



# SIR HAPPENINGS

NOVEMBER 2008

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 4

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

## President Art's Column

I especially want to thank the Officers, Directors, Governors, and State Committees for their contributions during the year. Without your input and cooperation my work would have been much more difficult. It was a pleasure to work with all of you.

One of the most pleasant responsibilities of the State President is presenting Honorary Life Memberships and Century Sir Certificate awards. So far in 2008, 22 Honorary Life Memberships and 5 Century Sir Certificates were awarded. I am grateful for the assistance of Sir **David Reiser**, Vice President, Sir **Norman Whitsted**, Area 27 Governor, and Sir **Ronald Ross**, Area 15 Governor, for each presenting awards while I was recovering from pneumonia. Also, I want to express my appreciation to all those branches that invited me to attend their luncheon. Everyone made my visit a very pleasant experience.

This year the Growth and Management Committee was assigned the task of developing guidelines to assist branches in recruiting younger members. Sir **Walter Schick**, our recently appointed Chairman of Publicity, will be responsible for the development of policies and practices to add branches on print and electronic media. The work of both of these Committees is extremely important to the future growth of the Sir Organization. The success of these programs will require the participation of all Sirs.

One special perk of being the President was the thrill of my throwing out the first pitch at the San Francisco Giants game on August 21, 2008. Sir **Charles Roberts** and the San Francisco Office made this day a lasting memory for me. I was given the baseball I had thrown, a color photo of me in front of the pitcher's mound and on the scoreboard throwing the first pitch, a Giants' jersey and baseball cap. How good it is!

As my term comes to an end, I have special memories of the gracious and generous hospitality and splendid cooperation of all SIR members with whom I came in contact. I know the State Organization will be in very capable hands in 2009. I thank you all for the privilege and honor of being your State President and for these most pleasant memories. My best regards to all of you.

Art

## Damian Reynolds Branch 1, San Mateo

### 50th Anniversary Celebration

#### Bill Short, State Secretary

It was August 13, 2008 ...what a wonderful sunny day for a Branch celebration! The San Mateo Elks Lodge was the setting and over 170 Branch One members – and a few guests – were in attendance to celebrate 50 years of Sons in Retirement and the founding of Branch One. I was asked to attend.

Promptly at 12:00 noon, Big Sir **Bob Asselstine**, gained the attention of the luncheon attendees and brought the meeting of Branch One to order. "This is the 601st meeting of Branch One. Today's meeting begins year number 51 and we are here to celebrate!"

Following the pledge of allegiance to the flag and the singing of The Star Spangled Banner, Big Sir Asselstine thanked the Anniversary Committee – **Stan Angel, Ray Lang, George Riley** and **Floyd Afson**. Lunch was then served.

After the Anniversary Chocolate Cake was eaten, Big Sir Asselstine, introduced Honored Guests, Jerry Hill, a San Mateo County Supervisor and (me) ...Bill Short, State Secretary. Each spoke briefly, thanking and praising the efforts of Branch One and its active members. Congratulatory honors, in the form of framed certificates, were presented to the branch from the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and **Bob Asselstine** is shown holding the certificate from the San Mateo City Council. The speaker for the meeting was Dan Rusanowski – the San Jose Sharks radio announcer – who entertained the group with anecdotes and inside stories about the hockey team and its colorful players

The warmth and friendly atmosphere at this historic 601st meeting was quite impressive. To think that 50 years of SIR friendship and camaraderie had its beginning because Damian Reynolds and three of his retired friends said let's start a fun club.



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# SIR Annual Meeting



The new officers for 2009 are shown in the photo taken at the Annual Meeting a short time after being elected. From left to right Treasurer **Robert Mannell**, President **David Reiser**, Secretary **Gary Gruber**, Vice President **Floyd 'Buck' Kendrick**, Assistant Treasurer **Michael Berry** and Assistant Secretary **Harold 'Hal' Stephens**.

## Meeting Speakers



←  
**Jim Stedman** Area 2 Governor, shown in the photo at left, presented the findings on a study of SIR Membership Losses. Excerpts from his study are published on the next two pages.



←  
**Jim Petruk** Region 9 Director, shown in the photo at left, suggested that "Baby Boomers" should be the target audience for promoting sons in retirement.

→  
**Bob Edwards** Program Chairman of San Jose Branch 32, shown in the photo at right, discussed three key ideas for improving programs. Program Chairmen improve with longevity, advance notice of next three speakers helps recruitment, and meetings with Area and Region Program Chairmen are beneficial.



→  
**Eckart Sellinger** Chairman for Area Governor Training, shown in the photo at right, announced plans for the annual Governor Training session which was to be held in October.



# SIR Annual Meeting

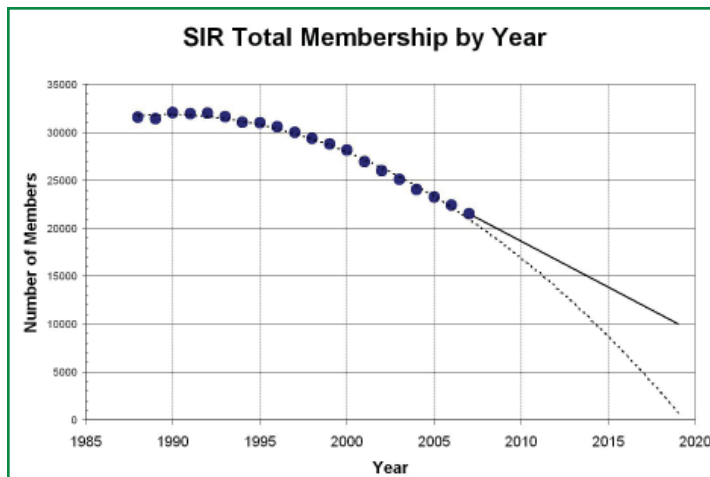
*Editor's Note: Jim Stedman, Dick DeVoe and Jeff Baily of Branch 146 (see photo at the end of this article) have done some excellent research on the reasons for the continuing decline in SIR membership. Jim Stedman presented their findings during a talk at the last SIR Annual Meeting. The following are some excerpts from his talk that should be of interest to all of us:*

## SIR Membership Losses— What we have learned

Jim Stedman

Area 2 Governor - Region 6 Director-elect

If we remain complacent, Sons In Retirement will continue to descend toward extinction in the next decade. In the chart below we have plotted the total membership of SIR over the period 1988-2007. Depending upon how we extrapolate this data we might predict that SIR will not be around in 10 years. We have learned what is causing membership loss and what needs to be done to avoid these dire predictions.



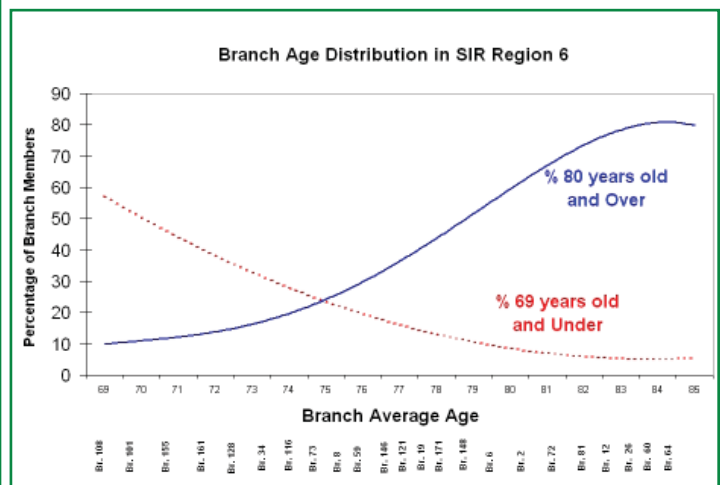
### A STUDY OF SIR MEMBERSHIP LOSSES

We studied the branch membership records for the 183 SIR branches that received charters. **We found that SIR branches have been losing members for most of its 50 year history.** In the first 34 years this fact was hidden because new members in new and growing branches exceeded members lost by existing branches. In the last 16 years members lost in existing branches have exceeded the new members in new and growing branches. The rate of total SIR membership loss has increased annually. It was 4% in 2007, and the trend is continuing in 2008. **Membership loss is so widespread that 93% of SIR branches now have fewer members than in their peak membership year. Twenty-seven branches have failed – all within the last 15 years—and many more are near failure.**

In December 2007, we studied the 23 branches in Region 6. The cause of branch membership loss is best described by the former Big Sir of one of the 23 branches, a typical branch that has lost members. He was asked why his branch had 89 members at the end of 2007 after having a peak of 267 in 1990, and why it has been unable to return to its larger membership size. He answered: **“My branch used to be vigorous with a long waiting list. Leadership did not stress recruitment. Fewer and fewer members were inducted each year. Membership became old, activities diminished, and the branch started losing members.** Some members became dissatisfied for various reasons and left the branch. Branch membership has just continued to get older and lose members. Attempts to stop the losses have been unsuccessful. The advanced average age of the membership is the main reason why enough new members can't be attracted.”

**There are three essential lessons to be learned from this typical branch.** The **first** is that the leaders of branches that are healthy and can attract new members need to continually and aggressively recruit and induct a good supply of new members and resolve any issues that may result from branch growth. The **second** is that an insufficient supply of new members will result in an increase in branch average age and a decrease in the percentage of younger members. The branch will begin to lose members because it is less attractive to both its existing and potential members. The **third** is that once branch membership gets too old it is nearly impossible for branch leaders to attract new members and branch failure will be the likely result.

The branches in Region 6 vary in branch average age from a low of 69 as shown on the left side of the following chart to a high of 85 on the right side of the chart. This chart demonstrates that the percentage of



# SIR Annual Meeting

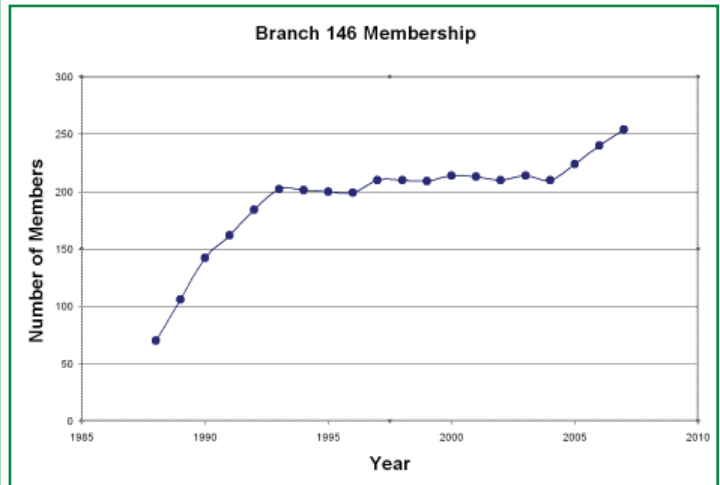
younger members 69 and under decreases and that the percentage of members 80 and over increases as branch average age increases.

**There is a correlation between branch average age and membership loss.** The 6 branches with the youngest average ages on the left side of the chart have lost an average of about 12% of their membership from their peak membership year. The 6 branches with the oldest average ages on the right side of the chart have lost an average of about 63% of their memberships from their peak membership year. The startling fact is that the branches listed on the right side of the chart were at one time on the left side. The reason for the movement from left to right is that once a branch gets to a “comfortable” size in the minds of its branch leaders, aggressive recruiting is curtailed and then branch average age increases because there aren’t enough new, and often younger, members inducted annually.

**It is possible to stop increases in branch average age and prevent membership loss. Branch 146, the Pleasant Hill Branch, is an example.** It was chartered in 1988 and grew rapidly to 200 members in 1993 at which time membership was capped and a waiting list started. The membership cap, with one increase to 210, remained until the end of 2005 after being in place for 12 years. During those years inductions were limited to replacement of members lost to attrition. Attrition was low and branch average age increased each year until reaching 76.2 in late 2005. Why? Because not enough new younger members were inducted to offset the annual aging of the existing branch members.

Rather than allowing branch average age to continue increasing and risk losing members, membership policies were changed in late 2005. The branch was allowed to grow to its current size of about 265 members by inducting those on the waiting list and by recruiting new members at the rate of about 10% of branch membership annually. Since the end of 2005 the branch average age has remained constant at 76.2.

The “New Member Relations” Coordinator helps new members integrate into the branch by assisting them in becoming involved in the more than 30 branch activities and events available for members. The “New Activities” Coordinator helps to continually add additional activities and more groups within existing activities. Member retention is high. The



long-term prospects for Branch 146 are bright so long as current recruitment and induction rates and member retention programs are maintained.

**New members are the life-blood of any organization.** This is especially true of SIR branches because we all join at about age 65 and then get older too quickly. **Our branches get older right along with us if we don't induct new members at the rate of about 10% of branch membership annually**, e.g. 20 new members annually for a branch of 200.

Nearly all new members are recruited by active members. Branch leaders need to continually remind and encourage active members, especially new active members, to bring guests to lunch and sponsor new members. Sponsors of new members need to be publicly congratulated at luncheon meetings. Membership contests with rewards as incentives for sponsoring new members are important.

**Branch membership losses can and must be stopped** in those branches that are still able to attract a good supply of new members. **Vibrant, growing branches are exciting and fun... declining branches are not!**



Dick DeVoe, Jim Stedman and Jeff Baily (L to R)

# Sirs in the News

**Twin Peaks-Portola Branch 25, South San Francisco**

## A Super Senior

Nick Fesunoff, Bulletin Editor

Region Five Director **“Buck” Kendrick** honored Sir **Petar Lucich** with a Super Senior Award at a Branch 25 luncheon in August (see picture). Petar turned 95 this year.

He was born on August 12, 1913 of Serbian parents. He began school knowing only a few words of English, but thanks to understanding teachers, he prevailed. In fact, he graduated as Class President from Mission High School in 1931.

Petar enjoys reminiscing about sports highlights, such as seeing Babe Ruth appear at the Recreation Ballpark and he was present at the prizefight when Max Baer knocked-out his opponent, Frankie Campbell, who died as a result of a powerful right hand punch.

In 1942, Petar was drafted into the Army Air Corps and later on – because of his fluency in the Serbo-Croatian language – he was transferred to San Francisco and assigned to the Yugoslav delegation as a translator at the organizational meeting of the United Nations.



.....  
**De Anza Branch 153, Sunnyvale**

## Super Senior

Bob Marcy, Bulletin Editor

Region 7 Director **Gary Pelton** (right) is shown presenting a Super Senior Award to Sir **Bob Waugh**. Bob first joined Branch 62 in October 1976, and then was one of the committee members that organized



Branch 153 in 1988. He became a Charter Member of Branch 153 when the Branch was chartered in August of 1989. Bob is also an Honorary Life Member.

Editors Note: Recently, Region 9 Director Jim Petruk, offered a personal cash reward for the best three Baby Boomer profile stories in his region. The best definition of a Baby Boomer that Happenings could find defines a Baby Boomer as a person who was born during the Post-World War II baby boom between 1946 and late 1953. This makes them 55 to 62 years old in this year of 2008. The contest winners were: First place, Vito Kapeckas, of Branch 37, who won \$75---the second place prize of \$50, went to Jim Quintal from Branch 11---and the third place winner of \$25 was Pete Politi, from Branch 37. SIR Happenings is pleased to publish the winning profile of Vito Kapeckas.

**Placer Gold Branch 37, Auburn**

## Baby Boomer Profile

Don Walker, Branch 37 Profiler

Baby Boomer, **“Vito” Kapeckas**, entered this world as Vytautas Kapeckas, a full-blooded Lithuanian. His parents immigrated to the U.S. following WW 2, after experiencing occupation by the Nazi’s and then the Russians. Vito still speaks the Lithuanian language. He completed all of his schooling in Lowell, Massachusetts and graduated from the University of Massachusetts as a plastics engineer.



He interviewed with Hewlett Packard and accepted his first position with HP in Sunnyvale. HP then transferred him to Corvallis, Oregon to work on designing the first ink jet printers. Ten years in Oregon was enough for Vito and when an opportunity came to work in Roseville, he transferred there and completed 30+ years with the company.

Vito has the distinction of being the youngest Sir in Branch 37. When asked why he joined Sons In Retirement, he says that the then Big Sir **Mike Mickey** simply talked him into it. He didn’t have the slightest idea what the organization was all about, but came to a luncheon as Mike’s guest anyway. He says that when he was asked to sing “God Bless America” he was embarrassed because he had not sung that song for years and had a hard time remembering the words, but the “golden-throated” song leader, **George Williams**, helped him with that!! Vito says that he really enjoys SIR, and says that it is kind of like belonging to a Fraternity. He also says that he thinks that SIR should do more advertising because he feels that many prospective members – who might want to join – don’t know the organization exists.

# Sirs in the News

**Pony Express Branch 69, Sacramento**

## **Good Going Warren**

**Frank Franzago, Bulletin Editor**

At the SIR Annual Meeting in August, Sir **Warren Senegal** (in the picture) was presented with an Honorary Life Member Award by President Art Pufford. Warren has served as Branch Big Sir, Area Governor, Regional Director, Chairman of two State Committees and has served as a special advisor to the State President. Good going, Warren ...the award was certainly well deserved!



**Sierra Hills Branch 79, Auburn**

## **A Very Active HLM**

**Dennis Beverage, Little Sir**

Sir **Jimmy Pierce**, the former Big Sir of Branch 79, is shown in the picture receiving an Honorary Life Membership Award and congratulations from current Big Sir **Al Camilleri** (left), and Area 33 Governor **Ken Newman** (right).



Jimmy Pierce has served Branch 79 as Golf Chairman, Membership Coordinator, both Little and Big Sir, as well as a member of the Branch Board of Directors. He also has served on the Branch nominating committee and was instrumental in helping setup the Branch web site. In addition to all that, Jimmy has maintained the membership database and the Branch Roster and is currently the Branch special events photographer.

All in all, Jimmy Pierce has accumulated 15 years of SIR membership and leadership that personifies the SIR Mission Statement.

**Stanislaus Branch 103, Modesto**

## **Honored for Long-Time Service**

**Don Reed, Bulletin Editor**

Sir **Charles "Chuck" Behr**, on the left in the picture, and Sir **Ted Detton**, on the right, were honored by Stanislaus Branch 103 at a July luncheon. They were given framed plaques, honoring them for their long service to the Branch, both as officers of the branch and serving as golf chairmen through the years.

Ted Detton was golf chairman and also a director of the Branch prior to his being stricken with cancer. He gave it a valiant effort and never waived in his will to overcome, but sadly, he passed away in August.

Our Thursday golf tournament was the idea of Golf Chairman Chuck Behr back in January of 1998. The theme was to have fun and to mix with other golfers from our branch as well as two other branches. Chuck's tournament was a stroke type format, but he also mixed in other formats to keep things interesting. Its design was perfect for what it was intended – to get more golfers participating – even if for only nine holes. Even though Chuck is in ill health, the Thursday tournament still takes place every week (year around) with volunteers from Branch 103 and 144.



**Bayshore Silver Anniversary Branch 118, San Mateo**

## **90 & Going Strong**

**Jim Mahon, Big Sir**

The latest 90-year old members of Branch 118 were recently honored at a Branch luncheon by Region 5 Director **Buck Kendrick**. On the left, in the picture, is Sir **John Bauer**, in the center is Sir **Jack Mish** and Buck Kendrick is on the right.



## State Golf

### Dave Betts, Chairman State Golf Committee

As 2008 draws to a close, we are winding up a successful year of golfing. Most of the golf tournaments conducted by the State Golf Committee have been well attended. We have had a few disappointments with several of our fall tournaments. With cancelled flights, fuel surcharges, and add-on baggage charges, the long distance travel events have really suffered.

The Cabo San Lucas trip for October suffered when Alaska Air Lines cancelled their direct flight out of Sacramento causing us to lose 50 passengers because they either could not get on the flight out of San Francisco, or chose to cancel.

The Princess Cruise to the Mexican Riviera in November has only 80 passengers with 34 golfers. The ship is currently sold out with other passengers, so, we can't get any more cabins for those members who have waited to make their decision to participate.

We started the year in Las Vegas with a well-attended tournament and played three courses that were new to our members. We played both of the Angel Park Courses and The Legacy. For 2009, we have contracted with the Suncoast Hotel and Casino and will again play the two courses at Angel Park and in addition, we will also play Aliante. This hotel is located very close to the Angel Park Golf Courses. The dates for Las Vegas will be April 26th through May 1st, 2009. The Suncoast has a very nice website, [www.suncoastcasino.com](http://www.suncoastcasino.com), which you may wish to view for a preview of the hotel. We are only planning one week in Las Vegas this year while trying to rebuild interest for this location.

The three weeks in Reno, at Circus-Circus, were all filled in 2008. We will be considering a three week contract with Circus-Circus for 2009 at our meeting on October 15th. The golf courses being considered are Wolf Run, Arrow Creek, and Lakeridge. Tentative dates are: The first week will be June 1st–5th, 2009, the second week will be June 8th–12th, 2009 and the third week will be June 15th–19th, 2009.

The State Team Championship in August at Poppy Ridge Golf Course was again successful. You may view the winners on the [www.sirstategolf.com](http://www.sirstategolf.com) website.

The Fall Classic at the Santa Ynez Valley Marriott was well attended following a declining interest in 2007 and most likely will be considered as a venue for 2009.

The State Individual Championship is November 3rd and 4th at Poppy Hills. The Open Play portion is filling up pretty well.

To keep up with what is happening with Sir State Golf, please visit our website. In planning for 2009,

## State Bowling

### William "Coop" Cooper, State Bowling Chairman

Hello bowlers. This will be my last column for SIR Happenings, because in January Sir **Carl Elvik**, will become the next State Bowling Committee Chairman. I will still be on the committee, so if I can help any of you SIR Bowlers feel free to contact me.

If you did not make the tournament in Reno, there was a lot of good bowling. In division 1, there were 98 bowlers. **Art Tourtilot**, Branch 112, had a scratch 686 and in Division 2, **Gary Bennett**, Branch 59, had a scratch 623. Thanks to **David Wells**, Branch 29, some 274 bowlers participated, also 74 ladies bowled.

In leaving you – just remember bowling is like smoking – they both are habit forming, except smoking is bad for your health!



SIR President **Art Pufford** is shown throwing out the first ball on All Sir Day at AT&T Park where Giants played the Florida Marlins in August.

the committee will most likely be considering venues that can be reached by automobile travel. We will try to keep it both interesting and challenging for our membership.

Due to the three-year term limit on Chairmanship of the State Golf Committee, this will be my last article for SIR Happenings. It has been both a pleasure and a challenge to serve in this capacity.

# News from the Branches

## San Francisco Branch 4

### **Walking & Learning**

**Warren Lee, Branch Member**

Walking is good for you ...so, learning while walking should be even better! Right? Branch 4 tested that proposition by having a walk last July through San Francisco's Chinatown, led by Sir **Warren Lee** (see picture). Warren is

also a guide with City Guides, which is the largest walking tour organization in San Francisco and has about 200 all volunteer guides.

Our group of 18 met at Portsmouth Square on a beautiful, gorgeous day in the city. It was a great day to walk the area and learn about its people and culture. As we slowly walked through Chinatown's streets and alleys, we paused at some of the interesting places to learn about their background. We went into a Taoist temple, but decided not go into the fortune cookie factory because the free samples would spoil our appetite for lunch.

To summarize, we met at 10:00 ...walked about a dozen blocks ...ate a tasty lunch ...and were finished by 1:00. It was fun, educational, and good exercise. Yes walking and learning go together!



## Mount Diablo Branch 8, Walnut Creek

### **Low Cost Wine Finders**

**Walter Schick, Bulletin Editor**

Branch 8 has a serious wine tasting group that searches for good wines under \$15. The frugal "Wine Finders" even use the same glass for all wine tasting, making sure that there is nothing left before the next taste.

The Wine Finders recently found out that a member of Branch 8 owns a winery specializing in estate grown and bottled wines when we were hosted by Sir **Joe Karg** and his wife Judy at their Alamo Winery. Eight Sirs and seven spouses gathered on the Karg's patio to taste eight cabernet sauvignons and indulge in assorted hors d'oeuvres (see picture). The night was beautiful, with a full moon looking down on the festivities.



Highlights of the gathering included Ron and Judy Smith's winning cab. The "best buy" went to incoming Little Sir **Jim Sowell's** selection of Evil Cab from Australia and a Costco selection for only \$8.00 or so. The big loser was Derek and Pauline Southern's Thudernut Cab ...yes, that's right, Thudernut! They got it from friends who are planning to market it in the next couple of years, but our group decided it was a long way from prime time. The evening was highlighted by a tour of the winery, including the production and bottling operation and the wine aging cellars. Winemaker, Joe, has really figured out how to make this a low-cost, low-frills operation ...we understand he's even looking for Sirs with big feet to aid in the crushing operations. The nice evening was also graced by a Hollywood celebrity, Ginny Schick – anyway she sure looked like one wearing her snazzy new sunglasses.

## Mission Branch 32, San Jose

### **A Beautiful Setting for a Picnic**

**Dan Roberts, Bulletin Editor**

Our picnic was held at Saratoga Springs and 73 people attended, including Region 7 Director **Gary**



**Pelton** and his wife Carolyn, and our area 20 Governor **Fred Mollerus** and his wife Dot.

The food served at the June picnic was barbecued chicken

or Santa Maria Steak with salad, chili, French bread, vanilla dessert cups and beer, wine, and coffee. For entertainment, we played bingo (see picture) and bocce ball. There were also many door prizes and lots of good fellowship!



# News from the Branches

## Amador Branch 96, Jackson

### Catfishing Champ

Paul Murphy, Publicity Chairman

Branch 96 member Sir **Sam Mazzariello** brought his “Catfishing Rig” (see picture) to the September branch luncheon and demonstrated to the fishing club, and many other members, how to catch catfish. Sam is considered – by many – to be the catfishing champ of this area. When he is not at his home in Jackson, Sam can be found at his summer place on Lake Pardee, one of the many fishing lakes in Amador County.



Sam certainly stands out among the membership of the Branch. He is the Bocce Ball organizer at the annual lady’s day picnics and also plans many of the golf tournaments for the 70-member golf club. Sam is the kind of guy that makes this Branch one of the best!

## LaMorinda Branch 171, Moraga

### Art Tour

Bill Sumner & Dick Curry, Branch members

In September, 40 members of Branch 171, and spouses, toured the Hearst Art Gallery at St. Mary’s College in Moraga. The Gallery show was all about Carl Sammons’ California Expressionist Landscapes. Sammons (1883-1968) gained fame as a Bay Area landscape painter because of his remarkable color sense and drawing mastery. The exhibit consisted of forty-nine rarely seen paintings and thirty-eight pastels. Most of the works were on loan from Donna Walsh Sumner, the artist’s niece and wife of former Branch 171 Big Sir Bill Sumner. Donna conducted the tour which was well received by all the participants. Shown in the picture discussing the exhibit are, from left to right: Donna Sumner, Leslie Lynch, Stu Knudsen and his wife, Verna.



## Miwok Branch 134, San Rafael

### Wandering Fisherman

John Crawford, Area 6 Governor

In June, 11 members of Branch 134 gathered at Flaming Gorge, Utah to harass trout and they were quite successful ...25 fish per boat per day was normal. No fish were harmed, so PETA back off! – catch and release was the program for harassment. The 11 fly fishing Sirs were: Sir **Larry Wade**, Sir **Fred Holmes**, Sir **Larry Lack**, Sir **Brian Stompe**, Sir **Alan Dunham**, Sir **Richard Grosser**, Sir **Bill Cline**, Sir **Dave Hopper**, Sir **Tom Telfer**, Sir **Bill Walker**, and Sir **John Crawford** all shown in the picture.

After a week on the Green River, the group moved on to Peekaboo, Idaho, where they wet their flies on Silver Creek, and the Big Hole River. After two days there, the next adventure was the Boise River. After having some exciting adventure on the Boise, the caravan’s next destination was the Owahyee River in Oregon ...here, Sir Brian Stompe has a story to tell. The fish that were caught on the Owahyee were in the 20 inch size ...not many, but big! The wandering fishermen then moved on to the Crooked River near Prineville, Oregon. Unbeknownst to the group, the forest service had shocked the river two days before their arrival. Guess what? ...the fish weren’t biting, because they were convalescing. Their next location was the Fall River, and the last stop was the Williamson River ...good fishing, but poor catching at the last two locations as well.

It was a great time for all! ...If you wish to participate in the fly club, the group meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at Larry Wade’s abode.



# Branch Summer Parties

## Sunnyvale Branch 62

### Another Great Picnic

Lee Rogers, Bulletin Editor

Our third annual Lady's Day Picnic was held in June at the Ortega Park in Sunnyvale. The weather was ideal – at about 80 degrees – with a light wind from the west.

Fifty-five Sirs and 55 guests attended the nice affair. Lunch was served at about noon, after the pledge to the flag and opening prayer.

The menu was various hors d'oeuvres, followed by barbecued pork loin, chicken, salad, garlic bread, coffee and bottled water. Many chose to bring their own wine for the occasion.

The grand finale was ice cream and there were also cakes and cookies brought by some of the attendees.

The food was great, as well as plentiful, and the fellowship was just super as Sir **Ernie Huesby** and Sir **Henry Crossfield** show in the picture. All and all ...another great picnic!



## Snowline Branch 113, Pollock Pines

### A Picnic in the Pines

Larry Folts, Bulletin Editor

Big Sir **Larry Leibnitz** is shown standing in the pine forest during the Branch 113 picnic that was attended by close to 100 Sirs and their guests. Everyone enjoyed a great barbecue lunch and there were some terrific prizes that were donated by Branch members and some very generous local merchants.



## Westgate Branch 125, San Jose

### Lot's to do at this Picnic

Daryl Jones, Bulletin Editor

Branch 125 held its annual Barbeque in July. The picnic was preceded by a fun-filled, 9-hole golf tournament that attracted 33 golfers. The picnic itself had 125 people in attendance, including 38 wives and other guests. Games included horseshoes, cribbage, and "Montana Golf." It's not surprising that the highlight of the event was the good food! The menu included tri-tip steak, baked beans, Cole slaw, Italian sausage, French bread, chips, and drinks. A fun day for everyone!

## Murphys Branch 140, Murphys

### First Friday at the Park

Dave McCarroll, Branch Member

The "Shades of Swing" played to quite an enthusiastic crowd last August in Murphy's Park. I happen to be the only Sir in the musical group, but there were a lot of other Sirs in the crowd, enjoying picnicking and wine as we retirees often do up here in Calaveras County. The organizer of the "First Friday at the Park" is our bandleader, Matt Cullen, who is also our tenor singer. Matt is pictured in the center ...I'm the white haired guy on the left with the violin. On that day, we had the biggest and most receptive crowd we have ever had. After the audience had enjoyed their picnic and wine, they all started dancing to our music from the 40s to the 60s. When it was time for us to finish playing, they pleaded with us not to stop. There must have been 30 couples out there and we just had to go through the first 1/3 of our program again until it was dark.

So what do they say about fun. The money we made was nothing – the experience was priceless!



# Happenings Travel Bulletin

## December 2008

December 20, 2008-January 3, 2008  
**New Year's in San Antonio**

Trip includes r/t air, 4 nights at the Hilton Hotel, New Year's Eve gala event and numerous sightseeing tours, including a boat cruise down the Paseo del Rio and a tour of the Alamo. The price per person is \$1440 PPDO. Offered by Branch 6 Travel. Call **Lou Pagni** at 510-276-5025.

## January - February 2009

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



Cruise is on board the Diamond Princess, with a pre-cruise stay at Novotel Darling Harbor. Ports of call are: Melbourne, Hobart (Tasmania), Fjordland National Park, Dunedin, Christchurch, Tauranga, and Auckland. Prices

range from \$4190 to \$5470 PPDO including r/t air. Offered by Branches 101 and 121 Travel. Call **Werner Schlapfer** at 925-443-8291.

January 26-30, 2009  
**New York Theatre Tour**

Tour includes r/t air, four nights at the Edison Hotel, dinner at Tavern on the Green and Langhans, plus a full breakfast daily. Also included are three Broadway shows and a 90-minute interactive session with an actor. Cost is \$2565 PPDO. Offered by Branch 146 Travel. Call **Gary Schaub** at 925-938-5454.

February 23-March 5, 2009  
**Sights & Sounds of South America**

A wonderful South American Adventure starting with Buenos Aires where we'll see all the beautiful sights and sounds. Then we fly north to Iguassu Falls, the widest falls in the world. We next fly to Rio de Janeiro and visit all the famous sights. Cost is \$4069 PPDO, including r/t air. Offered by Branch 63 Travel. Call **Bill Howard** at 530-342-3368.

## 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 \$2743 PPDO. Offered by Area 6 Travel. Call **Henry Puccinelli** at 415-457-3990.

March 14-22, 2009

### Ft Lauderdale to Ft Lauderdale

Visit six different ports, including: Princess Cays, St. Thomas, St Maarten, Grand Turk, and Great Bahama Bank. Prices range from \$1940 to \$2350 PPDO, which covers all costs. Offered by Branch 143 Travel. Call **Bill Torrens** at 209-667-0244.

March 19-24, 2009

### Spirit of Washington D.C.



The trip includes the Monuments, World War II Memorial, National Gallery of Art, National Museum of the American Indian and more. This 5-day trip includes 4 breakfasts and 3 dinners. Cost is \$1,799 PPDO. Offered by Branch 44 & 78 Travel. Call **Jerry Mills** at 661-325-5951.

## April - May 2009

April 12-26, 2009

### Exotic Panama Canal Cruise

Enjoy 14 unforgettable days and nights on the Coral Princess. Some of the stops are: Aruba -- Caratagena, Columbia -- the Panama Canal -- Puntarenas, Costa Rica -- San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua -- Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala -- and Huatulco, Mexico. Prices range from \$2869 to \$3469 PPDO and include r/t air. Offered by Area 14 Travel. Call **Pete Lepisto** at 209-948-2265.

April 14-21, 2009

### Savannah & Charleston

Seven nights including Hilton Head, Jekyll Island, Jacksonville, St. Augustine and St. Simon Island. We will be touring the gardens of beautiful southern plantations and much, much more! This will be a Spring Time extravaganza of Azaleas & Dogwoods and each day we will experience the best this beautiful and venerable area has to offer. Price of \$2508 includes r/t air from the Bay Area. Early bookings will receive a savings. Offered by Branch 153 Travel. Call **Ralph Hunt** at 650-967-8467.

May 24-June 3, 2009

### Alaska Cruise

Ten night inside passage cruise on the Sea Princess. Ports of call include: Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway, and Victoria B.C. Prices range from \$1456 to \$2373, including r/t air from San Francisco. Offered by Branch 63 Travel. Call **George Smith** at 530-342-3133.

## Travel Chairmen

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

Don MacGregor at: [donmac95@comcast.net](mailto:donmac95@comcast.net)

# News from the Branches

## 50th Anniversary Celebration

Continued from Page 1

After the meeting in San Mateo, I drove back to my mountain home in Pollock Pines and began to delve into the SIR Secretary files to find out more about the “early days” of Sons in Retirement. In a document entitled “A Brief History of Sons in Retirement” prepared by H. Gordon Beesley – the SIR President in 1984 – I found a wealth of historical background material on the formation of our organization. SIR Beesley tells of the first real meeting as a club that met at the Clairmar Restaurant in San Mateo on July 23, 1958. At this meeting there was much talk about operations – structure and By-Laws – and the rules and regulations needed for a successful club – there were nine retirees in attendance.

It was not until the next meeting on August 12, 1958, that the founders selected a name for the group. Damian Reynolds read a list of possible names for the club that included the following: “Faithful Old Fellows,” “Young Oldsters” and “Restful Sons.” They agreed on “Sons In Retirement” ...thank goodness they didn’t choose one of the suggestions – “Honey Dew’s.” And so, SIR was baptized.

By December 1958, the group decided to have a news-sheet or bulletin. Damian Reynolds was the designated Editor and Volume 1, No.1 – named, “Yes Sir” – was published – that was in February, 1959.

The wealth of information about the expansion of Branch One that first year included: incorporation on February 11, 1959 and the first roster printed with 108 members listed, including each member’s name, address, phone number and previous business affiliation. In March, the Executive Committee arranged for the first liability insurance coverage.

The Club’s activities during the first year expanded. The first tours and trips were arranged. The first guest speaker was invited to the August 1959 luncheon. The first Holiday party and first opportunity for wives to participate as guests took place in December. Several articles appeared in the “San Mateo Times” and “The San Francisco Chronicle” publicizing SIR. As interest in SIR grew, membership increased to 230 members by the end of December 1959 Sons in Retirement was off and running!!

Congratulations to you, Branch One!! We wish you continued success and more fun times as you begin year number 51 ...“Cock-a-Doodle-Do.”

## 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**

**Bidwell Branch 110, Chico**

## Wild Shirt Day

**Jim Kirks, Big Sir**

Branch 110 held another Wild Shirt Day at our August luncheon. There were four anonymous judges that scanned all 194 men present at the luncheon to determine who should receive the \$20 cash prizes.

The winners were, left to right Sir **Skip Reager**, who glowed in the most colorful shirt, Sir **Bob Kirkman**, who sported the most original shirt, Sir



**Dennis Wilson**, who was attired in the most beautiful shirt, and Sir **Will Stull**, who wore the most unusual/unique shirt. Big Sir **Jim Kirks** can be seen in the background standing at the podium.

**Junction City Branch 40, Roseville**

## A Veterans Poem

**Ted Ball, Big Sir**

These veterans standing tall  
who answered Uncle Sam’s call  
to you we owe so much,  
for you were beyond nepotism’s touch.  
Your religion, position, or parent’s worth  
did not give you a special berth.  
You sought no deferment request  
for you were our nation’s best.  
You completed your mission  
without any AWOL or indecision.  
Whether you are Red or Blue  
today, all SIRS salute you.

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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@mediart.com](mailto:john@mediart.com)