



# Branch 146

Contra Costa County CA

# Call

December 2024—January 2025



## Big Sir's Corner

**Bob Ford**

I'm honored to introduce myself as your newly-elected Big Sir. It's a privilege to serve such a dynamic and engaged group of individuals, and I am committed to fostering an environment of camaraderie,

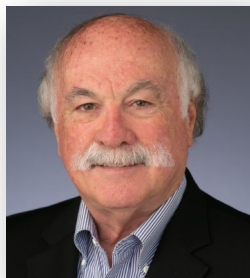
growth, and shared purpose.

One of my key priorities this year will be the recruitment of new members. Fresh faces and ideas are the lifeblood of our organization, and it's essential that we continue to grow and evolve. By inviting new members to join us, we enrich our community by bringing in diverse perspectives to ensure the longevity of our club.

I look forward to collaborating with each of you and making this year another great one for SIR.

Warm regards,

**Bob Ford**  
Big Sir, Branch 146



## Little Sir's Corner

**Thom Degan**

I am pleased to join the SIR146 BEC and look forward to working with everyone to make your SIR146 experience as good as it can be. For our next SIR146 Luncheon on Thursday, January

9<sup>th</sup>, we are very fortunate that **Bob Ford** organized Ms. Holly Reese, a Healthy Aging Coach. Ms. Reese teaches older adults how to harness the power of healthy aging. She evidently practices what she preaches as in 2023 she set the Guinness World Record for the most pushups by a woman in an hour, 1,036.

To ensure that we have an interesting set of speakers for the year, I have set up a Speaker Committee consisting of **Jim Pope, Glenn Breslin, Jim Crites** and myself to organize a diverse group of speakers. If anyone would like to join the committee or has suggestions for interesting speakers, please contact me or anyone on the committee.

We look forward to seeing you all in January, and to an outstanding year at SIR146.

**Thom Degan**  
Little Sir, Branch 146

### Activities for you...

- [Explore & Eat](#) Page 24
- [Calendar of Events](#) Page 9
- [Take a Hike!](#) Page 21
- [Need a good read? How about 2?](#) Page 17
- [Couples Dining Out](#) Page 21
- [Need a trip?](#) Page 15

**SIR Monthly Luncheon**  
**Thursday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**Boundary Oak 11:30**  
**Holly Reese, Healthy Aging Coach**  
**A reservation is required!**  
**To make yours and choose your entrée**  
**go to page 3. (click Here!)**

## 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.



## Membership George Mon

One new member was approved for membership in December.

David Price lives in Danville with his wife **Marian**. He worked as a Product Manager for Kaiser Permanente. He grew up in Kansas City and

moved to the Bay Area from LA in 2023. **David** is sponsored by **Frank Terzouli**.

Six members decided to resign for various reasons. They are **Bill Vizza, Bob Greulich, Ron Afdal, Ted Coggiola, Gary Schaub** and **Doug Hansen**.

Unfortunately, we lost **Tom Boltz** on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Tom passed away following surgery for a fractured vertebrae from a fall.

The **2025 Dues** letter was sent out in mid-October 2024 along with a return envelope for your convenience. Then a reminder notice for dues was published in the December newsletter and there was also a reminder e-blast.

So far, after these efforts, we still have about  
**42 members owing dues.**

These members will be contacted by the Big Sir and Little Sir this month and it is important that we know of their intentions as remaining members of our branch.

It is important that we have an accurate count of our branch membership since State Sir allocates cost for insurance and operating expenses based on our number.

It is important to increase 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 would like to encourage all luncheon guests 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 was **273**.

If you want to sponsor a new member, please go to our website [www.sir146.com](http://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](mailto:gckk@comcast.net)) so that we can update the directory with the most current information.

**George Mon**

925.830.1604 [gckk@comcast.net](mailto:gckk@comcast.net)



## Editor's Ramblings Clint Collier

Another year is upon us... or another year is gone. It all depends on your point of view I guess.

I choose to look forward to and anticipate each and every year.

"Bonus years" at my age I guess you could say; thankful that I retain sufficient marbles to allow me to continue putting together this newsletter for you all.

For some technical information: we, my wife and I, are off for a month-long cruise in January. Although I anticipate some (reduced?) access to the internet, **Bob West**, our assistant editor, will be handling the bulk of the work involved so it is important, when communicating with us, that you use the editor's e-mail address. [br146SIRCall@gmail.com](mailto:br146SIRCall@gmail.com). Articles and other things sent to my personal SIR e-mail address may—or may not—make it to **Bob**! This editor e-mail address comes to both of us!

Cutoff date for the next issue of SIR Call will be February 17<sup>th</sup>. Keep in mind this is the date by which we should have it, not the date for you to start writing it!

**Clint Collier**—Editor SIRCall

925.457.1489 [br146SIRCall@gmail.com](mailto:br146SIRCall@gmail.com)





## Luncheon Chairman Steve Oki

We are at the end of 2024, please remember that member dues are due now and you have the option to pay for lunches as an annual payer and pay for 8 of the regular lunches and get 2 regular lunches free. The two Ladies Day luncheons in May and December are special and are handled separately.

The links behind the entree items on the menu will generate an email for you to send, if it does not, please send an email message with your choice manually to [AttendLunchBr146@gmail.com](mailto:AttendLunchBr146@gmail.com). Be sure to include your menu choice!

All reservations will be acknowledged via email or voicemail. If you do not receive an acknowledgment within 24 hours, please send another message to the email above.

### Luncheon

**Date:** Thursday, January 9th, 2024

**Where:** Boundary Oak

**Cost:** \$36 per person

**Reservation:** All Luncheons require a reservation; you must select your menu choice as part of the reservation. The menu makes it easy to do this; simply click the appropriate meal link.

**If you do not reserve by Friday, January 3rd by Noon, we will assume you will not be coming.**

**Check-In:** 11:00 am The meeting starts at 11:30 am

**Payment:** The preferred payment method is by check payable to SIR Branch 146 at check-in.

### Other matters

If you don't have e-mail, you can call us at 925.979.5721 to leave a message. Be sure to include your meal choice from the menu!

### Change of Plans?

If you responded that you were coming but find you can't, you can cancel up to

**Friday, January 3rd by Noon**

and you will not be charged.

Send email to [AttendLunchBr146@gmail.com](mailto:AttendLunchBr146@gmail.com) or

Call 925.979.5721 and leave a message.

### Sponsors of Guests and New Members.

If you are bringing a guest or a new member, please notify the Luncheon Chair with their name and their meal choice at [AttendLunchBr146@gmail.com](mailto:AttendLunchBr146@gmail.com).

### Questions:

If you have any questions, please call Steve Oki at 925.979.5721 and leave a message with your question or request. Steve will acknowledge by returning your call.



THE CLUBHOUSE

AT BOUNDARY OAK

## SIR 146 January Luncheon

Thursday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 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.

# PUT THE FEBRUARY LUNCHEON ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW



## THE CLUBHOUSE

AT BOUNDARY OAK

### SIR 146 February Luncheon

Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

#### Salad

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

#### Entrées

##### Seared Marinated Bistro Fillet

with Caramelized Shallot Au ju, Mashed Potatoes,  
and Broccolini

—or—

##### Herb & Potato Crusted Cod

with White Wine Butter Sauce, Mashed Potatoes,  
and Broccolini

—or—

#### Vegetarian

##### Vegetable Cannelloni

Four Cheeses, Spinach with  
Tomato Basil Sauce Stuffed Pasta and Broccolini

#### 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.

## January Birthdays

Jim Barry	Robert Storkan
Garth Cummings	Steve Ybarra
Dick Devoe	Rob Mcspadden
Charles Eichten	Roger Pytlewski
Carl Feil	Mike Rothman
Ben Gleason	Steve George
Dennis Hallett	Pat Okeeffe
Bill Hoban	Steve Taylor
Colin Holland	Ted Robertson
Bob Lyman	Dick Wade
Pierre Mebane	Dave Paulson
Peter Plante	Ron Stoltz
Ken Richter	
Mike Riley	
Lynn Shafer	





# JANUARY MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES

WALT BUSENIUS

SIR Member	Year Inducted	Years
William Ross	2020	5
Ed Smith	2019	6
Dale Dalgaard	2019	6
Jack Menzhuber	2019	6
Earl Nevares	2019	6
Don Seaton	2015	10
Steve Ybarra	2015	10
John H. Alexander	2011	14
John W. Boyan	2011	14
Doug Eisner	2010	15
James Passaglia	2010	15
Randy Becker	2008	17
Paul Dubow	2008	17
Ray Spears	2007	18
Jim Burk	2006	19
Dan Schlatter	2006	19
Pete Gates	2002	23
Charles Eichten	1999	26
Lew Thompson	1996	29
Jim Stedman	1993	32



## 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](mailto:brimacc@comcast.net) or by phone 925.324.2463 so that our SIR members can be advised. *Stay Healthy.*



Pat O'Keeffe



Norm Baietti



Richard Hockenbrock

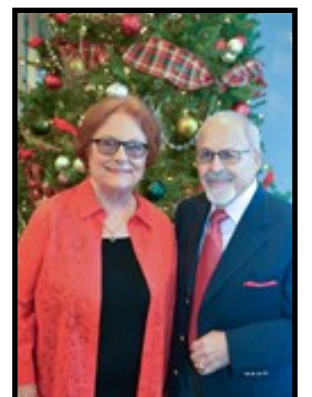
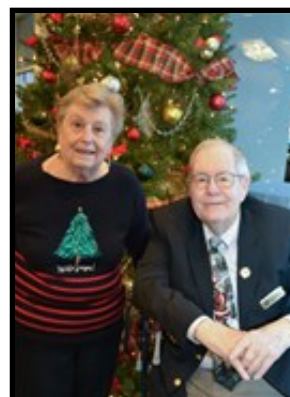
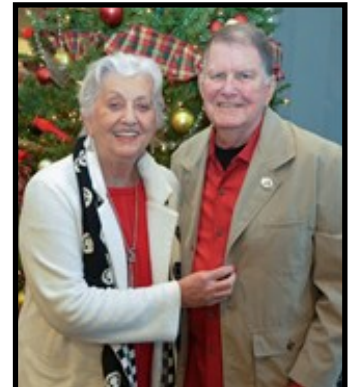
<b>SIRCall Newsletter Group</b>	
Editor	Clint Collier
Assistant Editor	Bob West
Photographer	Henry Thatcher
Proofreaders	Ron Polivka
	Bruce Borgman
	Frank Lucas
Internet Posting	Ron Plachy

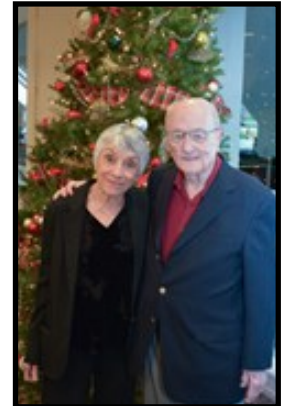
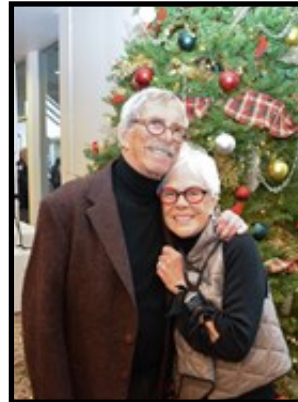
# DECEMBER MEETING

Photos by Henry Thatcher









Pseudo Santa Claws, with his Reindeer Games, was back, helped by Big Sir Bob and his 14¢ decision maker.

PS would like to point out... if you would like a full size copy of your picture to print simply click on it to get the original high definition version.





# Looking for something to do...



## Activities Coordinator Glenn Breslin

Hi to all SIR Members !! Are you aware that SIR Branch 146 has 48 different group activities and 29 of the 48 activities are available to spouses or significant others. If you are looking for something to enrich your life then go ahead and click on any activity located at [www.sir146.com](http://www.sir146.com). Just select one of the icons and it will pull up a full description of that activity with the chairman's contact information. If you haven't found an activity that you like, the most popular activities are Golf and Mexican Train Dominoes. If you want to be trained to play Mexican Train Dominoes, just let me know.

Still not finding an interest? How about starting a new activity; I can assist you with that. We greatly appreciate the efforts of all of the Activity Chairs and what they do to keep the our 273 members involved in stimulating activities. The Mission of SIR is to improve the lives of our members through fun activities and events - while making friends for life. You all have done a great job of implementing this mission! You continue to make SIR146 a successful social organization. SIR would not be the same without you. Please continue to let me know how I can help you continue this success or if you need support in any way.

Description	Totals
Total Activities	48
Total Co-Ed Activities	29
Percent Co-Ed Activities	60%
Total Unique Activities	28
BR146 activities shared with other branches	12
Other SIR Branch Groups Activities Shared with SIR146	15

Glenn Breslin  
SIR146 Activity Chair  
925.788.6520 [glennbreslin@gmail.com](mailto: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

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

# SIR Branch 146 Activities Calendar January 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
30	31	Jan 1	2	3
10:00am Hiking 12:00pm Table Pool at Masses	9:00am Golf	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
6	7	8	9	10
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	8:30am Birding Location TBD monthly 1:00pm– 2:30pm Guitar Group 1:00pm– 3:00pm Pinochle at Rocco's 6:45pm– 10:00pm MTD 7 Siete	9:00am– 10:45am BEC Meeting 11:30am– 1:30pm SIR Luncheon	11:45am– 3:30pm Hearts Rocco's in W.C. 12:30pm– 2:30pm Chess Pleasant Hill Sr Ctr 6:45pm– 10:00pm MTD 1 Uno
13	14	15	16	17
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 1:30pm Poker Group 8	11:00am Lunch and Wine (LAW) 1:30pm SongSir Rehearsal W.C. Presbyterian Church 6:45pm– 10:00pm Couples Duplicate Bridge 1 6:45pm– 10:00pm MTD 9 Nueve	9:30am Nine-Hole Golf–1 7:00pm– 10:00pm MTD 5 Cinco	9:00am– 11:00am Photography Group Rocco's Pizzeria 10:00am– 3:00pm Men's Duplicate Bridge 3 7:00pm– 10:00pm MTD 4 Quattro 12:00 SIRCall Articles due
20	21	22	23	24
10:00am Hiking 12:00pm Table Pool at Masses	9:00am Golf	12:30pm– 3:30pm Cribbage at Rocco's 1:00pm– 2:30pm Guitar Group 1:00pm– 3:00pm Pinochle at Rocco's 1:30pm– 3:30pm \$UMS in Retirement Investment Group Zoom 6:45pm– 10:00pm MTD 6 Seis	7:30am– 9:30am Area 16 Fishing Group Legends Sports Bar Diablo Creek GC 9:30am Nine-Hole Golf–1	11:45am– 3:30pm Hearts Rocco's in W.C. 6:45pm– 10:00pm MTD 2 Dos 6:45pm– 10:00pm MTD 3 Tres
27	28	29	30	31
10:00am Hiking 12:00pm Table Pool at Masses 1:00pm Poker Group #3 1:00pm– 4:00pm Poker Group #4	9:00am Golf			



## 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 .

To view the below links on travel option, just press control button, and have your pointer over the link and click to go to the website.

S e q	Vietnam/Cambodia (Price/Price with Air)	S e q	Australia/New Zealand (Price/Price with Air)	S e q	Japan/Korea (April 2025 Sold Out) (Price/Price with Air)
<b>1</b>	10/19/25 to 11/7/25 (3495/4695)  Angor Wat Post-Trip Included available  <a href="#">LINK HERE</a>	<b>2</b>	1/7/26 to 1/25/26 (5295/7645)  Both Melbourne Pre-Trip and Fiji Post-Trip available  <a href="#">LINK HERE</a>	<b>3</b>	4/1/26 to 4/16/26 (7495/9095)  Hiroshima Post-Trip available  <a href="#">LINK HERE</a>

### SIR Travel Plan:

- Done December** (see just above) – Work with SIRs that choose these future SIR Travel Destinations to pick the start and end travel dates for each above numbered trip.
- To Do January** – Obtain BEC approval for these trips at the BEC 1/9/25 meeting
- To Do January** – Communicate trip details to SIR146 and other SIR groups

### Travel Quotes:

- “ There is an unspoken bond you create with the friends you travel with”
- “ You can pack for every occasion, but a good friend will always be the best thing you could bring”
- “ A good friend listens to your adventures. A best friend makes them with you”

Let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Glenn Breslin  
925.788.6520 [glennbreslin@gmail.com](mailto:glennbreslin@gmail.com)







## Theater Glenn Breslin

### Theater Events at the Leshner Theater

Join us for the upcoming Tribute Concerts at the Leshner Theater, Walnut Creek.

#### The ABBA Concert Experience (Tribute Performance)

- **Date:** Sat., January 18, 7:30 PM
- **Note:** Show is sold out. If you are interested, then I will put you on the SIR146 waiting list – as I always obtain cancellations.
- **Price:** \$58 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:** 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 PM - before the performance.
- **Ticket Distribution:** Leshner Lobby between 6:45 and 7:10 PM on Sat 1/18 – before the show

#### Eagles Tribute Performance

- **Date:** Tue., February 4, 7:30 PM
- **Price:** \$62 per ticket – discounted group rate
- **Note:** Limited number of tickets still available. If this show interests you, then contact me asap before this show sells out.
- **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 PM - before the performance.
- **Ticket Distribution:** Leshner Lobby between 6:45 and 7:10 PM on Tue 2/4 – before the show

#### Shows at Leshner Theater – Walnut Creek

- Location: Leshner 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](mailto:glennbreslin@gmail.com)



## Cycling Group Larry Kaye

Dec 3rd: Today was a special ride. We were going to visit the Military museum in Dublin at Camp Parks. Today's group included: **Bill Ross, Bill Holly, Bob Lucido, Tom Alborg, Jim Crites, Ken Studer, Roger Meyer, Moose Kelly and Larry**

**Kaye.**

We took a later start so the cold wouldn't chill us too much. Trip South was nice and we passed thru Danville and Dublin en-route.

The Museum is a building housing memorabilia from the days of this being an active base. Lots to see. Some of us Vets took in more than the rest. Once we were done it was off again. We stopped at Peets via the new trail in the Valley. Fun and flat and paved. Wowee. Java and much needed food was what the doc ordered. Then it was heading North and West to the Alamo area. Finally we arrived at our cars. 30 miles and bushed. Hey, who really cares? We all are not young in years anymore but.... We can ride 30 plus miles can you? Off the couch and get outside. Larry

Dec 10th: Fog. Dense cold wet fog. We met for our ride but being good brothers of the Spandex we took a vote. Let's go to coffee and see if it warms up. Unanimous!

Java and a sticky bun and the sun rose. Yipee. We voted again and off we went. **Thom Degnan, Tom Alborg, Brian Lotter, Dave Paulson** ( with his new electric rocket ship) and **Larry Kaye**. Shorter but lets get some hill work in was the chant. Taking the backroads we explored old Danville, old Alamo's( Macedo Ranch) and asst other nasty hills. The sun kept us warmer and the mood was up. Back to town finally became the route and off we went. The cars with their heaters on seemed the place to end at. There is cold and then there is really wet foggy cold, neither is fun. Age has a way of making ones bones really cold. Better on the bike than on a couch.

**Larry Kaye**  
925.698.430

The older you get, the earlier it gets late.



## Birding Ted Robertson

For our last trip of the year, five SIR birders undertook a leisurely walk around Hidden Lakes Park, located in southern Martinez. During our walk bordering a picturesque lake nestled between

oak trees, we spotted and heard 25 species of birds. There were many highlights, including Orange-crowned and Wilson's warblers, Cedar Waxwings, very close looks at a Western Bluebird, and three species of woodpeckers (Acorn, Nuttall's, and Northern Flicker).

Our next field trip is scheduled for the morning of January 8th (2nd Wednesday) at Contra Loma Reservoir in southern Antioch. Heavy rain cancels or reschedules. 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](mailto: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](mailto:tedr@berkeley.edu)



Hidden Lakes Park  
Photo by Jim Rowland

Continued on the Following Page



Birding continued from previous page



SIR Birders at Hidden Lakes Park  
Photo by Jim Rowland



Double-crested Cormorant  
Photo by Earl Bates



Cedar Waxwing  
Photo by Earl Bates



### SongSirs Peter Plante

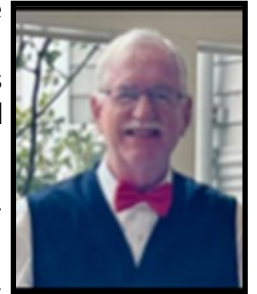
The SongSirs sang on December 4 at the Ivy Park Retirement Home in Walnut Creek. Our Christmas program was well received, and many people were singing along with us as we sang such favorites as "Frosty the Snowman," "Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer" and "The Christmas Song." It was a great way to finish out the year.

Our next rehearsal is on January 15, 29025 at Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church at 1:30. Our next program will be singing the Irish songs in preparation for St. Patrick's Day.

We are always looking for new members, so join us for a fun time and camaraderie. No auditions necessary, just a love of music and singing.

Peter Plante

[pcplante109@gmail.com](mailto:pcplante109@gmail.com)



Piano Maestro  
Steve Dinning



From L to R: Peter Plante, Ken Soult, Paul Beretz, Bruce Borgman, Frank Lucas, Lynn Shafer, Bud Pearce, Ron Lew, Bruce Kimmis.

Photo by Steve Dinning





## AREA 16 Fishing Report Paul Dubow

It has been cold and rainy all month. But that has not deterred the members of our fishing group. So long as we can avoid the wind, we will fish. The

wind did blow a lot in December, but we did enjoy enough calm days to drop a line or two.

The major activity was what we call a crab combo, where we drop our traps for crab and then fish for rockfish. **Lee Clark, Fred McNeil, and Stan Wong** all journeyed to the Farallones for limits or near limits, although Fred reported that the seals were just as interested in his lines as the rockfish. **Doug Dukes, Carl Moyer, Brion Beetz, Barry Latner, and Steve Paulick** also enjoyed limits on crab combo trips in other locations.

On the other hand, trout fishing was quite poor this month. San Pablo Reservoir is closed to fishing until February 14, while Contra Loma and Lafayette Reservoirs were not fishable after rainstorms because of mud accumulation. That left Shadow Cliffs Reservoir as the main attraction for trout fishermen. But it did not produce much this month. **Dennis Lee, Ken Konzak, and Carl Moyer** all fished at Shadow Cliffs, but the bite was sparse. Dennis and his son-in-law did try their luck at Los Vaqueros but all they come home with was frostbite.

We also had a first on the Delta. **Tom Kostik** failed to land a single fish on one of his four Delta trips this month. That has not happened to Tom in years. However, his companion, **Harry Sherinian**, landed a keeper striper. Tom did catch a total of 20 stripers on the three other occasions, including five keepers. As his custom, he released all the fish.

**Brion Beetz** had better results on a guided trip in the Delta. He caught and released three keeper stripers. And, just before he was ready to call it a day, his rod bent in half and, after a 20 minute struggle, he reeled in a king salmon close to the boat. Unfortunately for Brion, 2024 fishing regulations prohibit anglers not only from landing salmon but also from boating them. And so, Brion cut his line and the salmon swam off, ready to tease another angler. Brion estimates that the fish weighed 20 lbs.

Our traveler of the month was **Ken Bellindir**. He flew to Naples, Florida, for a vacation and spent a day on the Gulf of Mexico fishing for red snappers. He caught a fish on nearly every cast. But not a single one was over six inches! In fact, there were only three keepers landed by the 18 fishermen aboard the boat.

Finally, we had a very successful Christmas dinner at Zio Fraedo's with our wives and significant others. There were 54 of us who enjoyed the restaurant's prime rib. We also appreciated the generosity of **Dennis Lee**, who provided each woman attendee with a necklace and the men with stopwatches.

Our next breakfast meeting will be on January 23 at the Legends Bar and Grill, at Diablo Creek Golf Course, 4050 Port Chicago Highway, in Concord. 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



## Book Corner Peter Plante

The Book Corner returns in March. We have a terrific

selection for you.





## Nine Hole Golf Group Bob Ford

I am looking forward to another fun year with the 9-Hole golf group. I have really enjoyed the group and am happy that we have been able to expand our members. If you are

not already part of the group and would like to join us please let me know. 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](mailto:scubabob.ford@gmail.com)



## 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**



## 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](mailto:jbarry@sbcglobal.net)



## Bocce John Kendrick

Hopefully Santa answered your Christmas wish and brought you your very own set of Bocce Balls. Safety tip - don't practice inside the house.

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](mailto:jmkendrick23@gmail.com)

Three golf clubs went into a bar.  
The putter asked for a beer.  
The wedge ordered Tequila  
...and the third?  
The third said,  
"nothing for me, I'm the driver."





## Hiking Mark Curtis

The long-anticipated winter rains are here! I would venture to guess that as of this writing, we've had more than 5 inches of rain total with more on the way before the end of the calendar year. So far, we've only had to cancel 2 hikes due to wet conditions starting in mid-November. Some of the hikes have been to Diablo Foothills, Black Diamond Mines, Point Pinole, Morgan Territory, and Mount Diablo State Park.

Effective January 1, 2025, I will no longer be coordinating the hiking activity. The guys that enjoy this activity like to do hikes that are just getting too difficult and painful for me. I'm finding it increasingly difficult to walk up and down hills. I still walk a lot, but mainly on less awkward terrain. Ray Martz and Bob Wilkenfeld are jointly assuming the role of hiking coordinator. They will share the duty of planning the hikes, while Bob will have responsibility to create the monthly article for the Sir Call.

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. I/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.

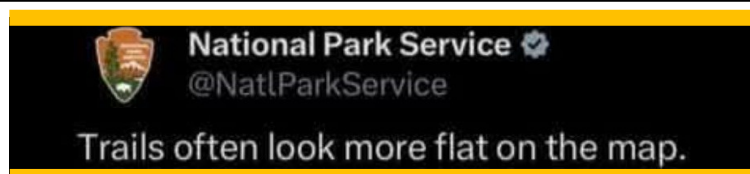
If you have an interest in participating in this hiking activity, please let me know and I will add your email address to my distribution list.

**Mark Curtis**

925.360.3449 [Mocurtis1657@gmail.com](mailto:Mocurtis1657@gmail.com)



L/R: Cleo Bolen, Eric Finson, Gene Schulting, Ray Martz, Mark Curtis, Earl Bates, Jim Crites, Roger Meyer and Tom Stucker







## Book Group John Pearl

### REPORT FOR NOVEMBER

For November, our group chose *Nexus*, right off the Best Seller list, and written by a well-known and considered by some to be a controversial author. This is his latest effort, an attempt to unscramble the world of Artificial Intelligence and communication over the centuries.

**Nexus: A Deep Dive into Humanity's Information Age** Yuval Noah Harari, the renowned historian and philosopher, returns with *Nexus*, a thought-provoking exploration of humanity's intricate relationship with information. Building upon the success of his previous works, *Sapiens* and *Homo Deus*, Harari delves into the evolution of information networks, from ancient myths and religions to the cutting-edge world of artificial intelligence (AI).

**A Tapestry of Human History:** *Nexus* is a captivating journey through time, weaving together the threads of history, technology, and philosophy. Harari masterfully illustrates how information networks have shaped civilizations, empowered leaders, and transformed societies. He highlights the pivotal role of language, writing, and digital technologies in connecting individuals and communities across vast distances.

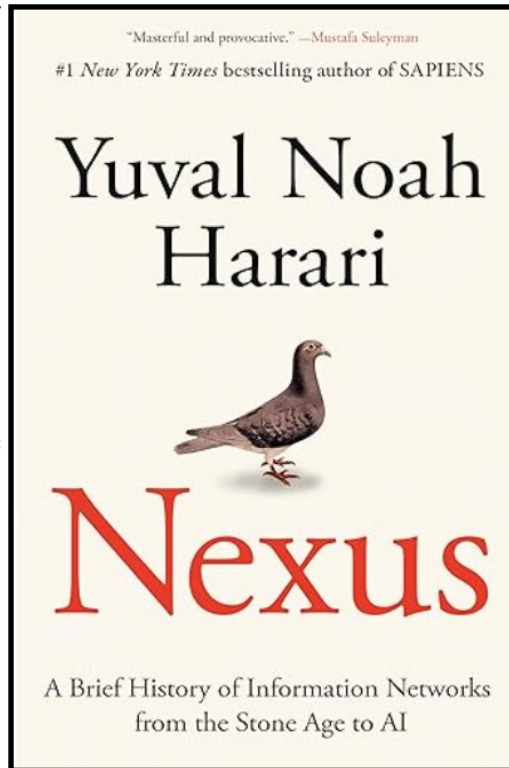
**The Double-Edged Sword of Information:** One of the book's central themes is the dual nature of information. While it has the potential to liberate and enlighten, it can also be used to manipulate, deceive, and control. Harari warns of the dangers of unchecked information flow, particularly in the age of AI. He argues that as AI systems become increasingly sophisticated, they could pose significant threats to human autonomy and agency.

**A Call to Action:** In *Nexus*, Harari urges readers to think critically about the impact of information technologies on society. He emphasizes the importance of developing ethical guidelines for AI development and deployment, as well as fostering digital literacy and

critical thinking skills. By understanding the past and present of information networks, we can better prepare for the future and shape a world that benefits all of humanity.

**Strengths and Weaknesses:** *Nexus* is a well-written and engaging book that offers a unique perspective on the history and future of information. Harari's ability to synthesize complex ideas into accessible language makes the book enjoyable for a wide audience. However, some readers may find the book's scope to be overly ambitious, as it attempts to cover a vast range of topics in a relatively short space.

**A Must-Read for the Information Age:** Despite its limitations, *Nexus* is a valuable contribution to the ongoing conversation about the future of humanity. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the intersection of technology, society, and ethics. By exploring the power and potential of information networks, Harari provides a roadmap for navigating the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.



John Pearl, Chair—Paul Dubow, Sr. Editor  
[jpearlir@gmail.com](mailto:jpearlir@gmail.com)

### Note for Book Group Readers:

Please note: For a Holiday Treat this month it just happens you have 2 months of Book Group reports. On the next page you can find the report for December.

I'm not going to have any struggles to tell my kids about.

What's my story going to be?

"Ah, son, once when I was flying from New York to L.A., my iPad died!"

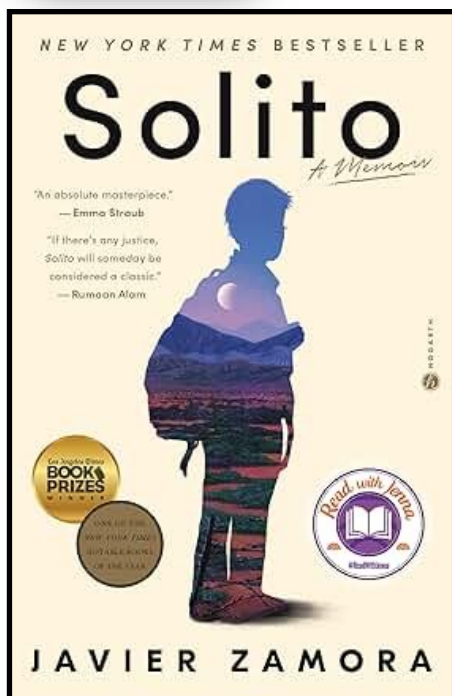


## Book Group

John Pearl

### REPORT FOR DECEMBER

For December, we reviewed our Book of the Month, "Solito, by Javier Zamora. This has been a bestseller and highly rated in the reviews, over 90%



either four or five stars. It is the story of Zamora's very difficult journey from a small village in El Salvador, La Herradura, to his parents' home in San Rafael when we just nine years old and unaccompanied by family or friends.

He was living with his grandparents in the small town of La Herradura and going to a

Catholic school run by a group of nuns. There was a phone connection at a neighbor's home so he could speak to his parents occasionally. His grandfather was the one who decided when he was ready to make this difficult journey and he also made the arrangements, dealing with the local "coyote" who would guide them north. He had a good reputation and was very successful in taking the mother to the US. The young boy has done well in the local school and is the class valedictorian.

Preparations get underway for his "trip," as he calls his journey. Grandfather meets with the coyote, Don Dago, who will guide him and hopefully care for him as they move north. Don Dago is the coyote who successfully took Javier's mother from the village to San Rafael. At this point Javier is thinking a lot about the trip north and his parents who await him in San Rafael. His father left when Javier was very young, and he really only knows what he looks like by the pictures that are sent south by the parents. Money crosses from his grandfather, El Chepe, (a nickname) to Don Dago, money that has been saved and sent by the parents and the

grandparents.

Finally, the preparations are in place, and the grandfather takes him to see the mother superior at the school to ask for a one week excused absence to go to Guatemala and visit friends and go the zoo, which he missed out on an earlier trip. His attendance and scholastic records have been perfect to this point. In actuality the absence is to give him a head start on his trip north. The mother superior says OK!

The grandfather takes him to San Salvador, the country's capital, which is the starting point for the group that Don Dago is taking north. After a few days, Don Dago rounds up his group, and loads up the bus, and group heads out, with first stop being Guatemala. There are five others in the group. They are Marcelo, whom the grandfather recognizes as a former resident of LaHerradura; Patricia and her eleven year old daughter, Carla, who hopes to join Patricia's husband and other daughter on the US; and two young men, Chino and Chele. They will later be joined by 25 others.

Most of the rest of the book is made up of individual "vignettes" describing the segments of Javier's travels, from San Salvador to Arizona and his parents who welcome there. And while Guatemala is immediately next to Mexico, it is a long way to the US. This is not a trip I would like to take. The group travels by buses, some walking and a harrowing long boat trip. I am beginning to learn how the "system" works, as a chain of "coyotes" that provide services, for pay, along the way. Javier encounters lots of people, such as the service providers, fellow travelers, law enforcement, and citizens who host the group. It is a bit like the Underground Railroad of the Civil War. Relationships develop among the group, providing support to each other, all of whom have the goal of reaching this country. Some of the people are quite interesting, others are quite terrifying. All this is seen and described by a nine-year old boy! Travel is by boat, car, bus, and walking – it's a long way.

Their first stop in Guatemala is Tecun Uman, just a short distance across the river on the border, with a maximum permitted stay of 15 days. The next stop is Guatemala City, the largest city in the country. The end of the day is in a town that reminds Javier of Zcatecoluca, the second largest city in El Salvador. They are now being led by a new Coyote, who never reveals his

Continued on next page

Grandpa gets him settled and gives his “instructions” to a couple of the adults and gets off the bus. In a very poignant scene, Grandpa waves until Javier can’t see him anymore as he watches out the bus rear window as his grandfather waves as the bus leaves – it may be the last time Javier ever sees him again; he is a white dot in back of the departing bus. The bus stops in Ocos, on the Pacific Ocean, very near the Mexican border. They are told the “new” plan, crossing into Mexico by boat, Don Dago leaves, never to be seen again.

The balance of the book is about the trip through Mexico and all difficulties it entailed. Not long after they depart the boat, they are stopped by the police who steal most of their money. They find new coyotes He ends up being part of a family headed by Carla, her daughter Carla, and a young man named Chino.

The chapters cover the travels one by one, and the stops they must take, some lengthy, to move closer to the border – in some ways the most difficult part of the trip, as the US has an active Border Patrol. The original coyotes have long gone on their way, and others must be found. Each new guide charges a fee, and this time at the border will make two tries to get them across. The first one failed and they were eventually returned to Mexico after spending time in a Border Patrol facility. One of the agents is a kind person and he quietly takes them back to the border without detaining them.

The second one, which they have paid for, tries the journey again. It worked as intended and they made it to Tucson, and a degree of safety. This trip took three months, not the two weeks as originally promised. At the house where Javier waited with some others in the group, at last the parents arrived and there was such a reunion, as Javier had not seen his father for so long. After the coyote was paid his fee of \$1,500 Javier was then off to his new home in San Rafael. This was a journey, and they were off the grid most of the time, with parents worrying about them.

This story is being told through the eyes of a nine-year-old, with an amazing amount of detail, and I began to wonder how a nine-year-old could do all this. In summary, it was quite a trip that took much longer than originally planned, with stops and interruptions that only money could buy your way through.

I get to the end and read about the author – it turns out that Javier is the name of the author and is the nine-year telling this story! The descriptions of the people

and the scenery are very complete and complex. At the age of 18 his legal status was now such that he was able to travel back El Salvador and visit his family there. While the author was born in La Herradura, El Salvador, he grew up to be an author. He has a published poetry collection, was a Radcliffe Fellow at Harvard, and has many other awards, and now lives in Tucson.

Sadly, Javier never sees Patricia, Carla, and Chino again, although there are a few phone calls. Marcelo makes it to Los Angeles, from where he called Javier’s parents before Javier made it to Tucson and to tell them that Javier was alive and in a survival mode. Chele apparently dies in the dessert after fleeing the Border Patrol.

We recommend this book highly as it strongly describes the travails they face in their attempts to reach the US. Most of these people are not criminals; they are just ordinary people who want a better life, a job, and the American dream.

The book is not an easy read, with a lot of Spanish slang added, but the book itself is worth the effort.

John Pearl, Chair—Paul Dubow, Sr. Editor  
[jpearljr@gmail.com](mailto:jpearljr@gmail.com)



**A college class was told they had to write a short story in as few words as possible. The instructions were: The short story had to contain the following three things:**

- (1) Religion**
- (2) Sexuality**
- (3) Mystery**

**Below is the only A+ short story in the entire class.**

**"Good God, I'm pregnant; I wonder who did it."**





## Cooking II Steve Ybarra

Cooking II will not meet in December 2024. Bruce Borgman will host our next Cooking II activity in January.

The photo of Sirs Polivka, Ybarra, Thompson and Hallett and wives was taken at the Greenery restaurant celebrating Lew Thompson turning 91 this November, 2024.



## 寿司の友達

### Sushi no Tomodachi Clint Collier

We were off to Makuni in the Veranda Shopping center in Concord for our annual get together with wives, friends, and whomever would like to join us end of year party. Not only good sushi but good dishes

for the non-fish eaters, it is dependable for its good choices and freshness. This year proved just as satisfying although it was noticeable that a pile of edamame had replaced some of the sushi on the platters that we ordered.



Steve Ybarra  
[sjybar@gmail.com](mailto:sjybar@gmail.com)



We will be going back to our even numbered months schedule in 2025 so our next regular get together will be February 20th. We will be going to Walnut Creek's newest Japanese restaurant located in the Citrus Circle shopping center off of Oak Grove.

Clint Collier

925.457.1489 [SirClint@the-colliers.org](mailto:SirClint@the-colliers.org)





## Couples Dining Out Bruce Borgman

We think you will enjoy the excursion into this Asian cuisine, and we look forward to seeing you there!

**Bruce Borgman**  
Dining Out Host  
[bgborgman@aol.com](mailto:bgborgman@aol.com)



You will recall from last month's report that for our January culinary event we thought we would try a Szechuan restaurant which had been recommended by one of our diners. It is Tasty Szechuan located on Treat Blvd in Concord. After your hosts visited this location, we were very impressed with the bold flavors of the dishes we tried and impressed with the genuine Chinese cuisine. However, they do not have a liquor license, so we posed the question of whether we would consider skipping our traditional cocktail hour. But the staff at the restaurant recommended we also check out their new Pacheco location, which did have the liquor license. I checked this location out on my own and had a pleasant meeting with the owner of all four locations of this restaurant. We selected a wide range of dishes – mostly from the Chinese American side of the menu since many of the Szechuan dishes tend to be spicier. We will be dining with this unique and authentic cuisine on Monday, January 20. While they do have a liquor license, their offering is limited to beer. So we've decide to skip a formal cocktail hour, and just stick with the dinner as the main attraction. The good news is that the restaurant has offered to include a beer in the total price of the dinner. Or you may select a soda. Traditional tea is served as well.

For the individual dishes, we will start with appetizers of Pot Stickers, Vegetarian Spring Rolls, and Wontons in Chili Oil Sauce. Next, we will enjoy a Cucumber Salad, followed by their Chicken Egg Drop Soup. For the main traditional dishes, we will have the Dry Fried Green Beans, Sesame Chicken, Mongolian Beef, Honey Walnut Prawns, Sweet and Sour Spareribs, and Salt and Pepper Fish Fillet – truly a feast for the senses! We will finish with a Sweet Osmanthus Cake.

We will plan seating at tables of 10, with four in the main dining area and one table in an adjoining room, for a total of 50 diners. Since we will skip the cocktail hour, we will start at 6:00pm. We'll be able socialize at the dinner tables since there is less room for this in the rest of the restaurant.

The restaurant is located at 5872 Pacheco Blvd, Pacheco – located in the strip mall in the location of the old Los Panchos restaurant. Parking is somewhat limited.



Flyer on the Following Page



# *COUPLES DINING OUT*

*Monday January 20, 2025*

*No Social hour for this event!!*

*Dinner: 6:00pm*



## *Appetizers*

*Pork potstickers*

*Vegetarian Spring Rolls*

*Wontons in Chili Oil Sauce*

*Cucumber Salad*

*Chicken Egg Drop Soup*

## *Chinese Specialties*

*Dry Fried Green Beans*

*Sesame Chicken*

*Mongolian Beef*

*Honey Walnut Prawns*

*Sweet and Sour Spare Ribs*

*Salt and Pepper Fish Fillet*

## *Dessert*

*Sweet Osmanthus Cake*

**Tasty Szechuan Restaurant**

5872 Pacheco Blvd, Pacheco

**SPECIAL for our group - a domestic or Chinese beer included**

RSVP to Bruce Borgman, [bgborgman@aol.com](mailto:bgborgman@aol.com), Confirm with check to Sir 146, mail to 3611 Winchester Pl, Walnut Creek 94598 \$45.00 per person, including tax and tip.

Served family style.





## Wine Tasting Brian McCarthy

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>. That is the date of the first wine tasting of 2025. Larry and Ann Kaye are hosting a WHITE WINE EXTRAVAGANZA at their

home in Alamo. The wines are less restrictive this time. Bring either your "favorite white wine," or "white sparkling wine," or "white prosecco." (i.e. no red or pink wines.) White is the color of the day. The wine tasting begins at 2:30pm and goes until 5:00pm. Please make sure your wine is CHILLED. Put it in a brown paper bag and include the information sheet that we will send you. Also, don't forget to bring an appetizer to share.

Since the tasting will be indoors, the number of attendees will be limited to thirty people. So, RSVP as quickly as possible. Call me at 925.324.2463 or email us at [br146winetasting@gmail.com](mailto:br146winetasting@gmail.com). Bill and I are looking forward to seeing you.

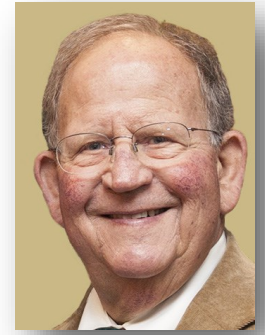
Brian McCarthy

925.324.2463 [br146winetasting@gmail.com](mailto:br146winetasting@gmail.com)



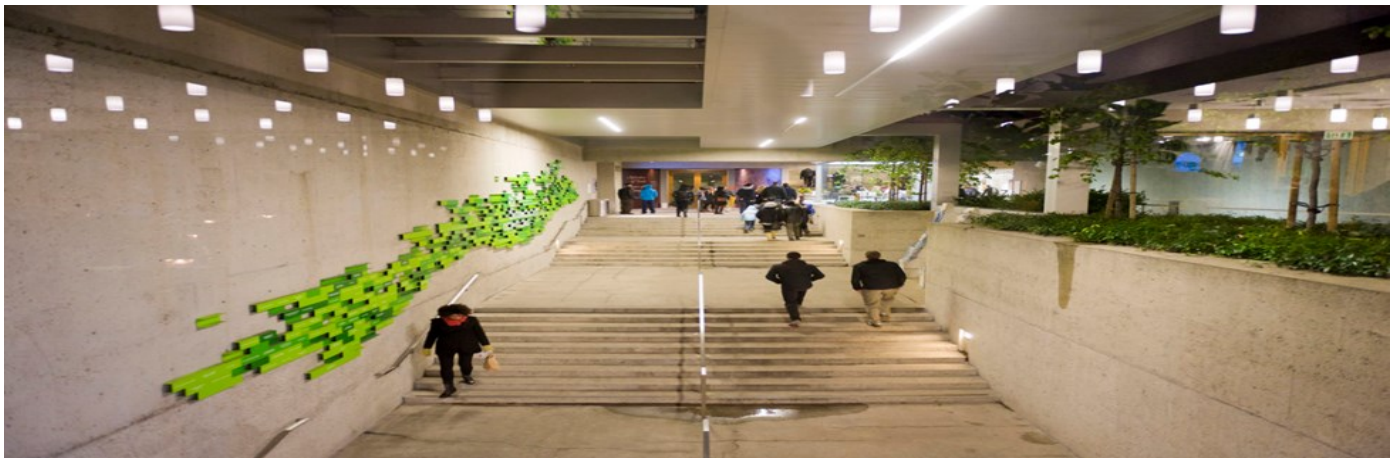


## Explore and Eat Henry Thatcher and Jim Pope



# Oakland Museum of California

**Tour February 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:00-12:30**  
**Lunch to follow at 1:00 at location To Be Determined**



Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) tells the many stories that comprise California, bringing people together and inspiring greater understanding about what our state's art, history, and natural surroundings teach us. With more than 1.9 million objects, OMCA's collections of art, history, and natural science bring to life first-person accounts and often untold narratives of California within 110,000 square feet of gallery space and seven-acre campus and gardens.

An abundance of interactive features in the galleries allow visitors to experience centuries of California history and people, generations of its art and artists, and millennia of natural science all in one place. The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) is located at 1000 Oak Street, at 10th Street, in Oakland. Museum admission is: \$8 per person for this SIR E&E event.

There is a \$6 charge in addition to general admission pricing for special exhibitions in the Great Hall if you wish to view after lunch.

OMCA offers onsite underground parking and is conveniently located one block from the Lake Merritt BART station, on the corner of 10th Street and Oak Street. We will tour the OCMA starting at 11:00 to 12:30. Lunch will follow at 1:00 with the lunch location To Be Determined. Please send a check to SIR 146 for \$8 per person to Jim Pope, 385 Bryan Drive, Alamo, CA 94507 to save a spot for this E&E Event.

*If you're 40+ it's time to leave them  
young girls alone and get you a woman  
that understands the signs of a stroke.*



# MEXICAN TRAIN Dominoes

Group Tres 3



## Mexican Train Dominoes "Tres" Walt Busenius

We met on Friday afternoon, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, after the Sir Call was published. Our Friday express ole locomotive huffed

and puffed its way through peaceful Walnut Creek to the Creekside home of **Alicia Baily**. Along for the ride were **Joyce Wells** and **Jim Barry**, **Sally and Lynn Shafer**, **Linda and Larry Brown**, **Judy Richmond** and **Sue Busenius**. Hospitable **Alicia** treated us to table treats and a very delicious half-time faire.

Bringing her A game to the table once again this month was **Alicia Baily** winning 1<sup>st</sup> Place and the big money which is inflation proof. The good lady is unstoppable. **Judy Richmond** had her guns blazing to capture 2<sup>nd</sup> place. **Sue Busenius** amazed herself to claim the honor of 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Once again, the ladies prevailed. Well done. The men are trying to get into the photo of winners without success. Maybe in January.

Everyone enjoyed themselves, said their goodbyes,

boarded the ole Mexican Train and followed the sunset home. MTD#3 is not playing in December.

Our next meeting will be on Friday afternoon, January 24<sup>th</sup>, at the home of **Sally and Lynn Shafer**. All Aboard. We hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!!

**Walt Busenius**

925.457.7428 [walterbusenius@gmail.com](mailto:walterbusenius@gmail.com)



Group Nueve 9



## Mexican Train Dominoes "Nueve" Bob Lucido

It was the week before Hanukkah on December 18th and all through house,

the players were scarfing **Judy Wilkenson's** latkes, all homemade. Only eight of us were available to play this evening which translated to more for each of us. With the latkes now gone, we divided up into two tables and shuffled the tiles. After six rounds one of our hosts, **Bob Wilkenfeld** ended up taking home first place, followed by **Clint Collier** and **Mary Ellen Dalgaard** winning a lucky \$2bill!

Clint Collier for Bob Lucido  
[bobwendy3@comcast.net](mailto:bobwendy3@comcast.net)



Truth in advertising

These are not **Judy's** lakes. This is a Google image. **Judy's** did not last long enough to be photographed







## Mexican Train Dominoes "Cinco" Dennis Hallett

Our Cinco group met at Marty Campbell home on Thursday December 5<sup>th</sup> 2024, to celebrate

Christmas and conduct our final 2024 game.

Marty did an exceptional job decorating her home and especially the table, where dinner was served. It was a joy to view the display of Christmas ornaments and treasures the Campbell family had accumulated over the years. Sadly, **Judy** and **Jim Baldrige** and **Janet** and **Bob Yolland** were unable to attend.

Our host welcomed our group with hors d' oeuvres and wine, then everyone sat at the dining table to enjoy Roasted Pork Loin served with various vegetable dishes accompanied by a grapefruit side salad.

Instead of the usual competitive games, the women and men played separately to produce 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> places. Then the two winners from each table had a playoff. The men's winners were **Dave Pierce** and **Dennis Hallett**, and the women's winners were **Marty Campbell** and **Ann Hallett**.

Before the four winners played for the final two places,

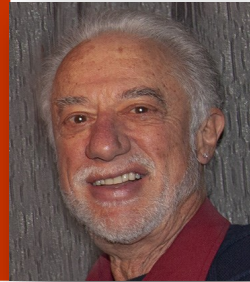
Pink Peppermint Ice Cream was served. Refueled and refreshed, the two men won the next game and went on to a "All Men" final playoff. The final playoff game between **Dennis Hallett** and **Dave Pierce** was won by **Dave Pierce**.

It was a memorable evening, with much laughter, storytelling and recollections from the games played during 2024. Everyone went home full of Christmas Spirit (in more ways than one !!)

The first gathering in the New Year will be on Thursday January 16<sup>th</sup> 2025 hosted by **Hallett's**.

**Dennis Hallett**

[dennishallett@astound.net](mailto:dennishallett@astound.net)



## Mexican Train Dominoes "Siete" Bob Lucido

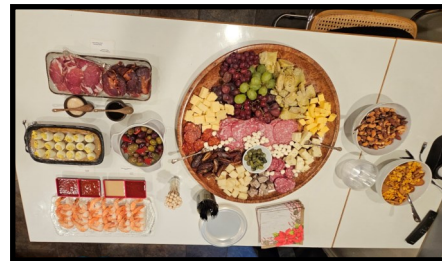
The gang, minus its leader got together on 11 December... for a quasi holiday party and

dominoes. With **Bob** and **Wendy** off camping two new substitutes joined us, **Norm** and **Mary Azevedo**.

The eggnog flowed, the canapes were fantastic as we settled down for a long winter's... game of dominoes. At the end of the evening, **Bob Wilkenfeld** was 1st **Bob West** 2nd and **Mary McCarthy** 3rd. All went home with something extra to put in their stockings should Santa overlook them.

**Clint Collier** for **Bob Lucido**

[bobwendy3@comcast.net](mailto:bobwendy3@comcast.net)





# CARD GAMES

...we play



## Men's Duplicate Bridge 2 Dick DeVoe

Our Duplicate Bridge 2 event on Friday, December 6 with four tables and 16 players was hosted by Dick DeVoe.

Dave Steinberg easily earned 1st Place with a 6.0 point spread vs. 2nd Place. To do that, he tied for 2nd at the halfway point and took 1st in the 2nd half. Congratulations, Dave, re your 45.5 points.

Tony Greco and John Kluesener tied for 2nd with 39.5 points.

Max Hinkle was 4th with 40.5 points.

Dick DeVoe

[dicknchristy@comcast.net](mailto:dicknchristy@comcast.net)



## Couples Party Bridge Tony Greco

Tony and Cindy Greco hosted our December 3rd. For this event, Dave & Joan Pierce subbed for the Browns. Those of you who are loyal readers of

this article may remember that many years ago Dave Pierce was the chairman for this bridge group until he handed over the cards to me in 2017. You may also recall three of our current regular couples were players back then: the DeVoe's, the Hatcher's and the Greco's. Their loyalty and dedication is appreciated.

This month's event returned to normal with no anomalies to report. Perhaps it can be attributed to the calming effect of the festive Christmas decorations or the Christmas music playing in the background. Maybe it was just the wine! Lol.

The official results are as follows:

1st PLACE with 3470 points - Dick and Christy DeVoe

2nd PLACE with 3040 points - Dave and Joan Pierce

3rd PLACE with 2140 points - John and Kathy Kluesener

Our next event will be our 2025 kickoff on January 7th and hosted by Dick and Maggie Chaffee.

Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year to all.

Tony and Cindy Greco

925.934.0395 [almanorwest@sbcglobal.net](mailto:almanorwest@sbcglobal.net)



Old age is when it takes you longer to get over having a good time.





## Couples Duplicate Bridge 2

### Dave Pierce

It was a crisp (some would say chilly) evening when **Ken** and **Elaine Richter** hosted us on December 10<sup>th</sup>. The cards were cold too. Consensus was that the boards were unusually boring. Indeed, after last month's successful slam bidding, nobody made six on any board, nor did any of our overbidders bid six. Not many games were bid either. Some were bid but not made. Board 3 was especially weird; everybody bid game but two pairs went down three in 3 NT and one did better, down two in five clubs.

At my table, **Sue Loftin** led a diamond at 3 NT and she and **Steve** then took six diamonds and the ace of hearts. Stuff happens. But it's not often we see a top score for down two. The **Loftin's** deserved good fortune as they filled in as subs at the last minute and made the game happen. Thank you, **Steve** and **Sue**.

Boring or not, **Jim Stedman** and **Jane Bradley** had a 53% game for third place, **Dick** and **Christy DeVoe** were second (55%), and **Joan** and **Dave Pierce** were first (60%). But everyone who sampled the wine and snacks got a winning hand.

### Dave Pierce

925.932.3877 [dwpi@astound.net](mailto:dwpi@astound.net)



## Men's Hearts

### Bob West and Steve Ybarra

Since the prior SIR Call submission, we are reporting on results from November 8th and November 22nd.

The big winners were **Bill Vizza** and **Ron Polivka** with 3 wins and **Steve Ybarra** with 2 wins. **Bob West** and **Dave Smith** had 3 2nds. **Bill Vizza** and **Ron Polivka** had 2 STM's. The lowest average scorer was **Steve Ybarra** with 34 and **Jim Passaglia** with 44.

Future Meetings: We play 4 games of 75 at Rocco's on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays, at 11:45, with an optional lunch at 11:15am. Our next matches will be December 13<sup>th</sup> and January 10<sup>th</sup>. We will not be meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:robtawest@aol.com) and [sjybar@gmail.com](mailto:sjybar@gmail.com)







## Poker Group 4 Pete Gates

Poker Group #4 met On November 18<sup>th</sup>, at the home of **Pat Tidmarsh**. A full table of seven players enjoyed a nice variety of poker games with the chips moving evenly

around the table. **Mark Sorum** was the biggest winner this time. **Pat** surprised us with some yummy baked goodies including a pumpkin pie.

Our next game is scheduled for Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at the home of **Carmelo Piccolo**.

**Pete Gates**

925.937.2035 [petegates10@gmail.com](mailto:petegates10@gmail.com)

If a man says he'll fix it, he will!  
There's no need to remind him every  
three months!



## Old Money Poker Group 6 Brad Hatcher

Poker Group 6 met on its usual first Thursday of the month schedule. The six players met at

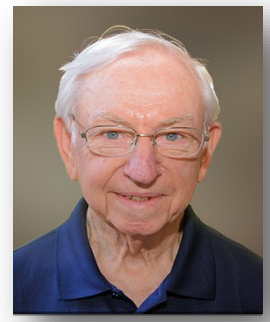
**Brad Hatcher's** home for a solid 3 hours of frivolity. It was nice to see **Brad** has recovered from his illness.

Besides the fun, many hands of "dealer's choice" led to some wide swings in the distribution of wealth. **Bruce Kimmis** and **Steve Ybarra** went home with significant gains.

We will meet right after the start of the New Year at the **Kimmis** residence.

**Brad Hatcher**

[bhatcher1942@gmail.com](mailto:bhatcher1942@gmail.com)



## Party Bridge Jim Pope and Jim Stedman

We had the final 2024 game at the home of **Mike Davidson**. As usual he was an excellent host. Great conversations and fun was had by all. The players were: **Mike Davidson, Dick DeVoe, Steve Dining, Joe Fuchs, Max Hingle, Bud Pearce, Jim Pope, Bill Schaaf, Ray Spears, Jim Stedman, Mike Whitaker** and **Bob Yolland**.

The high scorers were **Jim Stedman** with 5400 points, **Steve Dinning** with 4700 points and **Ray Spears** with 4430 points.

The 6-month high scorers were **Max Hinkle** with a monthly average of 5120 points (\$20.00), **Joe Fuchs** with an average of 4888 points (\$10.00) and **Jim Stedman** with an average of 4528 points (\$4.00).

The next game will be Monday January 6th at the home of **Jim Pope**. Please let **Jim Stedman** know if you want to play.

Co-Directors

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



"Honey, our car repair bill is wiping us out... we've just gone from brakes to broke!"



## Pinochle

### Pete McNeill and Stan Johnson

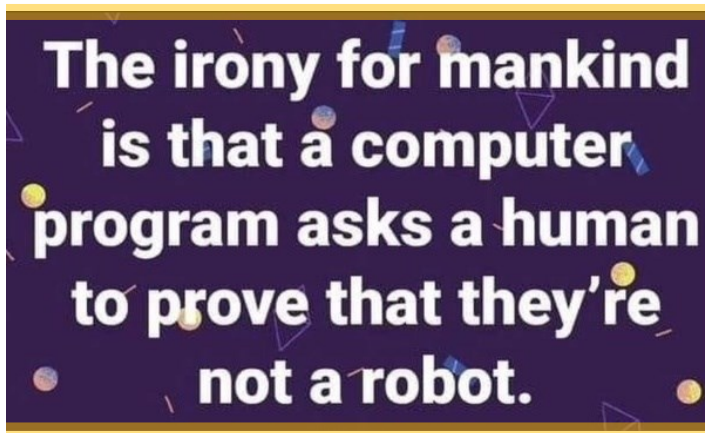
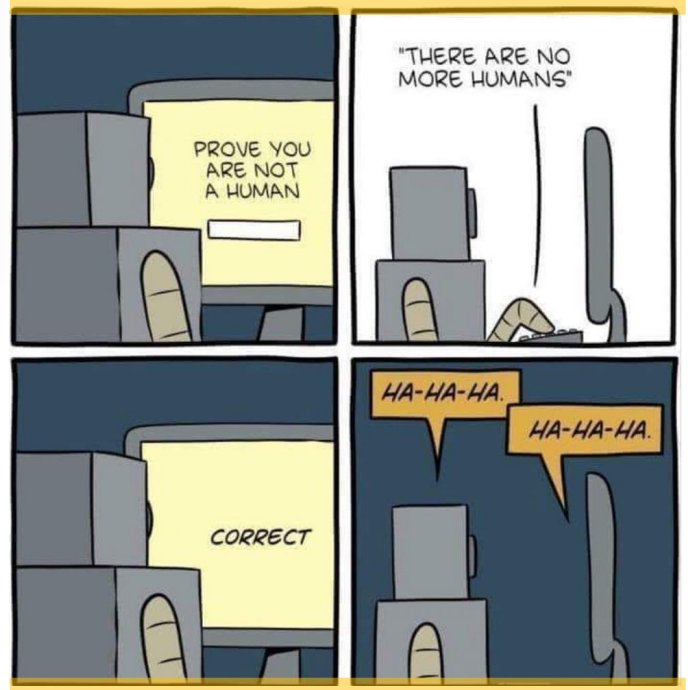
Any one interested in joining the group should give **Stan Johnson** a call at 925-938-7016, or myself at 925-858-9666. Our next two events are planned for Rocco's Pizza at noon and for cards at 1:00pm on 6/26/24, and 7/10/24.

**Pete McNeill**

925.858.9666 [petamole@gmail.com](mailto:petamole@gmail.com)

**Stan Johnson**

925.938.7016 [stan.johnson88@gmail.com](mailto:stan.johnson88@gmail.com)



## Poker Group 4 Pete Gates

Six members of the Poker Group #4 enjoyed the warm hospitality of **Carmelo Piccolo** at his home in Walnut Creek on December 16th. The

Christmas decorations were out, and the yummy snack and wine offerings were on the counter.

Poker is an interesting game of skill and hopefully, some luck. But predicably, there are outcomes that defy the odds. I think that this adds to the challenge and the fun of the game, knowing that each session will be unique and memorable in its own way.

Having said that, most players would wish to win a few pots early right out of the starting blocks. *But often how you finish is more important than how you start.* I proved that this month by starting in a deep hole but with a lot of luck, I got hot and emerged as one of the winners behind **Mark Sorum**.

**Mark Sorum** will be taking over as Chairman of the group in January.

The January game is scheduled for Monday, January 20th at a location yet to be determined.

**Pete Gates**

925.937.2035 [petegates10@gmail.com](mailto:petegates10@gmail.com)

## SIR State Information

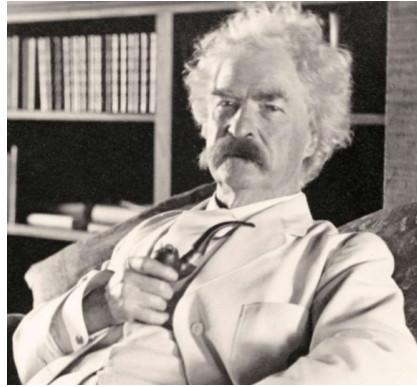


<https://sirinc.org/>

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



"The secret of getting ahead is getting started."

"It is better to keep your mouth closed & let people think you are a fool than to open it & remove all doubt."

"Good friends, good books, & a sleepy conscience: this is the ideal life."

"Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause & reflect."

"Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear - not absence of fear."

"The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read."

"Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter."

"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear & the blind can see."

"The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time."

"The two most important days in your life are the day you are born & the day you find out why."

"It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world & moral courage so rare."

"If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything."

"I have never let my schooling interfere with my education."

"Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured."

"Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been."

"The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up."

"Continuous improvement is better than delayed perfection."

"A clear conscience is the sure sign of a bad memory."

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts."

"It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog."

