



# SIR HAPPENINGS

AUGUST 2008

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 3

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

## President Art's Column

A reminder: available to all of our Branches is the ability to honor those individuals who have contributed to the best interests of their branch and the SIR organization. It seems that many branches are unaware that they have the means to honor their own members. To arrange for these awards, contact Sir **Otto Zimmermann**, State Awards and Certificates.

While on the subject of awards, let me suggest that when preparing the application for an Honorary Life Membership Award (HLM), that in addition to the Form 45, please include a resume of the contributions the candidate has made to the Branch over the past five years. This greatly helps to expedite the approval and processing of your application. The HLM is further distinctive in that only the President or his designated representative may present the highest honor in Sons In Retirement.

Here is a reminder to all Big Sirs: our Annual Meeting is August 4, 2008, at the Vallejo Elks Lodge. I look forward to greeting all Big Sirs or where necessary, their representative chosen by their Branch Executive Committee. Registration for the Annual Meeting will take place from 9:00 am until 9:55 am in the lobby. Paper name-tags, with a sticky background, will be passed out at the time of registration.

To help keep our State records current, it is very important that all Branches notify Sir **Gary Gruber**, State INFOSYS Committee, when an Honorary Life Member is no longer active. This gives your Branch an opportunity to recommend a new HLM. Also, please notify Sir Gruber of any changes in your meeting place.

As soon as you are notified that your HLM candidate is approved, please contact me, so a date for presentation of the award can be mutually arranged. My calendar for these events fills up very quickly.

I hope all of you are having a good summer, despite the high price of gas and smoke-filled air.

My personal regards,

*Art*

## An Editorial

### **Baby Boomers Needed! They are Essential if we want a Bright Future for Sons In Retirement**

We all know that membership in this great organization has been on the decline for a number of years. One of the reasons for this decline may be that we have not been targeting that vast group of men called "Baby Boomers" for membership in SIR. We would like to feature stories about young retirees and even start a "Boomers" column or a special section in future editions of Happenings. We thought a program that was just initiated by Region 9 Director **Jim Petruk** might be of interest to our readers.



Jim is personally offering a cash reward to his Big Sirs and their Branch to use however they choose, for sending in an interesting story about a Baby Boomer in the Branch. They have twelve Branches in Region 9, with over 1800 members. He is looking for three interesting stories about young members, with the first prize story receiving \$75; the second prize story \$50; and the third prize \$25. The best three young retiree or Baby Boomer stories will be selected by Jim, assisted by the Editor of SIR Happenings, and then they will be published in the state newsletter. This reward offering is for the month of July only, and the money will be paid-out by Jim, on or before the fourth week of August.

You can find out more about Jim's program by contacting him at [petrukj@pacbell.net](mailto:petrukj@pacbell.net). If you have interesting suggestions on how to get younger fellows to join SIR, let us know.

# Sirs in the News

## Rocklin Branch 98

### A Chef's Chef

#### Tom Werth, Branch Member

Branch 98 — in conjunction with its annual “Lady’s Day Celebration” — was privileged to honor long time member **Jon Greenwalt** as an Honorary Life Member. Jon has served Branch 98 in many capacities, including Big Sir, but is probably most appreciated for the many years that he and his lovely wife, Doris, have provided the outstanding food for the annual Branch picnic. Jon has been recognized throughout Northern California as the “Chef’s Chef,” and has been honored by his gastronomical peers for his life long contributions to the culinary arts.

Area 15 Governor, **Ronald Ross**, made the presentation to Jon. Region 9 Director **Jim Petruk** is shown in the picture with **Jon Greenwalt**.



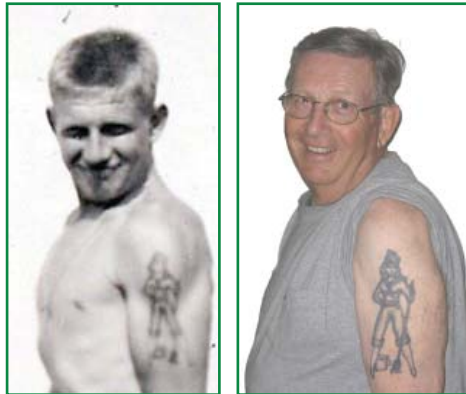
## Pony Express Branch 69

### Tattoos

#### Frank Franzago, Bulletin Editor

Branch 69 is having a lot of fun with a contest that is running in the Branch Newsletter (“The Mailbag”). Each month we publish a picture of one of the members when he was a young man. Then we pose the question, “Who Is That Kid?” Answers are submitted by filling out an entry blank and depositing it in the “Kid Bucket” at the luncheon. The correct answer receives a bottle of wine. If there is more than one winner, a drawing is held amongst the winning entries. In the next issue of the newsletter, the Kid’s picture — along with a current picture — are shown side by side.

Typical of the pictures is the one shown of our Area Governor **George Christman** proudly showing off his new tattoo in 1950 and how it has aged in 58 years.



## Upper Bay Branch 123, Vallejo

### Honorary Life Membership

#### Ed Wright, Big Sir

State President **Art Pufford** attended one of our Branch luncheons to present an Honorary Life Membership certificate to **Jack Krisha**. Jack was also quite surprised when his wife, Joan, came up and presented the distinctive lapel pin to him.

Jack Krisha has been a member of Branch 123 for twenty-two years and has served as the Branch Secretary for the past fourteen years. During his tenure, he was instrumental in bringing computer technology to the operation of the Branch and his extensive knowledge of SIR rules have been of immense help to the Branch. He has often filled in when key people in the Branch are absent and has performed those duties admirably. The Branch is very fortunate to have a person of his caliber.

Area Governor **James Bible** took the picture showing from left to right: President **Art Pufford**, **Jack Krisha** and Big Sir **Ed Wright**.



## Stanislaus Branch 103, Modesto

### Over Age 90 Honored

#### Don Reed, Bulletin Editor

Four members reaching the age of 90 were recently honored with a President’s Award presented by Area 22 Governor **Julius Manrique** (shown standing in the center of the picture). Those receiving the award are from left to right: **Herve DeBlois**, **James Reed**, **Ernie Burgi** and **Larry Grandt**.

James is a former treasurer for the Branch. Larry is an Honorary Life Member, a former Big Sir, and was also the branch newsletter editor. He is still very active in the branch, selling luncheon tickets and greeting members as they enter and does this even though he has suffered from ill health the past few years.





# Sirs in the News

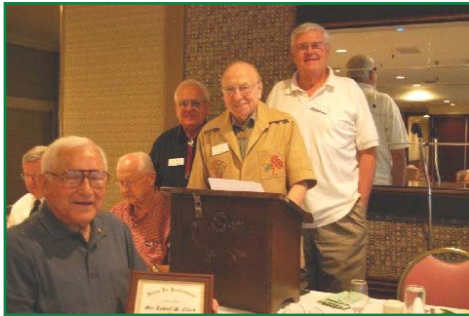
## Los Gatos Branch 141

### HLM awarded

Frank McMillan, Bulletin Editor

**Lowell Clark** (left foreground) was awarded an Honorary Life Membership at the June luncheon meeting. Presiding at the ceremony were: Vice President **Dave Reiser** (at the lectern) – flanked by Region 7 Director **Gary Pelton** (on the left) – and Area 5 Governor **Richard Kabanek** (on the right).

Lowell has been a member of Branch 141 since the Branch was chartered and has held the post of Golf Chairman for twenty years. An active participant in many Branch activities, he also served as its Big Sir in 1994.



## San Benito Branch 131, Hollister

### 100 Years Young

Phil Freeland, Bulletin Editor

**Gene Carbone** (seated) is shown accepting the President's award, which was presented jointly by (L to R) – Region 7 Director **Gary Pelton** – Branch 131 Big Sir **Paul Ambruster** – and State Vice President **Dave Reiser** – in recognition and celebration of Gene's 100th birthday.

Gene has been a loyal member of Branch 131 for many years and has garnered several awards for attendance during that time. He celebrated his 100th birthday on March 2nd and remains mobile, sharp, and possessed of a wicked sense of humor ...**Happy Birthday**, Gene, with many more to follow!



## Sonora Branch 136

### Ancient Ones

Newt McKenna, Bulletin Editor

Sonora Branch 136 recently honored its 13 oldest members. The "Senior Sirs," ranging in age from 90 to 94, were: **Dusty Rhodes, Al Cassidy, Arnold Berk, Newt McKenna, Gaylon Smith, Otto Bertel, Frank Brown, John Emerson, Sanford Grober,** and **Jim McKay.** **Holly Rice** (99) and **Frank Economou** (97) were honored as "Super Senior Sirs." The "Century Sir" was 100-year-old, **Elwood Johnson**, who helped form the branch in 1986. Region 27 Director **Norm Whitsed** is shown presenting the "Super Senior" plaque to **Elwood Johnson**. Elwood is certainly amazing for his age ...would you believe his driving license is good until 2011.

## Almaden Branch 94, San Jose

### Gold Fraternity

Ron Bianco, Branch Member

Branch 94 has a 13 year tradition of honoring members who have been married for 50 years or longer and we call it our "Gold Fraternity." Three members and their spouses were honored during our Ladies' Day Luncheon. They are left to right in the picture: **Roger** and **Marva Prow, John** and **Hugheen Cabri,** and **Dave** and **Germaine Zink.**



## State Sports

Indian Valley Branch 68, San Rafael

### Bowling Team Champs

Hans Sommer, Bulletin Editor

The Branch 68 bowling team includes **George Pelmear** (168 average), **Hans Sommer** (154 average), **Bob Hiday** (123 average) and newcomer **Charles Salinas** (105 average). In a league of 14 four-man teams, Branch 68 managed to put together some outstanding bowling to capture the Area 6 league championship for the 2007/2008 season.

It was a close competition right to the very end, with contenders from Branches 47 and 134 right on our heels. It was only due to a valiant effort, including four 200+ games by the Branch 68 team in the final playoff competition, that they were able to become the victors.

The most important thing is that the entire 34 week bowling season was great fun for all the bowlers and an incentive to look forward to the next bowling season beginning in the fall.

Shown in the picture is the Branch 68 bowling team consisting of (from left to right) **Bob Hiday**, **Charles Salinas**, **Hans Sommer**, and **George Pelmear**.



## State Bowling

William "Coop" Cooper, State Bowling Chairman

The bowling season will be starting up again in September. Be sure and join a team or two and check out the SIR website for all the up-coming SIR tournaments. Come out and meet some of the Sirs that you don't have the chance to see very often.

Well, USBC is doing it again ...they are moving their headquarters to Arlington, Texas. Also, there is a project to build another national stadium in Florida. If this is accomplished, there will then be one on the East Coast and one on the West Coast ...personally, I would like to see a national stadium in Hawaii

The Senior State Tournament will be in Fresno this year. Check your local bowling center for applications or contact Bill Cooper (707-762-3083).

You are never too old to bowl. The oldest I have heard of, just passed away ...he was 105!

**KEEP ON BOWLING!!**

*Coop*

## State Golf

Dave Betts, Chairman, State Golf Committee

Please visit our State Golf Committee website:

[www.sirstategolf.com](http://www.sirstategolf.com), for a complete update on all of our tournaments and the many things that are going on in State Golf.

*Dave*

Amador Branch 96, Jackson

### Knickers Golf Tournament

Paul Murphy, Program & PR Chairman

It was one of those perfect golf days at the Mace Meadow Golf and Country Club in Amador County, when the Branch 15 & 96 Golf Club held its first annual "Knickers Golf Tournament." **Sam Mazza**, Tournament Director, organized this very successful event with over 32 players participating.

Shown in the picture are the many players that dressed in the latest "Knickers" wear. Left to right **Candy Sanchez**, **Don Paris**, **Howard Blethen**, **Sam Mazza**, **Chi Chi Chavoya**, **Joe Dyke**, **Dave Porter**, **Bill Dufrane**, and **Johnny Medina**.



## State Sports

**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 vs. the New York Jets at the Coliseum**  
October 19 (Sunday) at 1:15pm.



# News from the Branches

## Mission Branch 32, San Jose

### Camera Club

Dan Roberts, Bulletin Editor

The Mission Branch Camera Club was started in April of last year. Its purpose is to have fun and learn something about Digital Photography. The group meets once a month and has gone on two field trips with the winning photos being published in the Branch Newsletter. The best pictures taken by the members are selected and published in the Newsletter ...shown



is an example of the fine work of one of our members taken at Hakone Japanese Gardens. Also shown is a view of Gig Harbor, Washington.



So far, we have had meetings to discuss "Post processing of digital photos" and a session given by one of the members on the "Ken Burns Effect," which is a means of giving still photos the appearance of motion. The next

meeting will be a session on "How to make a Power Point Presentation." The group was also given the responsibility of photographing all the members of Branch 32 for the Membership Roster.

## Placer Gold Branch 37, Auburn

### If the Pole Ain't Bending ...you're just Pretending

Jim Petruk, Region 9 Director & Branch Member

**Ron Roskauff** is shown holding up a load of fish caught on a trip to Lake Oroville with eleven other members of the Branch 37 Rooster Tails Fishing Club. Ron and **John Hess** fished together, catching this nice string of Land-Locked Salmon and his "T" shirt pretty well sums up that lively day of fishing.



## Area 2

### These Guys Catch Lots of Fish

Terry Miller, Fishing Group Chairman

The Area 2 Fishing Group has been very active, despite the big winds. Fishing for halibut in the bay on a party boat were **Craig Walton, Joe Peterson, Tom Boltz, Harry Sherinian, Terry Miller, Dick Thomson, Pete Gates** and **Carl Moyer**. The first trip was very successful, with 14 halibut and 6 strippers including a hefty 20 pound striper caught by Miller.

We had a very successful return trip to Shadow Cliffs Reservoir catching over 20 feisty trout, followed by a picnic. Attending were **John Hayes, Jack Waddell, Joe Miscione** as well as Sherinian, Walton, Peterson, Moyer and Boltz.

Seven dauntless Sirs went north to Lake Almanor for 3 days of trout trolling. The first two days were sparse, but the third day they landed some nice Rainbows and Browns ...fishing there were **Romano Gnusti, Karl Droese, George Schultse**, in addition to Boltz, Miller, Walton, and Hayes. Walton and Peterson fished the Sacramento River on a rare windless day for 3 strippers.

**Paul Dubow** and Moyer fished for sturgeon the same day, and Paul caught a big 60 inch sturgeon (see picture) that put up a good fight. Droese and Moyer fished the next day at Shadow Cliffs for quick limits of trout. **Kent Cremolini** fished with a guide in the upper Sacramento River for a lot of strippers weighing up to 26 lbs.

We have an exciting agenda for 2008, with trips to the delta for strippers and sturgeon, fly fishing for trout in various rivers, New Melones for Kokanee, Lake Tahoe for Mackinaw, the Bay for Halibut, a Fishing Group Day at the Races, and an evening social at an Irish Pub should be lots of fun.

All SIR members and guests are welcome and, indeed, encouraged to participate in our fishing trips as well as attend our monthly meetings, which are held at the Legend Sports Bar and Grill at the Diablo Creek Golf Course ...meetings start at 8:30 am. For further information, please contact **Craig Walton** (Big Fish) at 925-937-4876, or **Terry Miller** (Fish Coordinator) at 925-686-9298, or **Joe Peterson** (Secretary/Treasurer) at 916-777-5363.



# News from the Branches

## Miwok Branch 134, San Rafael

### Shad Fishing

**Bill Cline, Fishing Group Chairman**

Three anglers from the fly-fishing group – **Brian Stompe, Bill Cline** and Big Sir **Fred Holmes** – went fishing for shad on the Sacramento River near Willows in late May. They stayed at a “boat-in” riverside camp that the Stompe family has been using for years. Brian picked us up at the Ord Bend launch, after his family left from spending almost a week on the river, and we stayed three more days. It was a fantastic trip ...the weather was hot – but not blistering hot – the mosquitoes were present – but not oppressive – and the companionship was first class.

The shad had not yet arrived in massive numbers that far up the river, but we caught enough fish to make it a successful fishing trip. I caught six shad, including a big one that might have gone 21 inches. In the picture, I’m holding up my catch and Fred Holmes is standing on the right. Brian probably caught twice that many, and Fred did about as well as I did. As is traditional in fishing, the shad seemed to be arriving just as we were leaving.

One of the highlights was Brian preparing our catch to eat ...shad are not normally considered prime table fare. Brian prepared shad roe, dredged in flour and fried along with fried eggs for breakfast and it was excellent. He also barbecued a whole shad and once he separated out the bones, it was quite tasty.

All in all, it was an excellent trip and if the fly fishing group comes up with more trips like this, it will be very popular for the more adventurous among us.



## Los Gatos Branch 141

### Things get Crazy at Branch 141

**Frank McMillan, Bulletin Editor**

Branch 141 in Los Gatos has a unique tradition called Crazy Shirt Day, which is celebrated annually at the June meeting. As the name implies, Crazy Shirt Day gives every Branch member a chance to wear a shirt that he would most likely not wear anywhere else – and thereby, become a candidate for a prize.

This year’s top winner was **Carl Stalions**, (shown on the left in the photo), whose shirt proclaimed in bold face type: **“Warning! Retiree knows it all and has plenty of time to tell you about it.”** Second place went to **Jim Hill** (on the right) and **Vince Paoli** won third prize (in the middle).

Judges were **Ray Dollar, George McCarthy** and **Frank Basuino**.

## Area 22

### Spring Training

**Don Reed, Branch 103 Bulletin Editor**

The bus trip to Spring Training in Scottsdale, Arizona started in Modesto early on the morning of March 12 and returned on the evening of the 17th. The tour was really a great one! The group was busy from morning until night, touring the city, visiting the home of Frank Lloyd Wright, baseball games, shows, lunches, a barbecue, dinners, casinos and even a lovely snowfall on the way home ...in fact the trip was so good, that there are plans for scheduling it again next year.

**Bill Torrens**, Area 22 Travel Chairman and his wife, Esther – as usual – provided the SIR group of 51 people with many hours of pleasure and enjoyment. They had an overnight in Palm Springs, with rest stops at several places along the route. They saw two ballgames: one in Scottsdale Stadium and one in Phoenix Municipal Stadium. **Donna** and **Charlie Fox** are seen in the picture enjoying the game at Scottsdale Stadium where the Giants beat the Arizona Cardinals. The group attended a wonderful dinner show (Hello Dolly) in Meza, took a guided tour of Phoenix, and had an enjoyable dinner at Arizona Opry in Apache Junction ...which is known for its masterful music and food. They took a tour of Taliesin West, Frank Lloyd Wright’s winter home, and now a functioning architect school in Scottsdale.

Leaving the Phoenix area, they traveled through Kingman where they encountered a spring snowstorm before having lunch at the

Cracker Barrel. They stayed over night in Las Vegas at the Golden Nugget Casino and Hotel, where they enjoyed the Fremont Street light show.

Leaving Las Vegas, the group headed home on the Storer bus, with always expert driver, David. In Barstow, a steak barbecue lunch was enjoyed at the Idle Spurs Steak House on old Highway 58 ...**WOW...WHAT A TRIP!**





# News from the Branches

## LaMorinda Branch 171, Moraga

### Setting the Pace

#### Ted Westphal, Activities Coordinator

Branch 171 is continually increasing membership and adding new activity groups. Our current roster stands at a healthy 276 members, with another 56 “members in waiting.” On average each month, 240 members and guests enjoy a great lunch and fine speakers at the Serbian Orthodox Church in Moraga ...and we’re a very active branch with 20 separate “activity groups,” including two rather unusual new groups, which were organized just this year.

The first of these, a “Model Railroading group,” held its first meeting at Chairman **George McClain’s** home in Lafayette, where George has dedicated a large area in his own backyard to an extensive outdoor G-scale – garden – model railroad. His rolling stock stays out of the elements in a side-yard shed, which connects to the back yard layout and then meanders over live creeks, through model towns, up and over mountainous terrain and trellises—all built and under the control of George—plus, of course, his grandchildren, and now one of our new Branch activity groups.

Just recently, the Model Railroading Group went on a most interesting “behind the scenes” tour of the Redwood Valley Steam Trains located in Berkeley’s Tilden Park. Ellen Thomsen, whose father Erich Thomsen created the popular attraction, was our excellent guide. She leads a dedicated group of steam train enthusiasts who plan, build, and operate everything the public now enjoys. Inside their “round-house” we were fascinated to see their four working steam engines – all of which were built from scratch on site – and to learn how they actually work.

In the photo, the Model Railroading Group is inside Tilden Park’s Steam Trains’ round-house, standing in front of steam engine #7.



Left to right in the photo are: **Don Merson, Al Dessayer, Bob Reidelberger, George McLain** (group leader), **Ellen Thomsen** (tour guide), and **John Schick**.

Our new “Historical Interest Group,” chaired by Sir **Rich Sjoberg**, recently spent two highly informative hours on a private docent-led tour of the historic Mt. View Cemetery at the end of Piedmont Avenue in Oakland. It was a big surprise to most of us to learn that Mt. View was beautifully laid out way back in 1863 by Frederick Olmsted, who also designed New York’s Central Park ...Olmsted’s original cemetery layout remains exactly the same today.

Although only a fraction of the cemetery’s 226 acres were visited, we were led to several impressive monuments and were amazed to learn about the cemetery’s dozens of famous residents including Charles Crocker—one of the “big four” railroad tycoons (in the photo next to the tomb, **Rich Sjoberg**,

the group leader is wearing the straw hat) – Henry J. Kaiser – the Bechtel family – architects, Julia Morgan and Bernard Maybeck – Henry Durant, the founding President of UC – and Francis “Borax” Smith who, among other things, built the Claremont Hotel. There are countless other famous pioneers buried at Mt. View, including more former California Governors than are buried in all other cemeteries combined.

There is no question that Branch 171 is very much alive and well!



## Pleasant Hill Branch 146, Walnut Creek

### Let’s Go Walking

#### Harry Tutton, Branch Member

In 1998 **John Lewis** and his wife, Flo, founded the “Walkers” group because they enjoyed walking so much and wanted to go walking with SIR friends and their wives. Ten years later, John and Flo are still walking with original members, **Bob** and **Donna Madge, Ralph** and **Charlotte Fowler, Pablo** and **Adelaide Chavez** and a group that now numbers 20 to 25 people for the weekly Friday walk.

While all the walkers are encouraged to suggest where to go on future walks, John and Flo have planned the route for most of the walks over the years. Some of the memorable walks have been to Black Diamond Mines, east of Mount Diablo—inside the Caldecott Tunnel—over the Golden Gate Bridge—to the Berkeley Marina Aquatic Park—across the new Carquinez Bridge (see picture) – on board the USS Hornet – to the Old Borges Ranch – and around Treasure Island.

A typical Friday begins at 9:30 am at a site announced in the Branch 146 Bulletin, with the walk lasting an hour and covering about three miles. After that, the walkers all gather at a convenient coffee shop to relax after the morning outing...on some of the longer walks to distant sites, the group has lunch together.

The key to the success of the “Walkers” group has been including the wives, who are strongly encouraged to come along to enjoy a morning of walking, as well as nurturing friendships that have lasted for years. The group encourages all SIR Branches to start a walking group ...it’s a lot of fun!



# Branch Summer Parties

## Salinas Branch 56

### Picnic in Salinas

Bill Baltezar, Big Sir

Early on the morning of May 20, **Ray Morasca** – former Big Sir of Branch 56 – heads out to Toro Park on Highway 68 to prepare for the May barbeque. Since 1990, Ray and his crew have made this same trek twice a year in order to provide Branch 56 with the best barbeques anywhere.

By 8:30 am the fire is started and soon the grill is covered with steaks and chicken. Salads are being prepared, beans are cooking, and garlic bread waits its turn on the grill in this little bit of heaven, where massive oaks provide shade and wild turkeys sometime join the party. This year we had unwelcome guests in the form of oak worms ...next year we hope they will stay far, far away.

By 11 am members and their wives begin to arrive, bringing with them a great array of homemade pies, cakes and cookies. By now the sun has peaked out from the clouds, so members shed their ski jackets, some dancing to the familiar music of Artie Shaw and Glen Miller playing on the giant speakers ...others visiting with their friends. Standing in front of the SIR welcoming sign are left to right: Picnic Chairman **Ray Morasca**, past



Big Sir **Otis Hollibaugh** –and Big Sir **Bill Baltezar**.

At high noon, the dinner bell sounds and chow-hounds head to the service line for steaks, chicken, beans, salsa, salad, garlic bread and the delicious desserts.

A basket of strawberries is given to each wife who provided a dessert. A “raffle” follows and most members take home a gift of a pie, a cake or a batch of cookies, provided by Ray.

So ends another glorious barbeque with SIR Branch 56. We’ll be back for another one in September.

## Chico Branch 63

### Ladies’ Day in Chico

Gerald Morelock, Bulletin Editor

Branch 63 had a great Ladies’ Day luncheon with good attendance and entertainment from a wonderful singing group called “CHIC”...the Women’s Quartet and A Cappella Choir from Chico High School. These 4 young ladies performed numerous songs of George Gershwin and many other favorites of Branch members.



Everyone enjoyed the fine filet mignon lunch with all the trimmings. Each lady received a ticket and during the luncheon, ticket numbers were drawn and great prizes were distributed to the winning ladies. All in all, the ladies were treated to a very special and memorable “Ladies Day.”

## River City Branch 117, Sacramento

### Ladies’ Day in Sacramento

Don Flath, Big Sir

Branch 117 had a great Ladies’ Day Luncheon with approximately 101 in attendance. The meal was Prime Rib along with peas/carrots, salad, pasta and carrot cake for dessert. Our own “Singing Sirs” sang a couple of great Barbershop tunes, followed by 45 minutes of fun entertainment by the “Sisters of Swing.”

One of the highlights of the affair was when the Sisters of Swing invited editor **Al Williams** up on the stage and singing a love song to him, while proceeding to confiscate his wallet, money, keys and possibly his checkbook ...it almost brought the house down.

A great time was had by all and many hung around for quite awhile afterwards, just talking and having a good old time.





## Fresno Branch 159

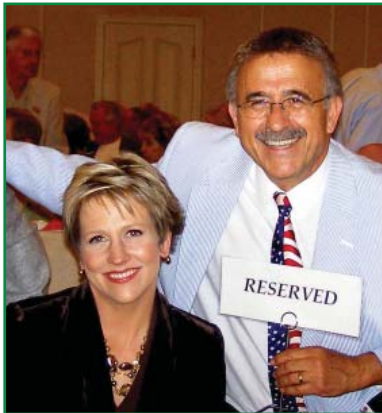
### Ladies' Day in Fresno

George Gianopulos, Little Sir

Two hundred and twelve gathered for the annual Ladies' Day Luncheon at Pardini's Restaurant. This event is always a treat for the wives and Branch members.

Big Sir **Reg Rosander** welcomed attendees and thanked the luncheon planning committee for all its efforts in putting on the luncheon. Then after lunch Little Sir **George Gianopulos** introduced the program.

Featured were **Kim Stephens** and **Kopi Sotiropulos**, co-hosts of the popular "Great Day" television program, a daily early morning show seen on the local Fox TV channel. Kim Stephens told the group about her early days in TV, working in various venues around the country ...sometimes news anchor ... sometimes a talk-show host. Sotiropulos is well known in the Fresno area for his former weatherman roll on the evening news ...now he entertains on the morning talk show. His presentation brought lots of laughter and fun. The footage he took during the luncheon was shown the following morning on his "Great Day" program and our members and their wives saw themselves laughing, waving, and shouting the Kopi-Show Epitaph.



The day's program wound up with drawings for prizes and now everyone is looking forward to our next party in December.

In the picture below, Big Sir **Reg Rosander** (L) and Little Sir **George Gianopulos** (R) are shown presenting a plaque to **Kopi Sotiropulos** (in the center) in appreciation of his entertaining performance.



## Miwok Branch 134, San Rafael

### Traveling Bridge Group

Dick Crocker, Bulletin Editor

Back in 1989, Larry Daniels took the floor at the monthly luncheon and pronounced: "There are other men beside golfers in this Branch and I am asking those who are interested in playing bridge to see me after lunch." Upon phoning those that indicated an interest, he invariably talked with the spouse who said... "we are interested!"

The following January found three tables of bridge assembled for the kickoff. Sirs Bassett, Bream, Daniels, Deadman, Norman, and Scarborough and their spouses were the players. In February they acquired a seventh couple, the Oliviers, to serve as substitutes. It didn't take too long to decide that going away for a few days of bridge was a good idea, so a visit to Asilomar in Pacific Grove started the travels of the Bridge Group and the trips have continued ever since. Nine months of the year play is held in a member's home. In 1991, enroute to Reno, the group elected Al Olivier Chairman of the group. Each year he resigns, but is unanimously reelected ...he claims it is because he is the only one who can add.



The first year only the one trip took place. Since then, the scheduled trips have numbered about three per year. These three-day trips – usually Tuesday through Thursday – begin with happy-hour in the late afternoon, followed by dinner. Normally four tables are involved and Tuesday consists of four rounds of five hands each. Wednesday morning and evening again are four rounds each with sleep, relaxation, or shopping filling Wednesday afternoon. Thursday morning sees the final three rounds played, the scores totaled, prizes distributed, and the bleary-eyed card players heading home.

It did not take long for other bridge players to come out of the woodwork and the result was a second bridge group. In 1991, Don Kirkner, who was a "traveling squad" member of the first group and Don Smith formed "The Younger Group." Smith and Kirkner were joined by Sirs Johnson, DeWolf, Minor, and Presenti and they joined the travelers on a number of their trips.

The group has taken about 53 trips over the last seven years to such places as San Francisco, Healdsburg, Bodega Bay, Reno, and Sonora. It then became somewhat automatic to refer to the bridge group as *The Traveling Bridge Group*.

# Happenings Travel Bulletin

## 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 glaciers. This is the perfect tour for previous cruisers to Alaska. We will travel to Anchorage, Valdez, 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.



**September 25-October 4, 2008**

### **Mackinac Island, Michigan**

A ten-day trip featuring the fabulous Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island. Tour Chicago, Green Bay, Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Mackinac Island, Frankenmuth and Southfield Michigan. Cost is \$2799 PPDO. Offered by Branch 110 Travel. Call **Bill Massie** at 530-342-2784.

## 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 **Midge Bamonte** at 650-588-6645.





# Happenings Travel Bulletin

## October 2008

**October 4-13, 2008**

### **Canadian Rockies by Rail**

Ten day trip that includes r/t air and 15 meals. Some of the highlights are: Columbia, Vancouver, Victoria, Rocky Mountaineer Train, Kamloops, Jasper, Columbia Ice Fields, Lake Louise, Banff and Calgary. Cost is \$3,199 PPDO.

Offered by Branch 14 Travel.

Call **Tom Cordray** at 916-771-7402.

**October 6-11, 2008**

### **New Orleans**

Trip includes: City tour of New Orleans – walking tour of the French Quarter – full day Plantation tour – lunch at a cooking school – and a free day in New Orleans. Trip includes r/t air from SFO and 5 nights at the Holiday Inn on the edge of the French Quarter. Cost is \$1440 PPDO.

Offered by Area 1 Travel.

Call **Harry Redlick** at 650-583-3961.

## 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.

**November 10-22, 2008**

### **Egyptian Odyssey**

Cruising the magical waters of the Nile for 7 days -- aboard the MS Crown Empress -- is the most enjoyable and relaxing way to experience the many sights and wonders of ancient Egypt. The trip includes four nights at the Grand Hyatt in Cairo, allowing time to see all the main attractions in and around the city. November is considered one of the most favorable months to visit Egypt. Cost is \$4195 PPDO.

Offered by Branch 114 Travel.

Call **Jim Stoner** at 408-238-8458.

### **Travel Chairmen**

**If you would like to have a trip listed in the Happenings Travel Bulletin, please email**

**Don MacGregor at: donmac95@comcast.net**

## 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**

This is a wonderful trip to a magnificent resort in Nashville. 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 \$1567 PPDO.

Offered by Branches 45 & 109 Travel.

Call **Larry Garvin** at 530-673-3693



## 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.

## March 2009

**March 4-12, 2009**

### **Discover Sicily**

This 9 day trip includes r/t air, hotel accommodations and 11 meals. Travelers will enjoy a deluxe bus tour and guided tours of Taormina, Mt. Etna Volcano, a local winery tasting tour, Catania, Caltagirone, Pizzaa Amerina, Villa Casale, Siracusa, and an optional tour to Palermo. Cost is \$2643 PPDO. Offered by Area 6 Travel.

Call **Henry Puccinelli** at 415-457-3990.

# Come celebrate the SIR 50th Anniversary in Reno, Nevada

*Enjoy two nights at the beautiful and luxurious*

*Grand Sierra Resort & Casino*

**plus**

*an exclusive SIR 50th anniversary reception and dinner followed by a performance by world-famous comedian,*

***Yakov Smirnoff***

**October 28-30, 2008**



# GOLDEN GATE FIELDS

WHERE THE BAY COMES TO PLAY

## Golden Gate Fields

Presents....

A fall "Salute to SIR" day at the races!!!

When: Friday October 10, 2008  
 Where: Golden Gate Fields Turf Club  
 Time: Please arrive @ 11:15 a.m.  
 Gates open at 11:00 a.m.  
 Buffet Hours: 11:30-2:30 p.m.  
 First race: 12:45 p.m.

Cost: \$23.00 per adult (Groups of 10+ required)  
 Includes: Valet parking (or parking for a bus), admission & reserved seating, daily racing program, buffet meal and a race named in honor of your SIR Branch!

**DON'T MISS YOUR CHANCE FOR A BIG WIN!!!**



For More Information Call **Michael Roberts** of Golden Gate Fields @ (510) 559-7380  
 Or email [mroberts@goldengatefields.com](mailto:mroberts@goldengatefields.com)

**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.

## 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

## SIR Happenings is published by the Information Systems Committee.

Dwight Sale,  
 Chairman/Publisher  
 Email: [dwight.sale@comcast.net](mailto:dwight.sale@comcast.net)

Send news and questions to:  
 Don MacGregor,  
 Executive Editor  
 Email: [donmac95@comcast.net](mailto:donmac95@comcast.net)

John Skarpelos,  
 Editor and Production Manager  
 Email: [john@mediaart.com](mailto:john@mediaart.com)