



SIR HAPPENINGS

MAY 2008

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 2

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

President Art's Column

The success of moving to paperless breathes continual life into the Sir Organization. Without this success, it is difficult to imagine what SIR would be like today, if still active. Recently I discussed this with Past President Dwight Sale, Chairman of the INFOSYS committee.

The fundamental principals of SIR have remained unchanged since our founders set them up in July of 1958. How we are organized and how we conduct our business has slowly changed and developed since then but those changes have been eclipsed by the dramatic change in the behind the scenes operations that have occurred in the last 10 to 12 years. We have gone from informing Branches of SIR and corporate requirements using paper to informing members using electronic means like Email and the SIR Website.

We forget the enormous and costly effort it took to print and distribute these documents. Past Governors and Directors will remember the onerous job of personally getting some 90,000 pages into the hands of Branch personnel. Annual printing costs used to be 5 to 6 thousand dollars with a like amount for postage when documents could not be delivered by hand.

The transformation of these operations began in 1997 with Dwight Sale's development of the SIR database. At the same time, Jack Rhondeau founded the State Website, sirinc.org. While the website was for the entertainment of our members and the prestige of SIR it later became the source of all documents.

Past President Jim Faverman, familiar with the Database, suggested that Dwight chair an information system committee and INFOSYS was born.

This group was really the beginning of a SIR information system that was to be used by other SIR officials to perform their duties. INFOSYS has matured into an indispensable tool for SIR.

Past President Dwight Sale, who has guided this INFOSYS effort since 1997 wants to turn over the reigns to someone else at the end of this year.

Art

Big Turnout for Salute to SIR Day at the Races

The 2nd "Salute to SIR Day at the Races" at Golden Gate Fields last January was a big hit! A total of 335 Sirs and guests from fourteen Branches attended the event. Upon arrival each branch was directed to its assigned seating area by a group host, the prime rib buffet was up and running and the first live race started on time at 12:45. Throughout the day, each branch had a race named in its honor and up to six members of each group were brought down to the winners circle for a photo opportunity with the winning jockey of that race. A souvenir photo was then mailed to the Travel Coordinator of each group. At the tail end of the day (no pun intended!), two lucky gentlemen won our raffle prize of two Club Field Level tickets for the upcoming San Francisco Giants season.



Golden Gate Fields' purpose in hosting the Salute to SIR Day at the Races is first and foremost to salute all the Branches in attendance and to assist with the SIR mission of renewing former friendships and providing an opportunity for everyone to make new friends through association with other retirees.

If your branch missed out on this exciting opportunity, please note that we have scheduled our 3rd Salute to SIR event in the fall on Friday, October 10th. The group package for 10 or more adults is \$23pp and includes: valet parking or parking for a bus, admission and reserved seating, the daily racing program, prime rib buffet, with tax & tip for the food servers included, and a race named in honor of each Branch. If you would like more information about this upcoming event, please contact Michael Roberts, of Group Sales at Golden Gate Fields, at 510-559-7380 or email mroberts@goldengatefields.com

Sirs in the News

**Bayshore Silver Anniversary Branch 118
San Mateo**

90 Year Old Certificates

Jim Mahon, Big Sir

Big Sir **Jim Mahon**, is shown on the left in the upper picture, presenting a 90 Year Senior Certificate to **Harvey Fanucci**.



In the lower picture Governor of Area 1, **John Damonte**, on the right, is presenting a 90 year Senior Certificate to **Paul Whitfield**.

In Memoriam – Robert Curley

Former SIR President Bob Curley passed away at his Modesto home on January 25th at the age of 85. Bob was born in San Francisco and was a fourth generation San Franciscan. He was the class president when he graduated from Lowell High School and went on to graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy in the class of 1945. He served on the USS South Dakota before entering flight school in Pensacola where he became a navy pilot.

In 1953, Bob left the Navy and obtained a masters degree, in Industrial Engineering, from Stanford. He worked in the transport industry for Stanford Research Institute, Consolidated Freightways and as President of Utility Trailer Company. Bob was instrumental in developing the system that moves containers from trucks, to trains, to ships. He returned to SRI where he worked until retiring in 1985.

Bob moved to Modesto in 1990 and enjoyed traveling around the world with his wife Frances. He joined Modesto Branch 144 and later served as the Big Sir and was the State President in 2007. Bob will be remembered by his many friends for his sense of humor, his engaging laugh, his optimism, and his love of gadgetry.

**Ignacio Pacheco Branch 22
San Rafael**

100th Birthday

Bob Farwell, Branch Member

SIR President **Art Pufford** is shown honoring **Alfred Scott** with a plaque on his 100th birthday. Al joined Branch 22 in 1974 and is still quite an active member. He regularly sings with the “SIRenaders” when they entertain the folks in the Marin County retirement and convalescent Communities.



**China Camp Branch 151
Fairfax**

World Class Runner

Eckart Sellinger, Bulletin Editor

China Camp member **Sam Hirabayashi** traveled to the World Masters Athletics Track & Field Championships held last September in Riccione, Italy. Sam competed on Team USA's M80 division's 4x100m and 4x400m relay teams. The 4x100m squad won a Silver Metal in 1:06.12, topping the American record set in 1985. Sam's 4x400m team won a gold medal in 6:41.73, which eclipsed the previous American record also set in 1985. He just missed the medals podium in the M80 1,500m and 10,000m – placing fourth – in both events. Until this meet, Sam really hadn't run a step since July 5, when he strained a hamstring and had been carefully rehabbing and staying off it.



“I was surprised at the number of 80-year-olds that were there,” Sam said, who competes for the Marin County-based Tamalpa Runners club. “It was interesting to see how quick some of these guys are. I was impressed! I've never run a 4x100 relay before, or a 1,500 or a 10,000 ...it was a great experience.”

The World Masters Athletics Championships are the world's biggest international track and field competition. They are reserved for master athletes age 35 and over. The 2007 WMA Championships hosted more than 9,000 athletes from 90 countries.

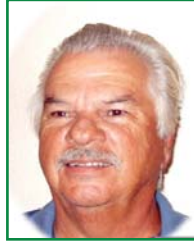
Sirs in the News

Pony Express Branch 69
Sacramento

Amputee Athlete

Frank Franzago, Bulletin Editor

One of our most active and athletic members is **Ross Martin** (shown in the picture). Ross is the Branch jock, even though he is missing his left leg below the knee. After losing his leg in an accident while serving in the US Air Force, Ross was fitted with a high-tech prosthesis that allows him to engage in all sorts of activities. He is an avid golfer, who normally drives the ball down the middle of the fairway over 200 yards and plays to a 15 handicap.



He is a member of the Sacramento Golf Council, where he serves as their web master and media director. He is also the Western Trustee for the National Amputees Golf Association and is involved with handicap golf clinics and tournaments throughout the Western United States. Ross also bowls in the Area 3 and 9 bowling league, spends a lot of time on the computer and somehow finds time for woodworking and gardening. Ross certainly sets an outstanding example and is a real role model for our branch members.

Petaluma Little Hills Branch 147

Senior Certificates

Nino Cerruti, Big Sir

This year's annual branch Christmas was special for two members of the branch, **Herb Louden** and **Bill Zemanek** who received Senior Sir Certificates for their 90th year award.

Herb was a founding member of the branch, serves as the branch chaplain, and has been a branch member for 19 years. Bill has been in the branch since the early 1990s, served as the membership chairman, and has been a member of several branch committees.

The photo shows from left to right: Area 25 Governor **Roy Dorn**, who presented the certificates, to **Herb Louden** and **Bill Zemanek**.

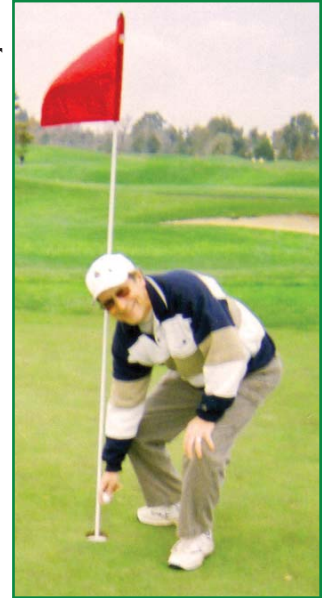


Westgate Branch 125
San Jose

Amazing Shot

Daryl Jones, Bulletin Editor

Most golfers play for years without achieving the ultimate goal...a hole-in-one. Well, **Peter Marrone** did just that when our SIR golf group was playing at the Los Lagos golf course on January 9th. Using a six-iron, Peter aced the 145 yard, 8th hole. Jerry Sanders captured the moment in this photo. Congratulations Peter!



Modesto Branch 144

President's Award

Duane Retzloff, Bulletin Editor

Big Sir **Mike Mensinger** is shown presenting the President's Award to **George Read** (on the left) and **Harry Pierce** (on the right) ...the gal in the picture, holding George's award, is his girl friend and dance partner. George is captain of one of the Branch bowling teams and holds an excellent average. He bowls twice a week and also dances two or three times a week with his partner. Harry Pierce is a past Rotary President, loves barbershop singing, and when asked what is the secret to your long life? He replied, "God told me to stay here until I got it right."



State Golf

Dave Betts, Chairman State Golf Committee

The first 2008 tournament was just completed. Ninety-two SIR members and eighteen lady guests enjoyed playing three challenging golf courses. On the first day of the tournament we played the Angel Park Palms course, then Angel Park Mountain course on the second day and The Legacy Golf course on the last day.

The next State Golf Committee tournaments will be held during the first three weeks of June, with all golfers staying at Circus-Circus Hotel Casino. The courses to be played are Red Hawk, D'Andrea and Lakeridge. At this writing, there were still a couple of spots available during the first week. Both the second and third weeks are sold out with waiting lists.

Following the Reno tournaments, we will have the State Team Championship at Poppy Ridge Golf Course in Livermore on August 11th. The Area Qualifiers for this tournament will be held during June and early July. Put a team together and whip last year's Champions. Get details about the Qualifiers from your Area and Branch Golf Chairmen.

Our Fall Classic will be held in Solvang again this year. We will be staying at the Santa Ynez Marriott in Buellton and golfing at Rancho San Marcos Golf Course and The River Course at Alisal. Check the website for entry forms. This is our only tournament that has a four-man team – two best net ball format; all others are scrambles except the individual Championship at Poppy Hills.

The Area and Division Qualifiers for the Individual Championship will be conducted in May and August respectively and the Championship will be at Poppy Hills in Pebble Beach on November 3rd. Seventy golfers will compete for seven flight championships. In addition we will have open play for 74 golfers on November 3rd and 144 golfers on November 4th. The application and entry forms are on our website.

Our Air/Land trip to Cabo San Lucas in October is booking rather quickly, with flights out of both Sacramento and San Francisco. There is still space available from either Airport. If you have not received an entry form in the mail, please check the website for copies which can be printed and completed for mailing or Faxing to Golden Gate Tours.

The last tournament of the year will be our Mexican Riviera Cruise aboard the Star Princess, departing San Francisco on November 10th and returning on November 20th. If you need entry forms, please check the website. We will be playing golf in Ixtapa, Puerto Vallarta, and Cabo San Lucas.

Please use our State Golf Committee website:

www.sirstategolf.com

to keep up to date on our golfing activities.

State Bowling

William "Coop" Cooper, State Bowling Chairman

Hello SIR bowlers and interested members. We are coming to the end of the bowling season and I hope everyone had a good year. Some upcoming events you may be interested in are: The USBC National Tournament this year is in New Mexico ...next year it will be in Las Vegas. Close to home, we will be having the Senior State Tournament in Fresno, on the last week of October and the month of November 2008.

In case you missed the last edition of Happenings, you can go online and bring up the SIR State bowling schedule, tournament results and our operations manual. If for some reason you can't bowl anymore and want to be involved, become a volunteer with your local association and work with the junior programs. If you are not in a SIR/ Senior League, start by joining one this summer. Come on out and have some fun, as well as making new friends ...SEE YOU ON THE LANES!

State Sports

SIR Day at the Sacramento River Cats vs. the Colorado Sky Sox

May 21 (Wednesday) at 11:30am

for info call **Ken Edwards** (209) 223-9156



SIR Day at the Oakland Athletics vs. the Tampa Bay Rays

August 14 (Thursday) at 12:35pm

for info call **Mel Augustine** (510) 524-4952



SIR Day at the SF Giants vs. the Florida Marlins

August 21 (Thursday) at 12:45pm

for info call **Chuck Roberts** (408) 243-6717



SIR day with the Oakland Raiders at the Coliseum date to be announced in the next issue.

News from the Branches

Area 2, Walnut Creek

Keeping up with Technology

Phil Goff, Co-Chairman,

Computer & Technology Group

The Area 2 Computer and Technology Group (called CAT) meets monthly in Walnut Creek. We are a group of active SIR members who want to keep up with the fast changing world of technology. Our membership is growing steadily and we now average more than 60 attendees per meeting (see picture in the lower right hand side of the page).

In the areas of personal computing and technology devices, it seems there is a never-ending list of things to talk about. For the first few years we focused on personal computers and their usage to SIR members.

We talked about various kinds of software, virus protection, and problem solving. However, we began to see that the world of technology includes a lot more than personal computers and decided to expand our venue. Today, we cover everything from how to select a HD Television to buying aftermarket GPS units for automobiles. Typical meetings consist of presentations (usually by members) followed by an open question/answer session. Attendees can get their problems discussed, if not solved.

Digital photography is quite popular and we have a few sessions each year dedicated to topics such as proper use of a digital camera and using Photoshop Elements to organize, edit and present digital photos. Many of our members have old photographs or slides that they would like to restore and digitize, and we have had several sessions showing how to do that.

We've set up a wireless internet connection at our meeting place, so we are able to review internet sites and services in real time.

The website at <http://sir-web.org/computer> contains descriptions of all our presentations and the materials used. All SIR members should feel free to visit the website and download materials that might be of interest to their Branch.

We would like to encourage some cross-area sharing where possible. Many of our presenters have assembled excellent presentations and would be willing to present them to other Branches if they would reciprocate. We're always looking for new topics or presenters.

We try to keep our presentations and discussions at a level that everyone feels welcome. We have attendees who are just getting started in computers, as well as long time computer users. It seems to be a formula that works well because our group is enthusiastic and keeps coming back for more.

Area 22, Modesto

Bowling Tournament

Don Reed, Branch 103 Bulletin Editor

An Area 22 SIR Bowling Tournament was held in Modesto at McHenry Bowl on Friday, March 14, under the directorship of **Jim Pastorelli**, Branch 103, and **Juan Guerrero**, Branch 144.

Gordon Ahart of Branch 103 was the winner in the "A" division singles of the tournament as well as first in "All Events." He bowled scratch games of 246-201 and 243 in singles, with a 780 handicap total. He had a total of 1444 pins to win the "All-Events."

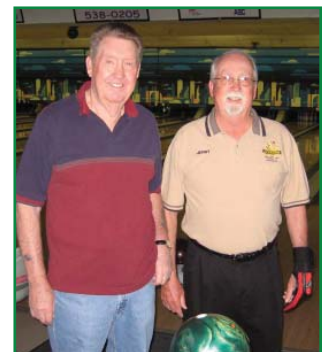
Jim Standridge of Branch 143 was the winner of the "B" division singles and also took third place in "All Events." He won with scratch games of 174-235-192 for a 736 handicap total.

Nance Clement and **Allen White**, both of Branch 143, were winners of the "A" division doubles. They won with a handicap total of 1358 with Allen bowling scratch games of 222-214 and 247.

Fred Sherman and **Jerry Strain**, both of Branch 144 were winners in the "B" division doubles. Fred also placed second in "All Events." They won with a handicap total of 1395 with scratch high games of 202 for Fred and 231 for Jerry.

In the upper picture Jim Standridge (on the left), is winner of "B" Division singles and Gordon Ahart (on the right), is winner of the "A" division singles and "All-Events."

In the lower picture is Fred Sherman (left) and Jerry Strain (right), winners of the "B" Division doubles.



News from the Branches

Placer Gold Branch 37, Auburn

100 Member Fishing Club

Jim Petruk, Region 9 Director

Last March – well before day light – thirty-one members of the Branch 37 Rooster Tails Fishing Club and three guests gathered at Folsom Lake to prepare for the second Non-Derby-Outing (NDO) of the year. Fourteen fishing boats equipped with VHF marine radios did radio-checks and festooned their boats with official SIR Rooster Tail Club flags. Just as safe-light signaled launch time, laughter and anticipation filled the crisp morning air as the Rooster Tails carefully maneuvered their boats down the ramp onto the lake. Club Chairman Tug Miller radioed NDO Host Jim Petruk for an official count as to who was on the Lake and to be on the look-out for a late arrival. Safety being a paramount concern at all Rooster Tails outings, fishing participants and their guests are required to check-in and check-out when they enter and leave the water for each of the ten NDO's and three Derbies the club will hold this year. Besides providing a means of fishing related chatter, the marine radios offer a margin of safety in the event of an emergency. Each NDO is hosted by a volunteer Rooster Tail club member to coordinate non-boat owners for seats with members owning boats. In addition to monitoring radio conversations, an NDO Host arranges for food, beverages, and collects a small contribution to cover the event costs. By one in the afternoon the entire Folsom fishing flotilla was gathered at the picnic area to eat sections of two

three-foot sub-sandwiches, chips, a brownie dessert, and fruit. Chairman Tug announced some of the details of the next NDO and one of the forthcoming spring Derbies. Camaraderie was at its finest, with jokes, cajoling, fishing advice, and a little bragging about the twenty some rainbows and salmon that were caught that day.

Since 1983, the Rooster Tails Fishing Club has been an activity of Placer Gold Branch 37. For most of the twenty-five years, the Rooster Tails have been entertaining, educating, and enhancing the fishing experience, and membership has seldom exceeded fifty ...this month, the Rooster Tails celebrated the addition of its 100th member. It no longer has a "Big or Little Rod," but this growing activity is now managed by a seven member Steering Committee. A local Denny's had been the meeting site for the past several years, but it became too small and so, the club moved to the Auburn Elk's Lodge last year. On the third Friday of each month, sixty or so Rooster Tails now enjoy a generous breakfast buffet and a fun meeting. Because of the Rooster Tails growth and promotion, quality breakfast speakers now draw a larger attendance.

The Rooster Tails Fishing Club Activity is a success story that provides a rich resource of new members for Branch 37. According to the SIR State Growth statistics from November 2006 through November 2007, Branch 37 *net* membership grew by twenty new members – third highest in the state – the majority of them because of the Rooster Tails Fishing Club Activity.



News from the Branches

Lake County Branch 133, Clearlake

Valentines Day in Clearlake

Bill Lyon, Bulletin Editor

Branch 133 held its Annual Valentines Luncheon at the Elks lodge in Clearlake. A serious accident that snarled traffic on the highway, caused some to be a little late, but that didn't deter the 75 happy, hungry, handsome and gorgeous crowd one bit.

Carnations were given out at the door to our wives or girl friends, along with a box of candy. We listened to songs played by Connie Miller and Bill Barrows.

Those who were brave enough, got up and danced during the luncheon while others sang along with Connie and Bill. For lunch we had Roast Pork and all the trimmings that go with it. Truly it was a splendid afternoon of music, song, food, dancing and good conversation.



Los Gatos Branch 141

Bullet Train to LA Coming Soon

Frank McMillan, Bulletin Editor

San Francisco to Los Angeles by train in two and a half hours! ...that's the prediction of transportation expert Rod Diridon, who spoke to the members of Branch 141 in San Jose, on the future of high-speed rail travel in California.

Diridon is Executive Director of the Mineta Transportation Institute in San Jose and is considered the "father" of modern transit service in Silicon Valley. He has been instrumental in promoting the development of a high-speed rail route between Los Angeles and Sacramento, with extensions to the Bay area and San Diego.

He cited the success of high-speed rail systems in Japan, France and Germany, which have been operated profitably for many years. In California, with its ever-growing population, such a system could relieve congested freeways and offer an alternative to costly air travel.

How soon could high-speed rail travel become a reality in California? By 2018, according to Diridon.

Miwok Branch 134, Novato

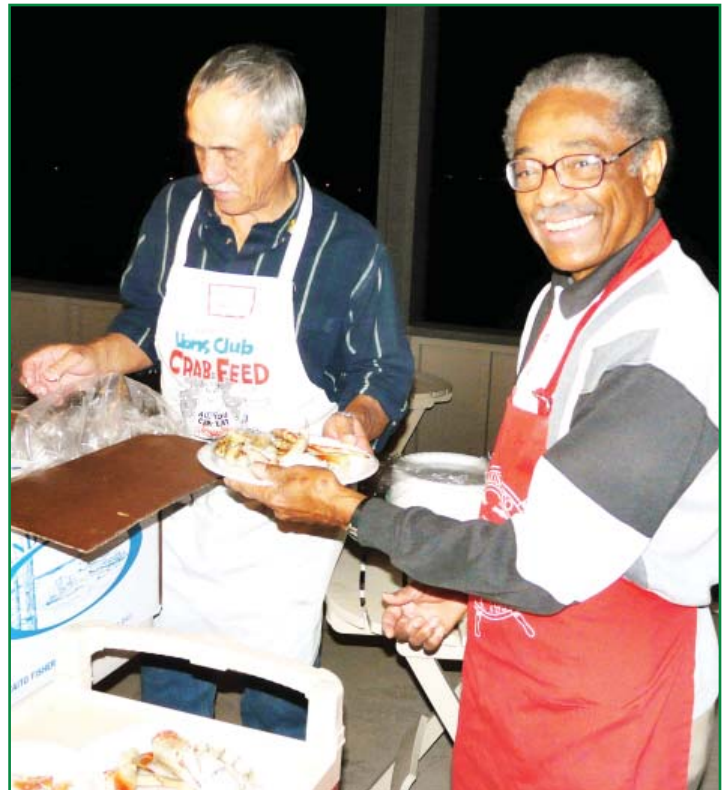
This Crab Feed had Great Reviews

John Crawford, Area 6 Governor

Miwok Branch 134, of Marin County, held its annual crab feed with great reviews. It was held in the club house at the Marin Valley Mobil Country Club. The success of the dinner is attributed to the great involvement of the members of Branch 134 and their wives. At 7:00 am, on the day of the event, Big Sir **Toni Marelich**, along with Little Sir **Jim Mathews**, arrived at Caito Fisheries in San Francisco, where they purchased 350 pounds of crab.

That evening, at 6:00 pm, the members began arriving. The room was festive with free beer and hor d'oeuvres abundant. The 122 guests arrived with crab on the brain and a bottle of wine in hand ...many guests even brought their own crab picks. At the end of the evening, around 10 O'clock, all the crab had been consumed, and many happy SIR members and their wives went home.

Toni Marelich, as event chairman, pulled off another successful crab feed. Toni was assisted by **Jim Matthews, Ray Piche, KB Glass, Vern Dorr, Dan Sebastian, Rich Loesch, Jerry Lakos, Ron Koenig**, and their wives. A great job was accomplished by all! Participation is what makes Branch 134 the best darn branch in SIR.



Big Sir Tony Marelich on the left is filling up the plates with Crab which Little Sir Jim Matthews on the right is going to deliver to a hungry crowd.

News from the Branches

Miwok Branch 134, Novato

Honoring Our Independence

Bob Evans, Publicity Chairman

The Branch Great Book Club gave a presentation celebrating the Declaration of Independence, at its July luncheon. Members played the part of six signers (out of the 56) and each read a portion of the Declaration, to the cheers of the luncheon group. The Branch members were: **Al Crozier** (John Hancock)– **Bud Cooney** (John Adams) – **John Crawford** (Thomas Jefferson) – **Bob Hibbs** (Benjamin Franklin) – **Bill Cline** (Gouverneur Morris) and **Ron Koenig** (Edward Rutledge).

Howard Bassett played George Washington and emceed the reading and **Bob Corbett** was the Town Crier and announced the presentation. John Hancock was the first signer and carried a copy of the Declaration around the room for the group to see, pointing out that his signature was at the top, so King George couldn't miss it. Ben Franklin announced that, "we must all hang together or assuredly, we shall all hang separately."



Howard Bassett



Bob Hibbs
Bob Corbett (seated)



Bill Cline
Bob Corbett (seated)



Al Crozier

Amador Branch 96, Jackson

New Member Record

Paul Murphy, Publicity & Program Chairman

Membership Chairman **Lee Suess** is a busy man these days. He just set a new membership record for Branch 96 by introducing 11 new members at the February luncheon in Jackson. "The applications just keep rolling in," says Lee. He hopes to have another big group next month. "We are getting the word out to retired men in the community that this organization has much to offer."

The Branch has plenty of activities to keep members busy. For example, the golf group has almost 70 members shared with Branch 15, also of Amador County. A very active fishing club makes local trips and is planning on a busy season. The Bowling group is rolling along with another state-wide bowling tournament scheduled and the RV drivers, and their families, have their motors revved up for several trips during the coming year.

Lee, a past Big Sir for the branch, is also an assistant Travel Chairman, speaks fluent German and will be the tour guide for a trip to Germany this fall. He just returned from leading a New Years Eve trip to San Antonio, Texas with 32 members and guests. Trips are also planned for a cruise to Hawaii and a 12 day cruise of the Mexican Riviera escorted by Travel Chairman **Gary DeRosa.**"



Happenings Travel Bulletin

June 2008

June 6-19, 2008

Baltic Heritage Cruise

An exciting adventure through the mystical ports of the Baltic Sea aboard the grand and beautiful new CROWN PRINCESS. We fly from San Jose to Copenhagen for a two night stay and a full day tour of Hans Christian Andersen land prior to setting sail for Stockholm, Helsinki, St. Petersburg, Tallinn, Gdansk, Oslo and back to Copenhagen for our flight home. Prices range from \$3,990 to \$4,960 PPDO. Offered by Areas 5 & 20. Call **Allen Daily** at 408-265-8140.

July 2008

July 8-15, 2008

Calgary Stampede

Enjoy the excitement of the Calgary Stampede, one of the greatest outdoor shows on earth. Also, visit other attractions like Lake Louise and the Kootenay Rockies. R/t air, 7 nights and all meals included. Cost is \$2375 PPDO. Offered by Area 33 Travel. Call **Barney Gruber** at 916-663-3537.



August 2008

August 16-24, 2008

Trains of the Colorado Rockies

Nine Day trip with 12 meals. Some of the highlights are: Denver, Rocky Mountain National Park, Georgetown Loop Railroad, Vail, Durango & Silverton Railroad, Mesa Verde National Park, Royal George Railroad, and Pike's Peak Cog Railroad. Cost is \$2199 PPDO. Offered by Branch 117. Call **Tony Praxel** at 916-285-9656.

September 2008

September 5-14, 2008

Grand Alaska Land Tour

The Grand Alaska escorted land tour is an experience of a lifetime. See spectacular mountains and valleys; watch wildlife and sea life in their natural habitat and view enormous glaziers. This is the perfect tour for previous cruisers to Alaska. We will travel to Anchorage, Veldez, Fairbanks, and Denali National Park. Trip includes all air transportation, most meals, professional tour manager, round trip transportation to Bay Area airport, and other amenities. Price is \$3090 PPDO. Offered by Branch 88 Travel. Call **John Hoffmann** at 707-642-4925.



September 7-11, 2008

The Big Apple

There is no place quite like New York and September is the very best time to see it. Trip includes all transportation, accommodations at the Edison Hotel -- right in the heart of Times Square --two Broadway shows, guided tours, and much more. Cost is \$1848 PPDO. Offered by Branch 143 Travel. Call **Bill Torrens** at 209-667-0244.



September 13-27, 2008

Grand Tour of Germany

From the Alps to the North Sea, the Black Forest and Rhine Valley, to the once divided Berlin ...discover the varied regions of this European power-house, with an exciting blend of culture, cities, rivers, and Bavarian charm. The trip is extensive, but leisurely paced. Price is \$3660 PPDO. Offered by Branch 96 Travel. Call **Lee Suess** at 209-296-2235.

September 18-27, 2008

A Taste of Northern Italy

A 10 day adventure through Northern Italy. The trip includes: The Lake District, Cinque Terre, and a visit with Leonardo DaVinci's Last Supper. Cost is \$2999 PPDO, including air from SFO and 13 meals. Offered by Area 1 Travel. Call **Michael Clark** at 650-347-0919.

September 21-October 2, 2008

Mexican Riviera Cruise

A 12 day round-trip cruise from San Francisco aboard the Norwegian Sun with visits to Mazatlan, Acapulco, Ixtapa, Puerto Vallarta, and Cabo San Lucas. Prices range from \$1260 to \$1682 PPDO. Offered by Area 7 Travel. Call **Paul Peters** at 510-724-8345.

September 25-October 10, 2008

River Cruise on the Rhine & Danube

A 16 day River Cruise beginning in Budapest, Hungary and finishing in Amsterdam. Our journey will take you to 11 cities in Hungary, Austria, Germany and the Netherlands. You'll explore the regal splendor of Budapest, meander along the fabled "Blue Danube" to Vienna, transit the Main-Danube Canal and glide past Germany's castles (during Oktoberfest) to the canals of Holland. All meals, tours and flights are included. Cost is \$4,515 PPDO. Offered by Branch 172 Travel. Call **Earl Nelson** at 209-586-5661.



Travel Chairmen

If you would like to have a trip listed in the Happenings Travel Bulletin, please email **Don MacGregor** at: donmac95@comcast.net

Happenings Travel Bulletin

October 2008

October 1-6, 2008 Washington D.C.



Visit Arlington National Cemetery, the White House, the Capital, major monuments, cruise the Potomac, and see a performance at the Kennedy Center. Cost is \$2170 PPDO. Offered by Branch 179 Travel. Call **Richard Beers** at 559-431-3728.

October 6-19, 2008 Danube Dream

Glide past fairy-tale castles and medieval villages aboard the river cruise ship, MS Switzerland II, traveling the second longest river in Europe. Take in views of the Czech Republic, Germany, Slovakia, and Hungary. Many shore excursions are included with visits to interesting cities and historic sites. Trip includes r/t air from SFO to Budapest, with return from Prague. Prices range from \$3415 to \$3660 PPDO. Offered by Area 2 Travel. Call **Bob Hagler** at 925-934-7620.

October 24-November 4, 2008 Cruise the Mexican Riviera

Cruise aboard the Norwegian Sun, roundtrip from San Francisco. Ports of call will be: Mazatlan, Acapulco, Zihuatejo/Xtapa, Puerto Vallarta, and Cabo San Lucas. This trip has real bargain rates, so, it will go fast. Prices range from only \$1035 to \$1580 PPDO. Offered by Area 1 Travel. Call **Paul Thiebaut** at 925-345-9375.



November 2008

November 3-15, 2008 Vietnam & Thailand

A 13 day adventure that will take you to Ho Chi Minh City, the Mekong Delta and Halong Bay in Vietnam and then to sites in Thailand. Price includes r/t air, hotels, breakfasts, lunches and dinners. Cost is \$3885 PPDO. Offered by Branch 146. Call **Bob Spellman** at 925-934-8428.

November 4-23 2008 Exotic Cruise to Santiago Chile

A 19 day cruise aboard the Norwegian Sun from San Francisco. Nine ports of call, including: Acapulco, Mexico—Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala—Puntarenas, Costa Rica—Quito (Manta), Ecuador—Lima (Callao), Peru—Arica, Chile—La Serna (Coquimbo), Chile—and Santiago. Prices range from \$3148 to \$3678 PPDO. Offered by Branches 20, 36, 85, and 104 Travel. Call **Tom Cutting** at 831-476-9725.

December 2008

December 13-22, 2008 Galapagos and More!!



This trip will include the famous Otavalo Market before getting on board the Coral II for 5 days of touring the Archipelago. There will be a full-time naturalist to answer our questions and be our guide. The ship limits passengers to 20 and will be exclusive for SIR on this trip. Prices range from \$4120 to \$4425 PPDO. Offered by Branch 62 Travel. Call **Ray Kriess** at 650-968-4299.

December 29, 2008-January 2, 2009 New Years Eve at the Beautiful Gaylord Opryland Resort

One of our most wonderful trips ever, was several years ago, to this magnificent resort. Price includes: all four nights at the resort, four breakfasts, dinner cruise aboard the General Jackson, performance at the Grand Ole Opry, gala New Years Eve party and much more. Cost is \$1765 PPDO. Offered by Branch 143 Travel. Call **Bill Torrens** at 209-667-0244.



January 2009

January 25 - February 10, 2009 Cruise from Australia to New Zealand

Cruise from Australia to New Zealand on board the Diamond Princess. Two-night, pre-cruise stay in Sydney. Some of the ports of call: Melbourne, Fjordland National Park, Dunedin, Christchurch, and Tauranga. Trip Includes r/t air and guided tours of both Sydney and Auckland. Prices range from \$4190 to \$5470 PPDO. Offered by Branches 101 & 121 Travel. Call **Werner Schlapfer** at 925-443-8291.

Editors Note: We hope to make Sirs aware of the many travel opportunities being offered by the various travel programs operating throughout Sons In Retirement and to give all of our Sirs the opportunity to take advantage of these trips. We hope this feature in Happenings will encourage our members to do more traveling with their fellow Sirs.

To the best of our knowledge, the information shown on these travel pages was accurate when this edition of Happenings was published, but there is always the possibility that some trips may be cancelled or sold out.

Area 10 Aptos and Santa Cruz

Vying for Bragging Rights

Jack Kemerling, PR Chairman Branch 104

“The red one is closest” – “No, the green one is” – “Okay, measure it!” ...these are the phrases often repeated as Bocce competition heats up between two SIR Branches. Since early last fall, teams from Branch 20 (Santa Cruz) and 104 (Aptos), have been meeting on the first and third Wednesdays at Boccis’ Cellar, where they can play Bocce, and also enjoy good food, a brew, and great camaraderie ...some of the players are shown in the lower picture.

Captains **Sterling Frost** and **Jack Roberts** (Branch 20) and **Tony LoBue** (Branch 104) have their teams vying for bragging rights to the “Fence Post,” a SIR themed trophy where the yearly winners are to be engraved.



Bocce is again growing in popularity in the Santa Cruz area. There are new municipal double courts in Santa Cruz and Scotts Valley. In addition, several mobile home parks have, or are planning on replacing their unused Shuffleboard courts with Bocce courts.



Get SIR Happenings Quarterly

If you want to get on the “Happenings” notification list, just mention it to your Branch Email Contact.

Every February, May, August and November you can go to <http://sirinc.org/sirhappenings/> and download the latest issue.

Happy Reading!

Dwight Sale, Publisher

Looking for some toe-tapping fun over the Memorial Day Weekend?
The 35th Annual

Sacramento Jazz Jubilee is the place to be!

The Sacramento Jazz Jubilee swings over the Memorial Day weekend from Friday, May 23rd through Monday, May 26th. The event is a fun party, with some of the best jazz you will ever hear, plus lots of good food and drink.



A variety of discounted tickets are again



available to Sirs.

For information and tickets, call Jim Fusaro at (916) 428-5719 or email him at jim4jazz@comcast.net. Jim will be glad to send tickets to any Branch on consignment.



SIR Happenings is published by the Information Systems Committee.

Dwight Sale,
Chairman/Publisher
Email: dwight.sale@comcast.net

Send news and questions to:
Don MacGregor,
Executive Editor
Email: donmac95@comcast.net

John Skarpelos,
Editor and Production Manager
Email: john@mediaart.com