



SIR HAPPENINGS

OCTOBER 2004

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 2

A Nonprofit Public Benefit Organization for Retired Men Devoted to the Promotion of Independence and Dignity of Retirement

President Jim's Column

Since this will be my last column as SIR President, I want to use this space to first thank the Information Systems Committee Chairman and Past President, **Dwight Sale**, "Happenings" Editor, **Don MacGregor** and "Happenings" Production Manager, **John Skarpelos** who have put in so much time and effort in producing this highly successful Newsletter.

I would be remiss not to also thank all of the Regional Directors, Area Governors and Big Sirs who have given so much of their time on behalf of Sons in Retirement. Though I, too, have served in your positions, I never fully realized how important

continued on Page 9



SIRARC

A Well-Kept Secret



About thirty-one years ago some members of Peralta Branch 12 came up with the idea of forming an amateur radio club within SIR. It became our first statewide activity and was shortly followed by golf and bowling. Today, nearly 200 SIR members are licensed radio amateurs and are part of over a million others around the world who enjoy this exciting hobby. The Sons In Retirement Amateur Radio Club... (SIRARC for short)... meets three times a year for a luncheon meeting and has its own newsletter which is published three times a year. Club Secretary, **Richard Shappee**, Mount Diablo Branch 8, says that SIRARC is a close-knit group because communication is our hobby and we are in contact with each other all the time.

Amateur radio has a proud tradition of providing emergency radio communication in time of need. During the 1989 earthquake, for example, amateur radio operators provided radio communications for the Red Cross Shelters and messages for persons separated from their loved ones. On 9/11, they provided thousands of hours of disaster related activities and they have regularly provided communication services to law enforcement and fire fighters. While most SIRARC members are beyond the age where they can be on the front lines, they are still active at their home radio stations in time of need.

SIRARC members enjoy making radio contact with other amateurs around the United States as well as all over the world. Becoming a licensed radio amateur is now easier than ever because it is no longer necessary to learn the Morse code.

SIRARC Chairman, **Darwin Thompson**, Buena Vista Branch 64, suggests that if you want to learn more about SIRARC or amateur radio in general, contact **Bill Moresi**, Pleasant Hill Branch 146, the SIRARC Membership Chairman, by Email at w6zzt@juno.com or phone him at (925) 837-4645.

Have Fun and Bring in "One More" in 2004!

SIR Baseball... Games at A's, Giants and River Cats



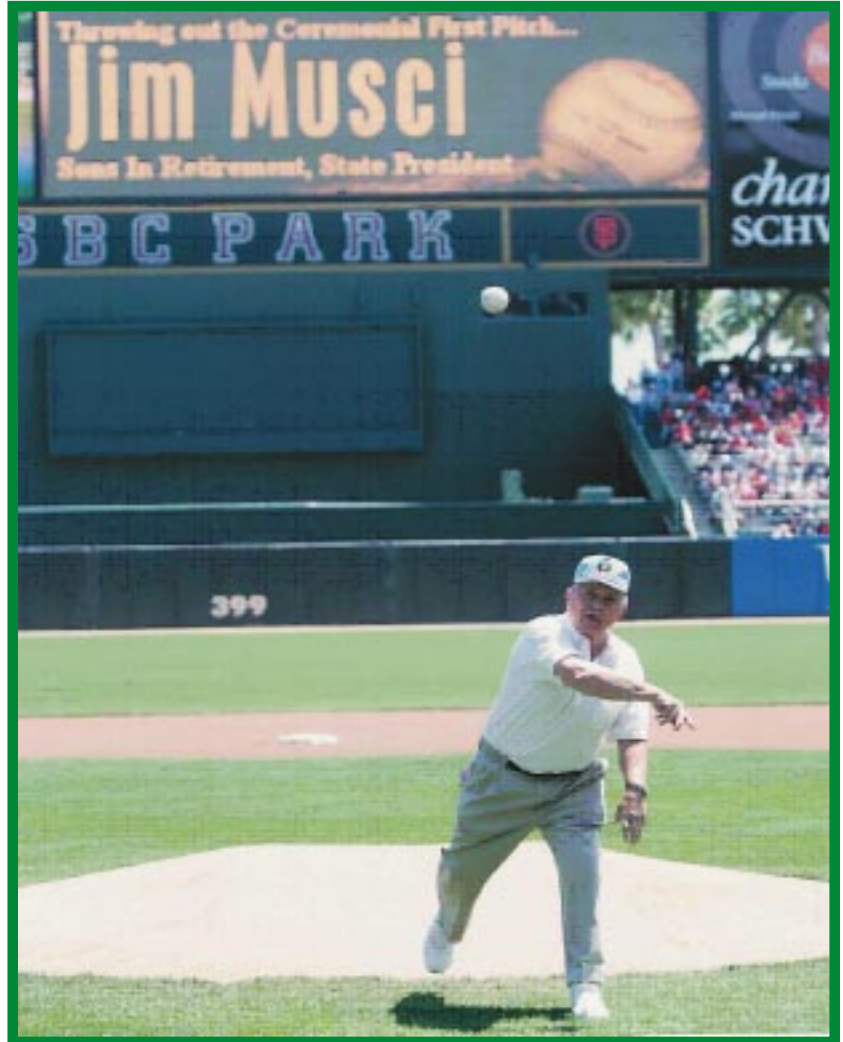
Play Ball

President Jim is shown throwing out a perfect strike on the first pitch at the 27th "SIR Day" at SBC Park in front of 40,000 fans, including about 1000 members of Sons in Retirement.

In June, many of our members turned out for a fun day at Raley Field in Sacramento to watch the River Cats play ball and then in July our members enjoyed games in Oakland and San Francisco. Jim also threw a strike on the first pitch in Sacramento and claims he is now a perfect three for three... two pitches at Raley Field and one at SBC Park... maybe someone should check the ump's eye sight.

At the River Cats game, the announcer read a moving eulogy to our late President, Don Schumacher, and then asked for a moment of silence. At SBC Park we were honored with a huge display on the scoreboard with a nice thank you to Sons in Retirement and later in the game the scoreboard listed all the Branches that had members in attendance.

If you missed a game this year, you missed a good time... make a resolution to attend a game next year and have some fun.



State Golf

Nino Pompillio, Chairman

The Area Team Championship Tournament was held in August at the Reserve Golf Course at Spanos Park in Stockton. The golf course was in excellent condition and the weather was perfect for the 35 teams competing from 24 different areas. The winning team was from Area 2 and was made up of **Ed Myrtle, Glenn Cheetham, Bud Grisanti,** and **Tom Baker**, all members of Branch 8. The tournament also saw a hole-in-one on the fourth hole by **Ken Adriance** from Branch 105. Prizes were awarded to the nine highest finishers and the first place team also received SIR jackets.



The State individual Championship will take place on October 18th at the Coyote Creek Golf Course in San Jose and finally, in November, there will be the two golf cruises to Mexico.

Plans are well under way for another great year of golf with tournaments scheduled for Las Vegas, San Diego, and Reno, and more events are planned.

For more information on the SIR state golf program, be sure to visit the SIR golf website which can be reached on the internet by going to www.sirinc.org. When that page appears, click on activities, then click on golf, and you will have the golf website.

What's the most popular hobby in the country?

Stan Harris, Damien Reynolds Branch 1 Genealogy Chairman

If you guessed gardening, you'd be right, but I'll bet you didn't know that genealogy is a close second... Only gardening has more members. Retirees are now one of the largest users of computers and according to a recent survey, their greatest interests are: Financial Information, Genealogy and Pornography. I don't know the order of your interests... but I know you can find all three when chasing down your roots!

Branch One organized a Genealogy Activity about five years ago. The group is small... usually between 10 and 15 Sirs attending each meeting, allowing plenty of time for member interaction.

One member of Czech ancestry used the Internet to work with the new Czech Republic... Happily, their government assigned a guide and interpreter to him when he and his wife visited the villages of his father and his mother. His success aroused his wife's interest in Genealogy; and she was quite surprised to find out that she was directly related to a passenger on the Mayflower. She has since joined the Mayflower Society.

Another member, of Norwegian background, found connections to his parents' hometowns. He was then able to visit them and learn much more about his family.

Still a third member started working on his forebears, and in checking his mother's records found she had saved all his letters while he was in the Army Air Corps during WWII. This refreshed his memories of military service, which he augmented with pictures. He then printed booklets of over 100 pages for each of his grandchildren. The children were indeed fortunate, for he passed away after completing his project. Be careful - Genealogy is catching! You can Email Stan at: <lifesir@comcast.net>

State Bowling

Bill Cooper, Chairman

Some very exciting bowling took place during the Wine Country Classic in Napa recently. **Roger Ziegenhagel**, of Branch 52, thrilled the bowlers with a perfect game of 300 and certainly deserves to be called Bowler of the Month. Overall, Roger took second place with a 725 series. **Paul Dilley** of Branch 45 won first place and the B Division was won by **Manual Moreno** of Branch 168. In the doubles competition, **Larry McNamara** and **Jerry Shelton** of Branch 105 took the A Division title. **Jim Heck**, of Branch 112, and his wife, Val, won the B Division title. **Larry Dent**, of Branch 65, did a great job coordinating this year's tournament.



If you haven't been bowling in our SIR tournaments, come out and have some fun and make some new friends.

Branch. The tournaments start in April and wind up in September, with the winning Branch receiving a nice plaque on the perpetual trophy. Last year, Branch 109 from Marysville accrued the most points and was crowned the winner. Bullock says this format can be very competitive and exciting, making the tournaments a lot of fun for all the SIR golfers in the area.

Branch Golf News

Area Golf

Burr Bullock, Branch 52

Five years ago, **Sam Kemp**, Branch 63 and **John Wilgus**, Branch 45 came up with the idea of using a "Ryder Cup" format for golf tournaments between the Branches located in their area. Today, the competitors include eight Branches in Chico, Marysville, Paradise and Yuba City. **Burr Bullock**, Branch 52, coordinates the Program and team captains, **Jerry Rose**, from Branch 109 in Marysville, **Chuck Wiles**, from Branch 45 in Yuba City and **Dick Roach** from Branch 110 in Chico ably assist him.

Burr Bullock pulls double duty as the team captain from Paradise. The format is match play where two man teams from each Branch compete against two man teams from another

Hole-In-One Drought Is Over

Dan Frank, Red Bluff Branch 139

After more than three and a half years without a hole-in-one among any of the SIR golfers in Branch 139, **Erwin "Butch" Richert** finally accomplished that highly exciting feat at the Oak Creek Golf Course, in Red Bluff. He managed this rare feat by skillfully driving the ball from the par 3, eighth hole, and mentally guiding the ball onto the green and right into the cup. In addition to his accomplishments on the golf course, Erwin also does a fine job as the Little Sir of Branch 139.

HATS OFF to

SIR Happenings ... plus

Dwight Sale, Don MacGregor
and John Skarpelos !!!



~by **Ray Lang**, Branch 1
Guest Columnist

If you have ever been part of a communications team launching a new publication, you know that it is no small task.

What will you name it? What's the format? The content? Whom do you want to reach? How will you produce it? And most of all will your prospects read it? ... and enjoy it?

Happily, these questions were resolved in highly affirmative fashion by the above-named triumvirate, as you could see in the first SIR Happenings ... AND in the issue you're now reading (you are reading this, aren't you?)

Chairman/Publisher, **Dwight Sale**, served as our State President in 2001 and as Big SIR of Branch 1 in 1996. Executive Editor, **Don MacGregor**, was a Big SIR of Gold Country Branch 37 in 2002 and also served as an Area Governor (and was an Air Force F-86 Sabre Jet pilot in the Korean War ... happy Veterans Day, November 11th!) Production Manager, **John Skarpelos**, also serves as the Editor of The Pathfinder, now in its 29th year as the Bulletin for Pathfinder Branch 59 in Fremont.

Spread the word: Tell your fellow SIR members they can receive SIR Happenings every quarter via Email ... just send your name and Email address to: dwight.sale@comcast.net

... or, you can also pick it up on: the Internet at www.sirinc.org

Either way, enjoy SIR Happenings!

East-West Shrine Game

Want to see some Exciting Football?
See the college all stars play football in the east/west Shrine game on January 15, 2005 at SBC Park in San Francisco. Get to the park by 11:30AM for pregame festivities.



For ticket information call **Mel Augustine**
(510) 524-4952
Or Email melaugustine@edintl.com

State RV Activities

Still Time to Sign Up for the Big State RV Rally

Bob Burton, Secretary/Treasurer

The fourth SIR State RV Rally will be held at the French Camp RV Park & Golf Course in Manteca, from April 24th to the 27th, 2005...

35% of the spaces have already been sold, so, if you want to camp with your buddies, get your application in soon.



There will be lots of fun things to do including golf, fishing, games, tours and trips and a great "happy hour" each night.

Get all the details and an application on the SIR web site at www.sirinc.org. Click on Activities, then click on RV's and you're there.

Or... for more information contact:

Charles (Howie) Fisher, chairman
(925) 634-0490 or by Email
<howfish150@Comcast.net>

or

Robert (Bob) Burton, Secretary/Treasurer
(415) 456-6451 or by Email
<reburton1@juno.com>

A THANK YOU FROM

The HAPPENINGS Publishing Team

We want to let our readers know how very pleased we are with all the compliments we have received, both individually and as you will note, from contributors to this edition of SIR Happenings.

It certainly makes all of our work worthwhile and we want to thank all of you for your support.

Dwight Sale
Don MacGregor
John Skarpelos

News from the Branches

Windsor Branch 176...

Famous Ship Awaits Your Visit

The USS Hornet saw plenty of action in the South Pacific during World War II and later was the primary recovery ship for the Apollo 11 and 12 space missions. This great ship is docked at its final berth in Alameda.

Sir **Dan Corsetti** is a docent aboard the Aircraft Carrier and recently led Branch 176, with many wives and guests, on a tour which took them all over the ship from high up in the Bridge, to far below in the engine rooms. The group was fascinated with the tour and particularly enjoyed spending time in the ship's fine museum.

You can get more information by visiting the USS Hornet website at <http://www.uss-hornet.org/>. If you or your group are interested in taking a tour of the USS Hornet, you can Email Dan at <hopejhc@earthlink.net>.



East Bay Branch 2...

Bocce Ball... Anyone?

Quite a few Branch 2 members can usually be seen on meeting days building up their appetites before each luncheon by getting in a few brisk rounds of Bocce Ball at the Galileo Club in Richmond.



This venerable old Italian Club has meticulously maintained Bocce Ball courts and play can go on, rain or shine, because all the courts are indoors.

Both Bocce Ball and the Branch's Lawn Bowling activity are organized by Sir **Russ Weeks**. For more information you can reach Russ at (510) 524-5689.



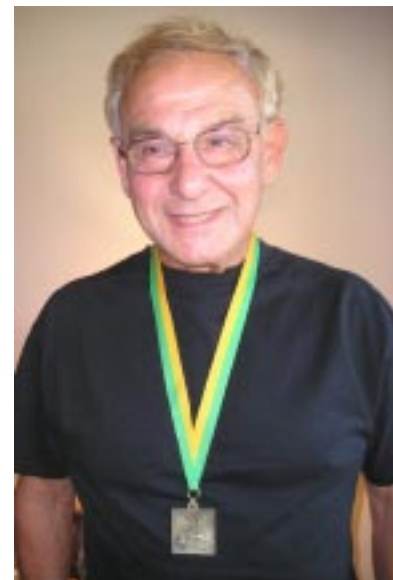
Dick Morton and **Bill Andrew** are shown preparing a delicious barbeque of Tri-tip and Chicken with all the trimmings at the 22nd Ladies Day Picnic for Amador County Branch 96. Program Chairman, **Bill Garrett** organized the event, which included golf chipping and Bocce Ball contests, organized by **Sam Mazzariello**. **Don Powers** and **Bob Martin** were the lucky winners of the Championship Trophy on the Bocce Ball court. Publicity Chairman, **Paul Murphy** reported that it was an outstanding affair and all 150 members and guests that attended had a good time.

Pathfinder Branch 59...

Marathon Runner

Pete Angelides, Branch 59 Historian, ran the 26.2-mile Mayor's Midnight Sun Marathon, June 19, 2004 in Anchorage, Alaska. He was a member of the the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Team In Training. The program provides training to run or walk a whole or half marathon. Pete raised over \$5000 for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

Of the 3703 runners who registered to compete in the 2004 Mayor's Midnight Sun Marathon, 3330 made it to the finish line. Pete finished the event in 7 hours and 32 minutes. He placed 657th with the men running the race.



Pete Angelides wearing his Marathon Medal

News from the Branches



Twain Harte Branch 172...

Don't Miss Hetch Hetchy

John Kinsfather, Big Sir Twain Harte Branch 172

Often in our rush to catch the beauty of the Yosemite Valley, we drive right by Hetch Hetchy, which is named after an historic piece of flora that once covered the valley. Many feel that the Hetch Hetchy Valley once rivaled the Yosemite Valley for its natural beauty and grandeur. However, the folks down the hill needed more water and consequently, much of the beauty is now under a few million yards of water, but visitors can still enjoy the vistas, the grandeur, and the majesty of the terrain and even the dam itself.

The Hiking Group from Twain Harte Branch did just that recently. It was a great day, the falls were spectacular and the profusion of wildflowers was something to see. There are great spots for lunch and one can even work in a little fishing along the way.

The turn-off for Hetch Hetchy is located just prior to the Yosemite Gate and is well marked. Be sure to put Hetch Hetchy on your must do list, just as the Twain Harte Branch does each spring.

Isle City Branch 60...

Branch 60 tries to define Democracy... "The right to be wrong?"

Doug Hayward, Little Sir Branch 60

Branch 60 found the idea of polling members on matters of philosophy can generate a healthy buzz of interest and some lively discussion, as well.

When asked to define democracy nearly a third of the members said "freedom of speech, without fear of reprisal." One offered that he was glad that our elected officials are not assassinated for their political viewpoints. One member even defended Howard Stern's right to speak his "foul-mouthed, obscene mind."

A close second was freedom of choice and action within the limits of the law. One member defined this as "the right to decide for yourself what you want to do with your life and the freedom to pursue that choice."

Several members mentioned freedom of religion... others as equality or put another way, "a square deal for all." One member wrote "the right to be wrong," when asked, "what democracy means to me."

Wine Country Branch 157

News From The Redwoods

Branch 157 held its annual barbeque at Villa Chantecleer, atop Fitch Mountain and more than 150 members and guests enjoyed a wonderful evening among the beautiful Redwoods. Big Sir **Bob O'Neil** said the evening was even more memorable because the usual swarm of Bees forgot to show up.

Last year, the Branch 157 golf team, sometimes called the Healdsburg golf team, won the SIR championship and several members of the team are looking forward to joining the 2004 State Golf Cruise in November... and on a final golf note... Sir **Gordon Nauman** shot a hole-in-one at the Windsor Golf Club and came within one stroke of shooting his age, which he claims is 71.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

Thanks to those people who provided material for the second issue of "SIR Happenings." If you want to see your Branch in print or, better yet, if you want to see you or your friends' names in print, send us newsworthy articles and we will do the rest.

To put out an interesting Newsletter that chronicles all the fun things that are going on in SIR Branches all over northern California, we need your support. Please help "SIR Happenings" be a success by emailing your Branch news items to:

Editor Don MacGregor <DLM@foothill.net>



News from the Branches

Mission Trail Branch 35...

How to Make a Luncheon Speaker Smile

Bob Berenhardt, Big Sir Branch 35

The singing *Trail Birds* of Mission Trail Branch 35 sing a parody about the speaker's topic at each luncheon and that highly unusual introduction always brings a big smile to the speaker's face.

Branch 35 starts each meeting with gusto, singing God Bless America and then the Trail Birds lead the gathering in music, spirit and fun with a sing-a-long of some oldies and funnies and even some songs with the original lyrics tailored for SIR.

The "Birds," as they are called, came into being when the Branch was chartered back in 1971. Their first leader, the late **Emmett Fitzpatrick**, is said to have copyrighted more than 200 songs, some still sung at Branch luncheons, and started the speaker parodies in 1974. **George Fullmer** has done the parodies since 1987 and the group has performed about 200 of them since then. **Ted Hatrak**, the current leader, trained with Fred Waring and the famous "Pennsylvanians" and over the years, the group has entertained at senior centers, retirement homes and memorial services.



The Birds number 12 to 15 members and hold practice sessions each month with a rehearsal just before each meeting. From the very beginning, the Trail Birds brand of

singing was meant to be just for fun... no auditions are ever held and they do not concentrate on technique. Hatrak says that anyone who has ever sung around a campfire, a fraternity house or in the shower is welcome to sing with the Trail Birds.

Fort Sutter Branch 14...

Chicken Soup for Lunch?

Hal Higgins, Editor Fort Sutter Branch 14

Best selling author, Bud Gardner, recently spoke to Fort Sutter Branch 14, dressed in full costume, looking just like Dr. Samuel Johnson, the great writer and lexicographer of 1700's England. Bud is best known for his book, *Chicken Soup for the Writers Soul*, a great book with the important mission of turning readers onto the value of reading and writing.

Bud Gardner called attention to the alarming problem of rapidly growing illiteracy in this country. The extent of the problem that Bud described, is so severe, that many in the audience at first, found it hard to believe, but by the time he finished his talk, many heads were nodding in agreement.

Bud asked all members of Sons in Retirement to become ambassadors to promote reading for fun, writing for fun and rekindling story telling. All those attending the luncheon were quite moved by his message and many will undoubtedly become ambassadors.



Bud Gardner speaking to Fort Sutter Branch 14

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Can I get a copy of *SIR Happenings* by regular mail?
Tom Sherba, Branch 59

No, SIR Happenings is strictly an electronic publication. You can download it from the SIR website or have it emailed directly to you by contacting <dwright.sale@comcast.net>.

If you don't have a computer, maybe a friend will print out a copy for you.

Dear Editor:

I really enjoyed reading *SIR Happenings* and I wonder how often it will be published?
Emile Lassalle, Branch 26

Our plans are to publish SIR Happenings quarterly in January, April, July, and October.

Dear Editor:

I thought that was a very interesting article on the SR-71. Could you tell me if the plane is still flying and also, where I can get some more information on the SR-71? Thank you.

Doug Hayward, Branch 60

The SR-71 is no longer in service but is on static display at a number of facilities around the country, including Beale AFB, near Marysville. For more information on the aircraft, you might try a search on Google.

Dear John and Dwight:

You don't know how happy I feel to be able to read *SIR Happenings*, our *SIR Newsletter*, which we discussed back in 2002. The obstacles we faced back then obviously were overcome when Don joined the team. The publication reflects your well-known talents and is in an extremely attractive format. I'm glad the idea did not expire with my term of office. Time marches on and I'm glad you were able to put *Happenings* in such a usable and attractive form. I look forward to receiving future issues! Thank you for your hard work in producing a state newsletter.

Irv Craig

Past President, 2002



Dear Editor:

Why does it take so long for the new *Happenings* to appear on the *SIR State* web site?

Burr Bullock, Branch 52

It doesn't take long at all... once the edition is finished it is available on the SIR web site within a few hours. Look for the next edition later this month. By the way, if you would like to receive SIR Happenings by Email, contact Dwight Sale at dwright.sale@comcast.net.

SIR in the News

Wine Country Branch 157

Oldest Sir

Ed Weisner, Secretary of Branch 157, reports that **C.H. "Barney" Barnard** is the oldest *SIR* in the State and is looking forward to his 105th birthday in September. Barney joined Healdsburg Branch 157 in 1991 as an original member. He still keeps in touch with his friends at the Branch from his assisted living residence. Barney was born on September 22, 1899 near Healdsburg and was a farmer during most of his working life. Barney married Faye and they had a son and daughter. We all wish you a very Happy Birthday, Barney!!



Westgate Branch 125...

Men of Honor

World War II veterans and Campbell neighbors for 45 years, 86-year-old **Phil Olavarri** (left) and 81-year-old **Buster Ichikawa** were featured on the front page of *The Campbell Reporter* earlier this year.

Phil recently found out that he and his neighbor, Buster, were fighting World War II together.

While Phil was dropping bombs from his B-17 Flying Fortress behind enemy lines in Italy, Buster was on the ground with the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Phil flew 35 combat missions with the 301st Bomber Group.

Would you like to Receive your Copy of the SIR Happenings Newsletter By Email?

If you would like to receive future issues of "SIR Happenings" by Email, please send your name and Email address to:

Dwight Sale <dwright.sale@comcast.net>

President Jim's Column

continued from Page 1

they are to the successful day-to-day operations of Sons in Retirement, until I sat in my present position. So, thank you, for the outstanding support you have given me as President... and please, don't stop now.

I would also like to again express my deepest appreciation to all those branches that invited me to attend their luncheons. As I said in my August letter, it has been, and will always be, the highlight of my abbreviated tenure as President.

This year, I have been very proud to be part of a number of significant changes in the way Sons in Retirement will operate starting next year. Some of these are as follows:

- We are going paperless in a big way, which will allow us to significantly reduce our operating costs and also speed up the process of getting information to and from our membership. Beginning next year, the Manual and Roster, as well as updates, will only be available on the SIR web site but hard copy will still be available for those few that don't have access to the web.
- Many of our Branches are computerizing their monthly bulletins and posting them on the Web. Others are Emailing many of their bulletins to their membership, as well as snail mailing to their non computer members.
- Because of these changes, I strongly recommend that all Big Sirs require their Branch Email Contact to attend all Branch Executive Board Meetings as the Branch Communications Chairman.
- The Growth and Management Committee is working very hard to convert our "Membership Implementation Program" into a Video presentation for use by the branches.

And finally, speaking of membership, recent reports continue to show that we have lost more members than we have taken in, but compared to last year, the flood has now become a small river. Please keep up the great recruiting effort you have demonstrated this year and I also want to encourage all our of Branches to expand your recruiting efforts to men of a different race, color, and religion, as well as to those men that have only retired from full-time employment.

My best regards to all,

Jim

Growth & Management Committee

Ned Banton, Chairman

Editors note:

SIR Happenings is beginning a series of articles to acquaint our members with the SIR administrative functions. The first article in this series tells about the Growth and Management Committee. We hope you find the series interesting as well as informative.

The Growth and Management Committee or "G&M Committee," as it is commonly called, is responsible for reviewing the activities of Sons in Retirement and recommending to the President those things that it believes will improve the performance of the organization. In addition, the President or Board of Directors may assign the committee certain projects. During the past few years, the committee has been asked to focus primarily on programs to help turn-around the declining membership trends.

In an effort to stem the decline in membership, the G&M Committee created the "Membership Development Program" which combined elements of several successful Branch membership programs and is available to all the Branches on the SIR web-site, in both a complete and condensed form. Later on, a program was developed to help the Branches implement the "Membership Development Program." These programs have been successful in many Branches, particularly in Branches where the programs have the strong support of all the Branch Officers and the Executive Committee.

A few other committee endeavors have included, producing a guide for Big Sirs and also one for Area Governors. A checklist of various things to consider was produced to aid officers in making better reports.

Currently, the committee is developing a membership training video to assist Branches with the "Membership Development Program."

We are anxious to offer assistance to any Branch and we welcome your call.

SIR Happenings is published by the Information Systems Committee.

Dwight Sale,

Chairman/Publisher

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Send news and questions to:

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Have Fun and Bring in "One More" in 2004!