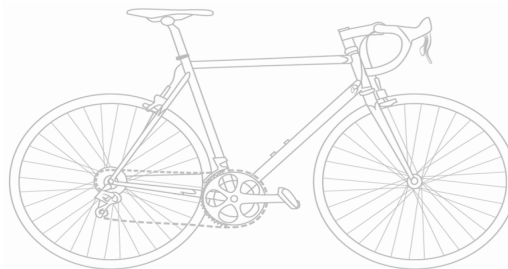
November 12th The Bears. All cyclists have heard about the Bears. It's a ride we all hate. Going the normal direction its a real ball=buster. So what do the Spandex guys do? We went the backwards direction. Which turns out to be beyond one's comprehension of horror. It starts with a climb of some 8-12% for 4 long agonizing miles. Then just to be sure you got it, it climbs to 8% for more and then it repeats itself. Did you ever have your heart in your mouth? It ain't fun. We did it. Then to get back to the start we rode uphill for almost 5 long steep miles. I must admit: The guys have come a long, long way. We all did it. **Moose Kelly, Tom Alborg, Jim Crites, Ken Studer, Scott Simmons Bill Holly**, and I, **Larry Kaye**. Returning to Orinda we enjoyed some java. Then home we flew.



November 19th Full house today. **Bob Wilkenfeld, Eric Finson, Tom Alborg, Moose Kelly, Thom Degnan, Jim Crites, Dave Paulson, Roger Meyer, Bill Ross, Ken Stu-**

der, Brian Lotter, Pat Hoy and Larry Kaye. Today's ride was a long jaunt into the Tassajara Valley. Cold and gray but we are strong. The ride was uneventful and yet very scenic. The farms, the horse ranches, the open space made this a super ride. The cold was tolerated and the distance, however long it was, seemed enjoyable. We returned to the start and since it was long and after lunchtime, most went home.

Larry Kaye
925.698.430



SongSirs
Peter Plante

The SongSirs enjoyed singing the service songs for our Veterans Day luncheon. Thank you to all our veterans for your service. I had the opportunity to talk to several former Navy and Air Force vets about their time in the military and thank them for keeping the Viet Cong off our backs when I was in the army in Vietnam.

We are rehearsing our Christmas carols in preparation for our December 6 date at Ivy Park Retirement Home in Walnut Creek. There will be such favorites as "Frosty the Snowman," "Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer" and "Silent Night." The residents get into the spirit and sing along with us.

We are always looking for new members and have asked Sir Branches 8 and 116 singers to join us for a fun time. No auditions necessary, just a love of music and singing.

Peter Plante
pcplante109@gmail.com



AREA 16 Fishing Report

It is getting colder and rainier, but November proved to be a prolific month for our fishing crew. We started the month with our semi-annual fish fry at **Carl Moyer's** home. 27 members

ate our fill of fried rockfish and lingcod topped off by brownies prepared by **Carl's** wife, **Marcia**. And we exchanged lots of fish stories, some of which were even true.

And we finished November at our monthly breakfast meeting where **Pedro Contreras** made a presentation about the long-range fishing trip out of San Diego that he, **Brion Beetz**, **Steve Paulick**, and **Stan Wong** enjoyed. The boat is 105 feet long and there were 23 fishermen aboard. They fished at a spot off the Baja Peninsula that was a two day boat ride from San Diego aboard the *Red Rooster III* and enjoyed gourmet meals along with the great fishing. Pedro described the trip as "mayhem" because they caught lots of big fish, mostly yellowfin tuna and a lesser amount of yellowtail. Pedro caught the largest fish, an 83-pound yellowfin. Unfortunately, he did not join the pool and so the \$400 prize went to another fisherman, whose yellowfin was only one pound less than the one that **Pedro** caught.

Ken Bellindir and **Ron Lew** also had a fun time fishing in Mexico. They traveled to San Jose del Cabo where, among other things, **Ken** landed a 130 lb. marlin while **Ron** boated two very large dorado (also known as mahi mahi).

Stan Wong won the prize for the most fishing outings this month. In addition to his adventure on the long-range fishing trip, he fished for sturgeon three times with some friends off Sherman Island and each time the catch increased. The group caught five fish on the first outing, seven on the second, and eleven on the final trip. The largest fish was six feet long. All the fish were released, because this year's fishing regulations prohibit retention of sturgeon. Stan also caught and released salmon in the San Joaquin River, landed some black bass in Montezuma Slough, and caught trout while fishing from the bank at Shadow Cliffs Reservoir. He also went on what was billed as a combo crab-rockfish trip on the *Huck Finn*. Unfortunately, they did not find any rockfish, but they did pull up some nice crabs. **Pedro Contreras** and **Steve Paulick** also tried their hands at crab fishing, but only landed four crabs,

fishing within sight of the Farallon Islands. **Carl Moyer** and **Dennis Lee** did somewhat better, fishing for crabs closer to the mainland and they caught some tasty sand dabs as well.

Shadow Cliffs Reservoir is back as a trout fishing venue. The reservoir had been closed for many months because of an algae accumulation. But the algae has been cleared and the Department of Fish and Wildlife is stocking the reservoir with 1000 lbs. of trout every week. This has come in the nick of time because San Pablo Reservoir, our normal trout fishing location, is on its annual mid-November to mid-February fishing hiatus. However, the results so far have been mixed. **Carl Moyer** made five trips to Shadow Cliffs. He had no luck fishing from shore, but he and his companions did slightly better fishing from a boat, catching four fish on the best day. But one of his fish weighed five pounds. On another outing in his skiff, he was skunked but **Dennis Lee**, who fished with him, caught one trout. Nevertheless, **Dennis** came home with two trout. That was because a kayak fisherman sailed by and offered up some of his catch. And so **Dennis** put out his net and had an extra trout for dinner.

Eric Finson went on a camping trip in Henry Coe State Park but took some time out to fish in the park's lake, where he caught some very nice black bass.

Ron Lew is our resident shark fisherman. Every month he catches a few in the bay and he continued that practice this month.

Tom Kostik caught and released 42 black bass in several outings in the Delta. He also fished in the Delta with **Nick Jabuka** and **Mike Corker** and caught some stripers.

Fred McNeil journeyed to Robinson Creek, near Bridgeport in the Eastern Sierra, and did well fishing for trout.

One of the best places to fish in the Bay Area, if one is interested in lots of action, is the Antioch Pier. The pier



Continued on next page

Fishing from previous page

produces lots of stripers, but very few are keepers. **Sam Ommen** tried the pier on one occasion and on another trip, **Phil Scimonelli** was joined by **Mike Browne**, a former member of Branch 146 who returned for a visit after moving to Ohio last year, and they had a good time hauling in small stripers on almost every cast.

We are looking forward to our annual Christmas dinner at Zio Fraedo's on December 10. Our next breakfast meeting will be on December 19 at the Legends Bar and Grill, at Diablo Creek Golf Course, 4050 Port Chicago Highway, in Concord. Although we usually meet on the fourth Thursday of the month, this meeting is on the third Thursday because of the holidays. You are welcome to join us, even if you have never fished or have not fished in a long time. The meetings begin at 8:30 am but come earlier for breakfast (beginning at 7 am) for camaraderie and fish stories.

Paul Dubow
510.504.3566



Tuesday Golf Ed Marlovits

Tuesday Golf is the SIR Branch 146 Golf Club. As a member you'll enjoy organized weekly golf competitions, opportunities to participate in inter-branch, Area and State SIR golf tournaments and outings, and with your club membership obtain a recognized golf handicap. The cost of belonging to our Golf Club is \$80.00 per year which covers NCGA membership (see below for NCGA benefits), member's lunches at selected golf events, and club administrative expenses. Golfers who wish to join the "Prize Fund" pay an additional \$36.00 per year - a total of \$116.00. The prize fund is used to pay cash awards to the winners of weekly stroke play competitions. By joining SIR Branch 146 Golf Club, you'll get all these benefits plus the camaraderie of others who share your love of the game of golf.

Ed Marlovits



Nine Hole Golf Group Bob Ford

The course is still in good shape so please come out and join us. Our group tees off at 9:30 am at the Diablo Hills Golf Course on every Thursday, except the second Thursday of the month when we go to the SIR luncheon. It is open to all, and you don't need to be a member of the NCGA or have a handicap to play. It takes us about two hours to play, then most of us also have lunch at the Greenery which is the restaurant at the course. On Fridays, I will send out an email asking who is coming for golf and if you plan to walk or ride. On Wednesdays I will send out an email with who signed up for Thursday morning. I hope to see you there!!

Bob Ford
scubabob.ford@gmail.com



Bocce John Kendrick

Need a Christmas gift idea from Santa, ask for your own set of Bocce Balls (not a good idea as a stocking stuffer).

In a few short months, our SIR 146 Bocce Ball activity will soon be active and always looking for new players.

Mark your calendars because the SIR 146 Bocce Ball activity will soon be a reality. The fun starts at 8:30 am and finishes around 10:00 am on the 2nd and 4th Mondays during the months of May through September.

The next Bocce Ball activity will be on May 12, 2025.

All games are played at the Bocce Courts in Newhall Park, Concord. The courts are near the corner of Turtle Creek and Ayers Roads in Concord.

Join us for some Monday morning entertainment and fun. Ladies are welcome. Formal Bocce Ball attire is not required..

John Kendrick
925.827.0585 jmkendrick23@gmail.com



Hiking Mark Curtis

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. So how many words does a movie represent?

Here, for your enjoyment, is an experiment... if you didn't join in the 10/28 Black Diamond Mines hike, is your chance to "partake" in this event!

[Click Here... to take a hike!](#)

As I write this article, we are at the start of a 4-day rain window fed by an atmospheric river. This weather pattern apparently also includes a cyclone bomb! So, from this point forward to about the end of February, I expect that a vast majority of the hiking trails that we frequent will turn from dust to mud. **Ray Martz** and I will need to be aware of this condition when we plan hikes for the end of Autumn to the end of winter.

Recent hikes were at Point Pinole, Black Diamond Mines, Wildcat Canyon, Morgan Territory, Big Break, and Diablo Foothills. For the next couple of months, we will likely select trails that are primarily gravel.

I am winding down as leader of the hiking activity. I have a lower back problem which flares up significantly when walking up or down hills. **Ray Martz** and **Bob Wilkenfeld** will lead. If the hike they select seems to be reasonable for me, I will probably tag along for the easier parts.

I should state that all the hikes I/we plan are in the order of 5 miles in length with up to 1000 feet of climbing. I do try to select at least 1 venue each month that has much less than 1000 feet of climbing. The notifications for each hike via email will generally describe the difficulty; easy, moderate, or strenuous.



If any of you have suggestions for any hikes that you have enjoyed, or would like me to include your ideas in planning, please let me know. We are always open to new venues. Also, spouses and guests are always welcome. Our canine friends will be allowed on leash if the hiking venue permits it.

If you have an interest in participating in this hiking activity, please let me know and I will add your email address to my distribution list.

Mark Curtis

925.360.3449 Mocurtis1657@gmail.com



Cleo Bolen, Eric Finson, Gene Schulting, Ray Martz, Mark Curtis, Earl Bates, Jim Crites, Roger Meyer, Tom Stucker & Dash

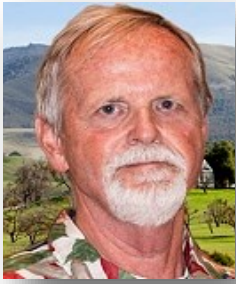
Table Pool Jim Barry

The table pool group meets every Monday. If you are interested in joining the fun we meet at Masses at noon. Send me an email if any questions.



Jim Barry

jbarry@sbcglobal.net



Photography Group

John "Moose" Kelly and Henry Thatcher

The photography crew met on Friday, November 15th at Rocco's for our end of the year celebration. The enthusiastic attendees were: **Jim Roland, Miker Rothman, Phil Lee, Billy Holly** (computer operator extraordinaire – thanks **Dr. Holly**), **Glenn Breslin, Roy Hodgkinson, Susan and Steve Oki, Peter Plante, Frank Terzuoli, Bob Wilkenfeld, Henry Thatcher, and Moose Kelly.**

Our meeting consisted of the following topics:

- Clarifying a few points from the club feedback for constructing a calendar for 2025.
- Ideas for improving the photography club.
- The club's first Best Picture of the Year Award for digital single lens reflex camera (DSLR).
- The club's first Best Picture of the Year Award for camera phones.
- Closing comments on the club year of 2024.
- Rocco's luncheon

The photo judging criteria for best picture of the year were:

- Impact, Creativity, and Storytelling
- Technical Excellence, Focus, Color Balance, and Lighting
- Composition, Center of Interest, and Subject Matter

Members of the club examined, then voted on the five DSLR photos and five camera phone photos presented. AND THE WINNERS ARE: **Frank Terzuoli** in the DSRL category for his photo in Iceland. **Miker Rothman** in the camera phone category for his photo of birds around the water fountain. **CONGRATS** to **Frank and Miker!!!** Please see the attached photos of the winners and the winning pictures.

Mr. Moose summarized 2024 recognizing and thanking the members for their enthusiasm and involvement in making it a superb year. One must remember that the photo club doesn't belong to Moose Kelly or Henry Thatcher but to all the members of the photography

group. Their commitment, interest, and involvement in this hobby called photography can't be beat.

We finished our celebration with lunch laughing and sharing stories. Please see attached pictures by my colleague in crime, **Henry Thatcher**. Thanks **Dr Thatcher**.

If you are not on our email list and would like to join the Photography Group or just want to come to our meeting to see what the club is all about, then please contact **John "Moose" Kelly** or **Henry Thatcher**. We would be happy to send you the agenda.

Be safe, be well and be sure to "Say Cheese"!

John (Moose) Kelly

610.517.0152 rollingstone91149@gmail.com

or

Henry Thatcher

925.997.5032 1henrythatcher@gmail.com



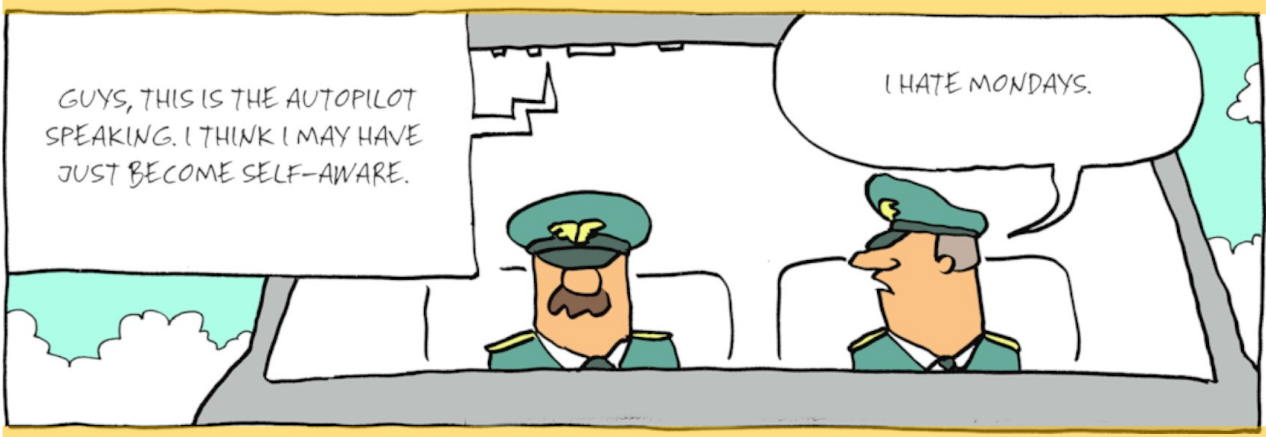
Miker Rothman



Frank Terzuoli

More pictures... next page

Pictures from the Photo Group Meeting





Birding Ted Robertson

During the late morning of November 6^h, an intrepid group of eight SIR birders looked at shorebirds, marine ducks, grebes, and egrets during an incoming tide. We spotted and heard 33 species of birds. Most of the birds were relatively stationary, so everyone got long and great looks at most of the bird species through binoculars and several spotting scopes. There were many highlights, including avocets, plovers, godwits, Willets, Dunlins, sandpipers, five species of gulls, terns, two species of phoebes, and five species of ducks.

Our next field trip is scheduled for the morning (9:00AM) of December 11th (2nd Wednesday) at Hidden Valley Park in southern Martinez, off of Center Avenue. All levels of birders are welcome plus I have a few loaner binoculars if you don't own a decent pair. If interested, please email Ted Robertson (tedr@berkeley.edu) so you can be added to the monthly mailing list and receive precise meet-up locations.

Ted Robertson
925.899.1872 tedr@berkeley.edu



SIR birders at Middle Harbor Park
(Photo by Jim Rowland)

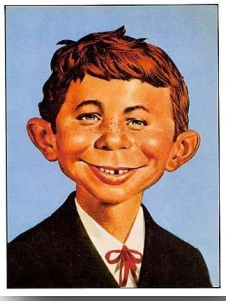
Two (and a half) Willets and a Marbled Godwit
(Photo by Earl Bates)



Five Western Sandpipers and a Dunlin
(Photo by Jim Rowland)



Snowy Egret
(Photo by Earl Bates)



Book Group John Pearl

[Editor's Note]

There was no book review for this issue of SIRC Call so I, using my editor's prerogative, have usurped their column and invited a guest columnist from MAD to offer this AI Generated review.

Review of "Twas the Night Before Christmas"

Clement Clarke Moore's poem, "Twas the Night Before Christmas," stands as a beloved holiday classic that has cemented its place in literature since its first publication in 1823. Its whimsical narrative and enchanting imagery encapsulate the anticipation and magic that permeate the Christmas season. Through Moore's deft craftsmanship, the poem captures both the innocent joy of children and the warm, familial spirit that characterizes this festive time of year.

At its heart, the poem unfolds in a delightful tableau, where the narrator, nestled in a deep slumber, is jolted from his dreams by the sounds of a mischievous Santa Claus and his hearty sleigh, drawn by a team of eight reindeer. The rhythmic and playful quality of the verses endears itself to readers young and old, successfully evoking the warmth of nostalgia. Lines like "when what to my wondering eyes should appear, but a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer," have become iconic, illustrating the innate magic of childhood belief.

Moore's vivid descriptions portray Santa not just as a jolly giver of gifts, but a character bursting with personality. Phrases that describe him as "jolly, happy, and fat" humanize the mythical figure, allowing readers to visualize Santa as a friendly, approachable figure who embodies the spirit of generosity. This showcases Moore's agility in blending the fantastical with relatable traits, ultimately crafting a Santa Claus that feels accessible and warm-hearted.

The poem also subtly taps into the themes of wonder and family unity. The scene captures a familial household, filled with excitement and anticipation, conjuring images of children anxiously awaiting the arrival of presents. Moore distills the essence of Christmas; the tangible gifts fade in significance to the loving atmosphere of togetherness that is cultivated in such moments.

However, beyond the initial charm lies an underlying commentary on the ritualistic practices surrounding

Christmas gift-giving. As Santa traverses the house in silence, carefully placing gifts and escaping unnoticed, readers are invited to reflect on the delicate balance between myth and reality. Millions of same-age families partake in similar rituals—alarms set to witness Santa and not miss the magic—they capture that crossroads between belief and disbelief where childhood innocence thrives.

In full bloom as a seasonal staple, "Twas the Night Before Christmas" continues to inspire a collective memory for those who experience it. The poem has transcended generations, becoming a linchpin of Christmas celebrations and storytelling. Its timeless lesson, brimming with joy, ultimately serves as a reminder of the joys of generosity, belief, and the love fostered amidst the holiday hustle.

With its lyrical precision and approachable delight, Moore's masterpiece continues to resonate, ensuring that its magic endures through the years, drawing families together, one cherished reading at a time. Each retelling, whether in living rooms or children's bedtime stories, pushes the cyclical beauty of this seasonal favorite further into our cultural holiday mindset, reaffirming that the spirit of Christmas—a gift indeed—lies within us all.

John Pearl, Chair—Paul Dubow, Sr. Editor
jpearljr@gmail.com

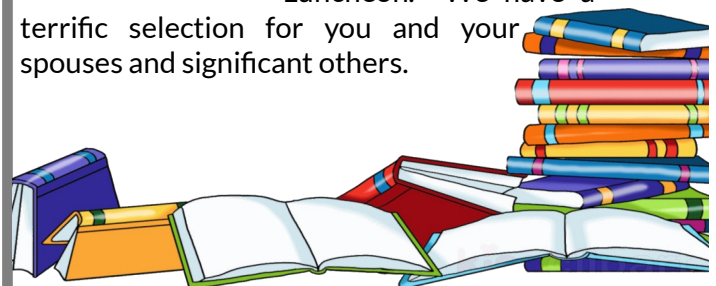
...will return next month.

There are 3 kinds of people in the world.
Those that are good at math and those who aren't.



Book Corner Peter Plante

The Book Corner returns in December for our Ladies Day Luncheon. We have a terrific selection for you and your spouses and significant others.





寿司の友達

Sushi no Tomodachi Clint Collier

We had a light turnout for our November get together... only four of us at House of Sake to enjoy the "fishing". But as always, a delightful group with good sushi, good conversation.



We have agreed to a couple of things for coming months: first, we will return to Mikuni in the Veranda Shopping Center for a December holiday gathering. The date will be our usual third Thursday, December 19th at 11:30. This is our bring your spouse/friends/whomever event. An e-mail will go out in early December, respond with the number of people in your party! Mikuni is in upscale Japanese restaurant so choices for lunch, other than sushi, will be available for those who aschew bait for lunch. If you aren't a member of the group drop me an e-mail if you are interested in joining us for this event.

Second, for 2025 we will return to our previous every other month schedule beginning with February, not January, so our first meeting next year will be on February 20th. Location and details will appear in a future column!

Clint Collier
925.457.1489 Sir-Clint@the-colliers.org



90% of a relationship is figuring out where to eat.



Cooking II

The Cooking II group met at the restaurant Sauced, located on Locust Street in downtown Walnut Creek. This is one of the few barbecue restaurants in the area. Everyone ordered off of the restaurant's special lunch menu. I am

pleased to report that the restaurant's signature plate of brisket was not disappointing. Also the pulled pork, pork belly burnt ends and smoked wings as well as their Tri tip wedge salad were delicious. As a bonus, all of their side dishes were very complementary to the meat choices. The BBQ lunch 2 meat combo plates are reasonably priced at \$22. The group recommends this as an excellent casual lunch destination. Bruce Borgman will be home hosting our next gathering on December 9, 2024.

The photo this month features Host Cook Corrie Oranje preparing wedge salads. The photo is from a prior month's Cooking II gathering.

Steve Ybarra
sjybar@gmail.com





Couples Dining Out Bruce Borgman

We are happy to report that we just completed our November Dining Out event at Wence's, and it was every bit as successful as we had anticipated. We have been to this

restaurant at least four times over the past several years of this activity and we have thus gotten to know the owner – Sandra Wence well and she accommodates our wishes with enthusiasm. This time we changed our routine a bit and started our cocktail hour at 4:00pm and extended it to 5:30. This gave our group a longer time to socialize and several of our diners told me that it was great to be able to chat with friends old and new for a longer time.

We had originally planned to limit the number of diners to 60, and we reached this number within a few days after our initial announcement. After talking with Sandra, we increased the number to 65 – and we wound up with a total of 66. During our extended social hour, we were also able to get Happy Hour pricing for drinks, and several of us got oysters for just \$1 each, or calamari.

From all indications everyone enjoyed the dinner menu selections – most of us got the excellent lobster bisque, and others the green salad. The entrees were likewise well received. The dessert of the Chocolate Chip Bread Pudding was a wonderful finale to this excellent dinner!

We were pleased to be able to have several members for whom this was their first time to participate in this activity, including some new members. We all had such a good time that sadly, we forgot to take any pictures of the event, so we will have to make do with this description.

This was the final event for 2024, and we will be looking ahead to the new year with the next Couples Dining Out event scheduled for January, likely Monday, Jan. 20, or Tuesday, the 21st. At the dinner we indicated that we were seriously considering a restaurant which Sue had enjoyed several times. It is Tasty Szechuan – located in Concord in the small shopping area at Treat and Clayton Road. Sue and I went there again yesterday, and I confirmed Sue's recommendation of this place with a great variety of excellent Szechuan dishes. But it turns out that they do not have a liquor license and thus we would all have to do

with sodas and skip the cocktail hour. So, dear diners – I would like to pose this as a question – would you consider a Couples Dining Out event at a place such as this? If you have an opinion, let me know by emailing me at bgborgman@aol.com. We will of course continue to look at other alternatives as well over the next month and will let you know where we will dine in January.

We wish you all a wonderful holiday season and look forward to starting anew in 2025 with some great culinary adventures.

Bruce Borgman
Dining Out Host
bgborgman@aol.com



Wine Tasting Brian McCarthy

Great news, Wine Enthusiasts! **Larry and Ann Kaye** have stepped up to host the January wine tasting. So, mark your calendars for January 28. More details will be in the Dec/

Jan SIRCall. In the meantime, have a wonderful holiday season.

Any questions, feel free to give me a call at 925.324.2463.

Brian McCarthy
925.324.2463 br146winetasting@gmail.com



MEXICAN TRAIN Dominoes

Group Uno 1



Mexican Train Dominoes "Uno"

Corrie Oranje

Due to unscheduled maintenance, Mexican Train Uno canceled their November game night. We have traditionally skipped playing in December so we will convene in January of 2025. The group joins me in wishing everyone a happy and healthy holiday season.

Corrie Oranje

corrieoranje@gmail.com



Group Dos 2



Mexican Train Dominoes "Dos"

Ron Plachy

Ron and Anne Plachy hosted our October game. This was the last game of 2024, and we will resume playing in January 2025.

Two regulars were missing but we managed to get one of our substitute couples, **Tony and Cindy Greco**, to play so we had 5 players at each of two tables.

All partook of the many snacks and goodies **Anne** supplied. Once again cupcakes were a mid-game snack. These were orange coated chocolate from Alpine Bakery in Concord.

We had a first-time winner, **Loren DeLaurenti**, who had a 15.3 average score. **Dan Holland** continued his winning ways coming in 2nd with an 18.3 average. **Cindy Grego** claimed 3rd with an 18.6 average. Attached is a picture of the winners with their cash.

Our next game is scheduled for Friday, January 24th at the home of **Loren and Marlene DeLaurenti**. We're hoping for a full complement of Regulars.

Ron Plachy

925.286.4552 rjplachy@icloud.com





Mexican Train Dominoes "Tres" Walt Busenius

We met on Friday afternoon, October 25th after The SIRCall was published. Our Friday express meandered alongside

the beautiful, peaceful but dry Walnut Creek to the home of **Sue & Walt Busenius**. Along for the ride were **Joyce Wells and Jim Barry, Sally and Lynn Shafer, Judy Richmond, Alicia Baily and Sharon Varner**. Sue treated the group to table treats and delicious half-time sweets.

Bringing her super A game to the table was **Alicia Baily** winning 1st Place and the grand prize. **Alicia's** average score was 11.66 per game, she went out 5 times and overcame 4 Dirty Dories (the double blank). **Sue Busenius** garnered 2nd place with an avg. score of 19.37 pg. **Joyce Wells** finished strong to claim the honor of 3rd place with an avg. score of 23.75 pg. Once again, the ladies prevailed. Well done. The men remain humbled and bowed in awe to their excellent play,

realizing they only walk in their footprints. Well done ladies!

Everyone enjoyed themselves, filled their mouths with treats and gossip, said their goodbyes, boarded the ole Mexican Train and followed the late afternoon sun home.

Our next meeting will be on Friday afternoon, November 22nd at the home of **Alicia Baily**. All Aboard. Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays!!!

Walt Busenius

925.457.7428 walterbusenius@gmail.com



Mexican Train Dominoes "Cuatro" Jim Pope

On November 15th, the El Quattro Mexican Train dominos group met at **Jim and Renie Pope's** home with 12 players. In attendance this

evening were: **Henry and Barbara Thatcher, Ron Louis and Fran Matthews, Dick and Christy DeVoe, Steve and Susan Oki, Scott and Marie Claire MacDougall, and Jim and Renie Pope**. The group was very joyous after consuming the wonderful snacks provided by several of the members. We played at two tables of six. We paid the player at each table with low table score 6 California Scratchers Lotto tickets. The table's two low score winners were: **Christy DeVoe and Susan Oki**. There were two table high scoring players: **Henry and Barbara Thacher** who were awarded one Lotto ticket each. There will be no MTD-4 in December so the next El Quattro MTD will meet next on January 17th (Photos by **Jim Pope**)

Jim Pope

jpope24@comcast.net





Mexican Train Dominoes "Cinco" Dennis Hallett

Despite the threatening weather, our group met at the home of **Joan** and **Dave Pierce** on Thursday November 21st 2024. As usual our hosts provided a selection of fine wines and candies along with their warm welcome.

Well at long last the men played with vim and vigor. **Bob Yolland** claimed first place after eight games. His score of 26 will go down in the history of the Cinco group. **Ann Hallett** was second with 132 and **Jim Baldridge** came third with 187.

Indeed, the ladies were shocked by **Bob's** performance. Thankfully they did not know his score at the time the pumpkin pie with cream topping was served, otherwise the portions would have been smaller for the men. Joan did us proud, it was delicious ! A prelude to the festivities to come.

Now that the men have partially redeemed themselves, they must stay focused as the ladies have dominated 2024.

Our next game is very special. **Marty Campbell** will host a Christmas gathering on Thursday December 5th 2024. It will start early at 5.30pm with a festive dinner followed by our usual game. Everyone is looking forward to ending our year with this memorable evening.

Dennis Hallett

dennishallett@astound.net



Mexican Train Dominoes "Siete"

On October 9th, **Bob** and **Jane West** hosted our MTD 7 event.

Clint Collier took first place, **Mary McCarthy** placed second, and **Brian McCarthy** came in third.

It's impressive that a husband and wife team came in second and third, I suspected that they were sharing information but since they played at different tables in different rooms so they must have some psychic connection.

Bob Lucido

bobwendy3@comcast.net



October 9th MTD 7 Winners (L to R): **Brian McCarthy** 3rd, **Mary McCarthy** 2nd and **Clint Collier** 1st.

Laid is pronounced like paid but not said
and said is pronounced like bread but not bead
and bead is pronounced like lead but not lead.



Mexican Train Dominoes “Nueve” Bob Lucido

On October 16, **Bob & Jane West** hosted our MTD 9 event.

Mary McCarthy took first place with 2.6 avg, **Bob West** second place with 8.5 avg and **Brian McCarthy** third place with a 17.6 avg.

Mary came in first with an amazingly low score of 26 points for an average of 2.6. I don't believe I have ever seen a total score as low as 26 points nor an average of 2.6. Not only did Mary go out first five times but when she didn't, she had very low scores of 12, 4, 8 and 2 points



Oct 16th MTD 9 winners (L to R): **Mary McCarthy** 1st, **Bob West** 2nd, **Brian McCarthy** 3rd.



Mexican Train Dominoes “Diez” (10) Mark Sorum and Cleo Bolen

Mexican Train Dominoes “Diez” (Group 10) was held in the **Bolen** home for November. The winners were **Barbara Sorum, Fred McNeil** and **Cleo Bolen**, with consolation prizes for **Glenn Breslin** and

Frank Lucas.

We meet on the third Friday of each month at 1:00 pm to socialize and have some fun. Our next meeting will be January 17th at the home of **Rich Alf**. We rotate hosting among different homes. Note- there is no meeting in December.

This is a coed activity, but single SIR members are welcome. Please contact us if you are interested in joining us.

Mark Sorum

925.577.5153 markandbarbsorum@gmail.com

Cleo Bolen

925.768.7902 cleo.bolen@comcast.net



Tip of the Day

Blow on the wine in your coffee mug to convince the rest of the zoom meeting that it is tea.



CARD GAMES

...we play



Men's Duplicate Bridge 2 Dick DeVoe

Our Duplicate Bridge 2 Event on Friday, November 1 with three tables and 12 players was nicely hosted by Max Hinkle.

Ed Marlovits earned 1st place with 30.5 points, with strong showings in both halves. Congratulations, Ed!

Bud Pearce got 2nd with 30.0 points.

Mike Davidson was 3rd with 27.5 points.

Dick DeVoe



Couples Party Bridge Tony Greco

Larry and Linda Brown hosted our November 5th. For this event, Max and Ardith Hinkle subbed again, this time for the Hatchers. Apparently we didn't scare Ardith Hinkle off the first time she subbed. We hope they continue to sub when needed.

Well, this month we set another record for Couples Party Bridge with the lowest 1st Place score in our history of only 2650 points. We also set the record for the closest total score point spread from first to sixth place of only 610 points. Also six slams were made but not bid. I would guess that half of them were biddable. Ugh.

The official results are as follows:

- 1st PLACE with 2650 points
Dick and Christy DeVoe
- 2nd PLACE with 2590 points
Dick and Maggie Chaffee
- 3rd PLACE with 2390 points
Tony and Cindy Greco

Our next event will be held on December 3rd and hosted by Tony and Cindy Greco. Please note that this is a change from the original hosting schedule.

Happy Thanksgiving to all.

Tony and Cindy Greco

925.934.0395 almanorwest@sbcglobal.net



I swallowed a Dictionary!

It gave me thesaurus throat I've ever had..



Couples Duplicate Bridge 2

Dave Pierce

Fall colors were about at their peak when **Brad and Lynne Hatcher**, recovered from the travails of travel, hosted us with plenty of colorful treats on November 12th. Were the players and their bidding skills at their peak? On Board 8, **Brad and Lynne** made 6 NT, and **Dick and Christy Devoe** made 6 spades, but they were both in game. But on Board 12, everybody made 6 spades; both **Dick and Christy** and **Jim Stedman** and his partner **Jane Bradley** had bid six. This is the first slam bid and made in quite some time in our group, so I am very happy to report it.

Many thanks to **Steve and Sue Loftin**, last minute subs who saved the day and made the game possible. They tied for third, along with **Ken and Elaine Richter**. A post-game scoring correction found **Jim and Jane** also tied for third. **Tony and Cindy Greco** were second (54% game). Our hosts **Brad and Lynne** roared to the finish with four tops on the final four boards to finish first (67.5%, a very good score). Congratulations to all, and to the slam bidders as well.

Dave Pierce

925.932.3877 dwpi@astound.net



Couples Duplicate Bridge 1

Our Couples Duplicate Bridge group met at the home of **Nora and Mike Davidson** for cards, comradery and cuisine. The table was spread with cheeses, crackers, candied pretzels, and a vegetable dip with a clever little turkey decoration crafted from bell peppers by our hostess, **Nora**. A little wine and soft drinks rounded out the goodies. Getting down to serious business, teams were very competitive. First place was taken by **Ismini and Rich** with a score of 20 points, just above the 19.5 points that the **Yollands and DeVoes** scored while **Kathy and John** came in second place with a total of 21.5 points. First place honors went to **Nora and Mike** who ran away from the pack with 24 points. Next gathering will be December 18, just before Christmas at the home of the **DeVoes** and the famous Nutcracker army!

John Kluesener

john@klueseners.com



I never run with scissors.

Those last two words were unnecessary.



Men's Hearts

Bob West and Steve Ybarra

Since the prior SIRCall submission, we are reporting on results from October 13th and October 25th.

The big winners were **Jim Passaglia** with 6 wins and **Steve Ybarra** both with 2.5 wins. **Frank Terzuoli** and **Ron Polivka** had 3 2nds. The lowest average scorer was **Steve Ybarra** with 36 and **Bob West** with 45.

YTD: **Jim Passaglia** leads with 28 wins followed by **Frank Lucas** with 25.5 and **Steve Ybarra** with 22. **Jim Passaglia** has the highest winning percentage of active players at 41% followed by **Steve Ybarra** with 36%. **Steve Ybarra** has the lowest average score of 52.3 followed by **Jim Passaglia** with 52.8. **Frank** leads in STM's with 14 followed by **Jim Passaglia** with 13. **Steve Ybarra** as usual leads in 2nds with 24.5 followed by **Bill Vizza** with 23 and **Bob West** with 20.5 **Glenn Breslin** is most improved. His 2024 win rate of 31% is 281% higher than 2023.

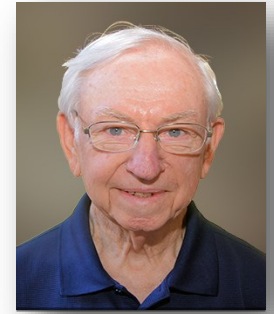
Future Meetings: We play 4 games of 75 at Rocco's on the 2nd and 4th Fridays, at 11:45, with an optional lunch at 11:15am. Our next matches will be November 22th and December 13th. We will not be meeting on the 4th Thursday of December due to Christmas Holidays.

Please call or email us if you have any questions or are interested in playing.

Co-Directors
Bob West and **Steve Ybarra**

robtawest@aol.com and sjybar@gmail.com

Alcohol may not solve your problems.
But neither will water



Party Bridge

Jim Pope and Jim Stedman

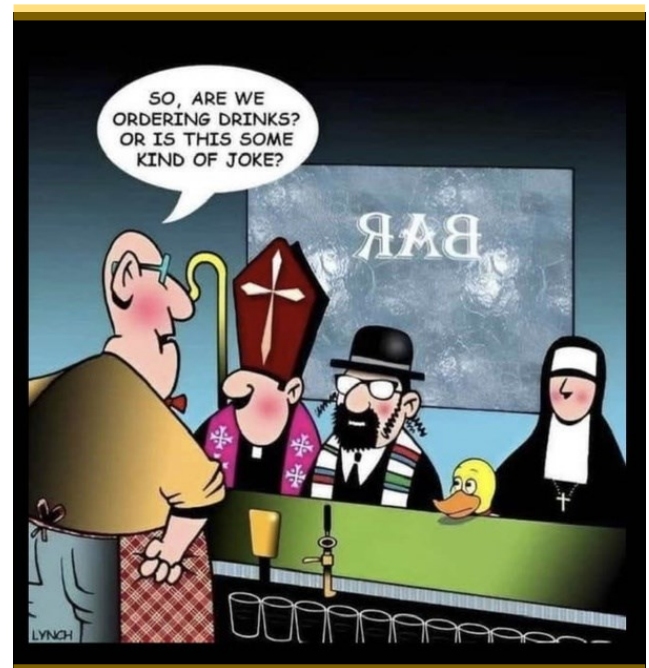
We had a good game with 12 players at The Waterford, home of **Jim Stedman** in Rossmoor. The average individual score was over 4,000, which is one of our higher scoring days. The players were: **Ray Bland**, **Jane Bradley**, (guest), **Mike Davidson**, **Steve Dining**, **Joe Fuchs**, **Max Hingle**, **Bud Pearce**, **Jim Pope**, **Ray Spears**, **Bill Schaaf**, **Ray Spears**, **Jim Stedman**, **Mike Whitaker** and **Bob Yolland**.

The high scorers were **Mike Whitaker** and **Jim Stedman** tied with 4670 points and **Jim Pope** with 4630 points. Of those with at least 4 games **Max Hinkle**, **Joe Fuchs** and **Ray Spears** are leading for the six-month contest. Several of us have a chance of getting into the top three so plan to play next month.

Our next game will be December 2nd at the home of **Mike Davidson**.

Co-Directors

[Jim Stedman](#) and [Jim Pope](#).





Poker Group 4 Pete Gates

Members of Poker Group #4 met at the home of Ray Bland for our October game. Ray was one of the winners and I was one of the losers. He was itching to play a game which I

euphemistically call: "Queens", fours and one-eyed Jacks are all wild cards but if anyone gets two sevens, that trumps all else. I won that one with a pair of sevens showing so it was a small pot but at that point in the game, any pot was welcome.

Pat Tidmarsh will host the next game on Monday, November 18th.

Pinochle

Pete McNeill and Stan Johnson

Any one interested in joining the group should give Stan Johnson a call at 925-938-7016, or myself at 925-858-9666. Our next two events are planned for Rocco's Pizza at noon and for cards at 1:00pm on 6/26/24, and 7/10/24.

Pete McNeill

925.858.9666 petamole@gmail.com

Stan Johnson

925.938.7016 stan.johnson88@gmail.com

Pete Gates

925.937.2035 petegates10@gmail.com



Area 16

\$UMS Investment Group

Due to the holidays, there will be no \$UMS in Retirement / Branch 128 Financial Zoom meeting in November and the December meeting will be on the held 4th.

Chair Tom Henry Branch 174

tomhenry925@gmail.com

Co-chair Dave Sutton Branch 8

Duplicate Bridge 3 Michael Whitaker



On Friday, Nov. 15, 12 hopeful SIR men played 24 hands of duplicate bridge. The games were graciously hosted by Bob Yolland.

Joe Fuchs ended up in 1st place,

Mike Whitaker was 2nd while Tony Greco and Jim Pope tied for 3rd. Our next game will be on Dec. 20 hosted by Tony Greco.

Michael Whitaker

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Ron Polivka

Bruce Borgman

Frank Lucas

Ron Plachy

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

Parting Shot

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
And mamma in her kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below,
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:

"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donner and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of Toys, and St. Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.

His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly.

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,



"Happy Christmas to all,
and to all a good night!"