



# SIR HAPPENINGS

FALL 2011

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 3

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

## President Bob's Column

As we approach the end of 2011, I would like to take this opportunity to review what we tried to accomplish this year and note our successes and talk briefly about an area where we were not quite so successful.



In my first Happenings column this year, I asked you to *Be A Friend - Bring A Friend* to help SIR grow and prosper. Many of you responded and the number of guests and, ultimately, new members has increased significantly over the previous years.

Another significant improvement in membership is the result of many, but not all, Big

Sirs and their BECs capturing and using the information in the Form 27 to improve their Branch. That has given each Big Sir a valuable tool to help manage Branch growth and when used, has been extremely successful.

Another very positive and important trend this year has been the overall increase in activities available to our members. Many branches have started new activities on their own, while some have combined with other branches to sponsor joint activities that neither would be able to support independently. It is this working together among Branches that will allow us to continue to offer more and more varied activities to our members and allow us to increase the interest of potential new members.

Exactly how well have we done with membership this year? We have inducted 1627 new members through end of September. That is an annual rate of 11.4% of our membership statewide. We lost 2203 members in that same time period. The net loss of 576 members is somewhat misleading due to the fact that we have asked Branches to clean up their rosters and remove members that were, in some cases, incorrectly shown as active members for years. By making the rosters more accurately reflect the true active member count, it will be easier to assess the true membership picture in the future, but it also had a negative short-term effect for this year. In addition, 212 of the members lost were in Branches that closed this year.

## Central Marin Branch 122, Fairfax

### DeLeon Honored with an HLM Irv Golden, Big Sir

On October 20th our Branch celebrated the awarding of an Honorary Life Membership to long time member, Ray DeLeon. Shown from left to right in the picture are President, Bob Mannel presenting the award, accompanied by Region 10 Director Don Davis, HLM recipient Ray DeLeon, and Area 6 Governor Jim Flippo.

In accepting the award Ray talked about his many wonderful years with SIR as Little Sir, Big Sir, and Area Governor. His final remarks were addressed to a group of "young," new members of Branch 122, challenging them to build our branch with more members just like themselves.



The one area that has been a bit of a disappointment is the lack of participation in the leadership roles throughout SIR. I still see and hear about unmanned vacancies at the Branch, Area, and Regional levels this year and on into 2012. I again ask all of you to consider sharing your experience and expertise to help SIR remain a healthy and vital organization. Without volunteers, there is no SIR.

We have done some of the difficult things that were necessary for our future and I believe that the remainder of this year and on into 2012 will reward our efforts and SIR is fully capable of showing true growth in the next one or two years. It is due to the efforts of all of you who have worked hard to make that happen. Thank you and keep up the good work.

*BE A FRIEND - BRING A FRIEND*

# Sirs in the News

## Mount Diablo Branch 8, Concord/Walnut Creek

### Our Oldest Member

#### Derek Southern, Big Sir

Nick Aviani is the oldest member of Branch 8. He was the Big Sir in 1974 and was honored with an HLM in 1995. He recently celebrated his 95th birthday, but because health problems make it difficult for him to walk, he hasn't been a regular attendee at our luncheons this year.

Therefore I visited him at his home in Orinda and presented the Super Senior Certificate to him... see picture.

He told me how, in his early days as a Sir, members wore coats and ties to luncheons, and that their biggest problems were the quality of the food, the service, and parking. He chuckled as he said this... some things never seem to change!



## De Anza Branch 153, Sunnyvale

### 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday

#### Bob Marcy, Bulletin Editor

President Bob Mannell is shown presenting a Century Certificate to Bob Waugh at the August luncheon. Bob reached his 100th birthday on July 30th.

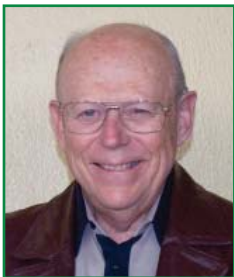
Back in 1986 Bob was instrumental in forming Branch 153 and later on, he was awarded an Honorary Life Membership in recognition of his exceptional and extraordinary service to the Branch.



## Spotlight on State Officers

### Rich Dettmer - Vice President Elect

Our Vice President elect is a very active individual both in SIR and in civic activities. He currently is in his second year as Region 9 Director and also serves on the Training, G&M, and RV State Committees. Two years ago he was Area 15 Governor and prior to that served as Big Sir and Little Sir of Peach Bowl Branch 45. Throughout the years he has been an active member of his Branch serving on the BEC and other committees. Even now, in addition to his State positions, he keeps active in



Branch 45 by maintaining the Branch Roster and the Form 27.

Rich graduated from the University of San Francisco and the Cal State masters program, majoring in public administration. He also graduated from the FBI Academy. He retired from the Hayward Police Department after 38 years in law enforcement, having served in just about every position from policeman to Chief of Police.

He has been an active member in a number of organizations and to name a just few: Rotary President – Yuba City Personnel Board President – American Legion member – American Red Cross Disaster Chairman and he also is an Army veteran.

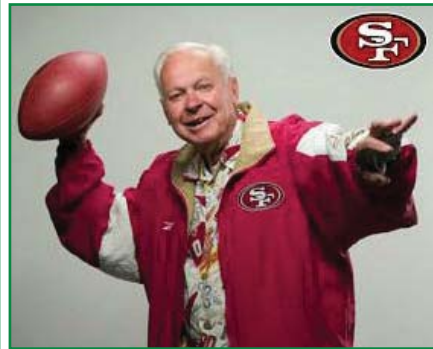
Rich is married to his wife, Jill, and they have two children and three grandchildren and have lived in Yuba City for the past 12 years. He likes fishing, target shooting, gardening, and RVing.

Quite a resume for our VP Elect!

## Miwok Branch 134, Novato

### Our Very Loyal 49er Fan

#### Dick Crocker, Bulletin Editor



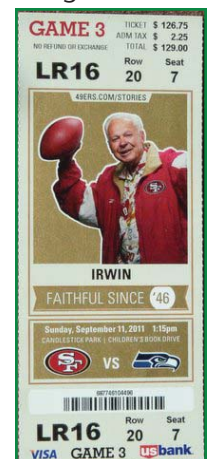
Season ticket holders were treated to Irwin Herlihy's photo on their opening day tickets on Sunday, September 11th (see ticket picture below). Irwin started going to 49er games in 1946 and this ticket honors his attending 600

consecutive home games! Last Year he was recognized as "Fan of the Game" and interviews with him can be seen on the 49er website:

<http://foreverfaithful.49ers.com/#/fans/card/2>

Irwin has noticed a "slight" increase in ticket prices during his time ...from \$2.50 at Kezar Stadium to the current \$129, but at least he now gets choice seats. Irwin has programs from all the games he has attended, which -- according to the 49er organization -- is a more complete collection than they have.

Since he didn't miss a game when he lived in Sacramento for five years, he expects his record will continue even if they move to Santa Clara.





# Sirs in the News

## Mount Diablo Branch 8, Concord/Walnut Creek

### Slow Golfers find New Member

Derek Southern, Big Sir

Hal Sampson learned about SIR slowly! He played golf at Boundary Oak in Walnut Creek, and was always behind a bunch of old guys who played very carefully... but SLOWLY! When he asked about the group, he learned they were Sirs so he decided to join them, perhaps to speed up their game!

He joined Branch 8 at the young age of 85, and at the October luncheon Hal was awarded a Senior Certificate by Area 2 Governor Ron Smith, recognizing his 90th birthday. At that same meeting, Hal sponsored his son, Bob, for membership... how often does that occur? In the picture from left to right are: son Bob Sampson, Hal Sampson, and Area Governor Ron Smith.

Hal is a native Californian, and since retirement has visited 47 countries with his wife Helen. On his numerous trips, he has played golf on 170 different golf courses in 14 countries. His most vivid memory comes from a South African trip when he watched a cheetah stalk, chase, and kill an impala... luckily for us, our luncheons are more predictable and gentle affairs!



## Stanislaus Branch 103, Modesto

### Feather in the Cap Award

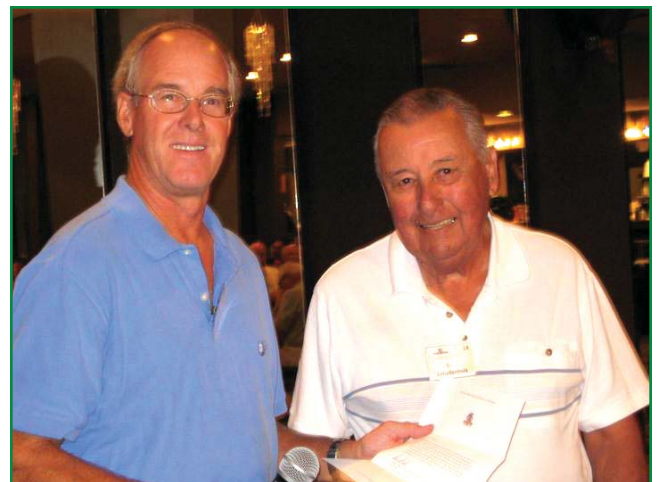
Don Reed, Bulletin Editor

During the August luncheon, Ken Leuenhagen was awarded a "Feather in the Cap." In the picture on the left, wearing an Aloha shirt, Ken is shown receiving the award from Golf Chairman Bob Manning. Ken shot a score of 74 at age 75, which he accomplished at the Dryden Golf Course in Modesto.



Lon Loudermilk, age 82, shot a 77 at the Creekside Golf Course in Modesto. He was presented his "Feather in the Cap" at the September luncheon by Golf Chairman Bob Manning, who is wearing a blue shirt in the picture on the right.

Only 10 of these awards were presented last year out of the 5,100 SIR golfers statewide... quite an accomplishment for one Branch to have two within one year.



Editor's Note: Happenings asked Don Dill to explain this award program. Don is the Area 33 Governor and also administers the Feather in the Cap program.

*The Feather In the Cap Award was adopted back in 2003 and has been growing ever since. The State Golf Committee presents to any Sir -- who has a hole-in-one or shoots his age -- a very attractive pin to wear with pride on his cap. There are some 5,000 SIR golfers and we will issue about 35 such awards this year ...approximately 20 for holes-in-one and 10 for a golfer shooting his age. It is one of the many things the State Golf Committee does for SIR golfers and I have the great pleasure of personalizing each and every Pin. It personifies the goals of SIR by promoting dignity and independence in retirement. The game of golf itself promotes a healthy active life style and the Feather in the Cap Award makes us Proud to be a Sir. I urge every SIR golfer to visit [www.sirstategolf.org](http://www.sirstategolf.org) and learn more about the SIR golf program. Dow Dill*

## In Memoriam - Russell Agnew

Russell Agnew, the 1989 SIR State President, passed away on October 17, 2011 at age 97. He was a charter member of Branch 89 in Salinas from 1983 to his death. He served as Big Sir of Branch 89, Area Governor of Areas 10 and 21, Chairman of the Rules Committee, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, State Vice President, and State President, as well as many other roles at both the Branch and State level. Sir Russ will be sorely missed by all of SIR.

Our condolences go out to his family. The family will hold private services for him. Thank you, Russ, for all you have done and may you rest in peace.

## Almaden Branch 94, San Jose

### Three Honored as Sirs of the Year

#### Ron Bianco, Branch Member

Three of our members were honored as Sirs of the Year and are pictured left to right: Neil Keever, Harry Billings, and Ernie Bode.



## Sierra Branch 175, Fresno

### Six Presidential Awards

#### Jerry Long, Bulletin Editor

Six Branch 175 members received Senior Certificates at the June luncheon for having reached 90 years of age. Pictured from left to right are: Big Sir Ron McClain with Senior Certificate recipients – Jim Quinn, Bud Rayburn, Frank Hunting, Bob Shahbazian, J.L. Morrison, Mike Tozlian – and on the far right is Little Sir Marin Vallejo.



## Sierra Branch 175, Fresno

### Winslow awarded HLM

#### Gerald Long, Bulletin Editor

Past President Dwight Sale (left in picture) presented Sir Bill Winslow, long time member of Branch 175, with the Honorary Life Member award given by the State Board of Directors.

The State Board of Directors awarded this HLM to Bill for his "...tireless and skillful efforts in initiating and developing the SIR Website as well as offering service to all branches to start their Website."



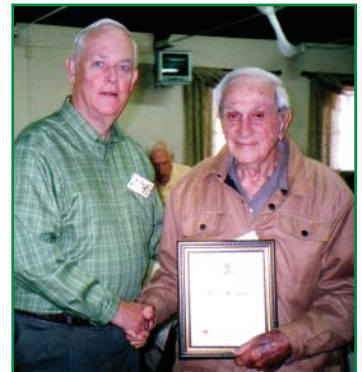
## Twin Valley Branch 36, Santa Cruz

### Stekoll Honored at 90

#### Gary Allyne, Big Sir

Big Sir Gary Allyne is shown on the left in the picture presenting a Super Senior Award to Matt Stekoll during a monthly luncheon in Santa Cruz.

Matt is the oldest member in Branch 36. He still walks nine-hole golf with us several times a month at the Valley





# News from the Branches

Lamorinda Branch 171, Moraga

Lamorinda Hills Branch 174, Moraga

## The SIRpremes Barbershop Chorus

Clay Sealy SIRpremes member

The SIRpremes – a takeoff on Diana Ross and the Supremes in case you haven't already guessed– is an activity, just like Golf and Bridge, of Branches 171 & 174. We are a Barbershop Chorus which means that all of the songs we sing are sung in the four part harmony of barbershop style... lead, tenor, baritone and bass. Several members, including our leader and organizer, have been singing in Barbershop Quartets and Choruses for many years and are the core of the group.

When invited, we sing songs at our SIR meetings relevant to events or occasions occurring that month... such as, patriotic songs for July and Christmas songs for the December Ladies Day Luncheon. On one special occasion, we were able to massage a title slightly and sing "In the Good Old Sumnertime" to Big Sir Bill Sumner – he has been floating around on a cloud ever since.

Several other typical performances with pictures and brief descriptions are depicted below:

Obviously we all enjoy singing, but we also enjoy each other as well and have developed a great camaraderie. Our



This picture was taken immediately following our singing of "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" to our waitresses. Our leader is obviously very upset as he is not getting any of the kisses being delivered behind him... tough luck, Brad.

rehearsals often run the gamut from telling stories or jokes, offering advice on home remodeling, talking about vacation trips and a myriad of other topics too numerous to detail here, and oh yes...to rehearsing a song or two.

Whatever we are doing must work as our Branches keep inviting us back to sing again. However, any success that we have had has to be credited to our Leader -- Director and Spark Plug! -- Brad Dewey. He enjoys directing and believes in getting it right, yet has the patience of a Saint, especially with those of us who could be classified as neophytes. He has a good ear for music and knows and can sing every part of the harmony, so if a sour note is heard, he is all over it...but with a smile. His enthusiasm is contagious and we all admire and look up to him and always look forward to the next rehearsal.

Our bottom line is that we enjoy ourselves and laugh a lot and laughter is good medicine at any age. Now if Brad's wife, Carol, will just keep turning out those great cookies!



This was "Shine on Harvest Moon" in August which was a real crowd pleaser. Can you smell the new mown hay?



This photo shows us singing "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" in honor of St Patrick's Day. We all had a bit of the "Irish" in us that day!



This picture was taken during singing of "Frosty the Snowman" at our Ladies Day Luncheon last December. One of our group, dressed in a "Snowman" suit, moved amongst the tables during the song to add a nice touch.



# The Annual Meeting of Sons In Retirement



SIR State officers for 2012, who were elected at the Annual Meeting early in August, are shown in the above photo. From left to right we have Charles Moss, Assistant Secretary, Jim Stedman, President, Rich Dettmer, Vice President, Eckart Sellinger, Secretary, Mike Berry, Treasurer and Jim Long, Asstant Treasurer.



President Bob Mannell addresses the members at the Annual Meeting.



Area 8 Governor Don Graff on the right along with Big Sir Hugh Twomey (in the center) is shown at the SIR Annual Meeting this year. On the left is Branch 26 Big Sir Daryl Main.



Area 19 Governor Robert Staib raises a question at the Annual Meeting.



SIR Happenings Editor Don MacGregor (on the left) interviews Past President Buck Kendrick.



Branch 144 Big Sir Jerry Strain (on the right) is having a discussion with State Vice President Jim Stedman.



# News from the Branches

## Area 2

### **A Fishing Club on the Go**

**Harry Sherinian, Branch 116 Fishing Coordinator**

All Sirs are welcome and, indeed, encouraged to participate in our fishing trips as well as our monthly meetings. Our meetings are held at the Legend Sports Bar and Grill at the Diablo Creek Golf Course in Concord at 8:30 am. At most of our meetings we have a speaker from within the professional fishing community, but sometimes our own members speak about their recent fishing adventures.



The club has been quite active with members fishing in such places as Alaska, the Columbia River in Oregon, Lake Tahoe, several of our local lakes, the Delta and of course the Bay, where Harry Sherinian caught this nice 20 pound Halibut.

On a beautiful Sunday in August, the fishing club held it's annual BBQ. We all gathered at Bill Landers' home and enjoyed a day of food, drink, and fellowship. We brought our wives along to make the day even more pleasant. We all gorged ourselves on ribs, chicken, and brisket with all the trimmings. We just had

a great time!

We will be very busy this fall with: delta fishing for bass, catfish, and sturgeon, party boat trips for kokanee, trout, sturgeon, rock fish, salmon, and halibut. These outings will include those who rarely fish, but would like to try. If you haven't been fishing in a while and would like to test drive an adventure, come join us. We will match you up with a buddy with a boat -- if you don't have one -- and teach you whatever you need to know to catch some fish. Always remember that old fisherman adage... *"the worst day of fishing is better than the best day at work."*

**Lamorinda Branch 171, Moraga**

**Lamorinda Hills Branch 174, Moraga**

### **Branches Rejoin for a BBQ**

**Ron Smith, Area 2 Governor**

Branches 171 and 174 of Moraga that previously had been one Branch reunited for a joint BBQ for their August meeting at St. Mary's College. Besides great food – and lots of it – we had sunny weather and camaraderie among friends, both old and new.

The affair included an interesting program put on at the Soda Center by the President Emeritus of the College... Brother Mel Anderson. The pictures at the right show the elaborate buffet line and members attending the program in the college Soda Center. The entire event was very successful and enjoyed by all!

## Area 2

### **Walnut Festival**

**Walter Schick, Branch 8 Member**

Area 2 sponsored a booth (see picture) at the Walnut Festival in Walnut Creek. The new SIR banner is quite visible in the picture and helps increase SIR name recognition.

Trifold Brochures were given away while Sirs from different Branches handed out their Branch Cards. Root Beer Barrels were given to anyone who stopped. All Sirs wore their SIR caps, and at least one Sir was outside the booth to talk to passersby.



## Area 16

### ***Bicycling an Enjoyable, Healthy Activity***

**Jerry Butler, Biking Chairman**

Bicycling has been a monthly activity since 2003 for the five Area 16 Branches located in Mountain View, Redwood City, and San Mateo. It was started by a few members of branch 35 who biked regularly on the many bike routes in the area and who thought it would be something other SIR members would enjoy as well.

The bicycling group is made up of every one that shows up for the ride, including wives and guests (see picture). Usually there are about 15 riders for an outing. The rides are scheduled for the second Thursday of each month and the ride description and directions to the trailhead are published in advance in the Branch newsletters. In addition, an email announcement is sent to those who want to be on the email list.

We are fortunate to have an abundance of biking trails in our area. We have designed eight different rides that vary in length from 14 to 20 miles. The terrain for each of the rides is mostly flat and almost entirely on designated bicycle/pedestrian paved paths, with almost no street riding. Most any bike can be used, including road, mountain, and hybrid bikes. Most of the rides are located near San Francisco Bay so there is wonderful scenery to enjoy as we pedal along the wetlands and various paths.

Safety is a priority. Helmets are required and rides are cancelled should there be rain or other unfavorable weather conditions. Stops are made periodically to keep the group together and ensure the ride tempo is agreeable for everyone.

The highlight of each ride is about halfway along the way, when a luncheon stop is made at a golf course clubhouse or restaurant. This provides time for rest and for everyone to get better acquainted and share mutual interests. Bicycling is a great way to get exercise while enjoying new and exciting sights that will pleasantly surprise you.



## San Francisco Branch 4

### ***Glee Club***

**George Rodriquez, Bulletin Editor**

Our Glee Club started with just a trio and we now have the Trio, plus singers. The group is shown performing in the picture and is composed of from L to R: George Rodriguez (Guitar, Banjo, and Singer) -- Dan O'Leary (Irish Tenor) -- Greg Pantages (Bass Baritone and a former Opera Singer) -- Joe Jacinto (Keyboard) -- and Jack Major (Electric Bass).

We do sing-a-longs and instrumentals and have performed for the Ladies Day Luncheons, Christmas Luncheons, and some of the regular Branch luncheons. Our objective is to have fun ...and we certainly do!

Music is wonderful and lifts the spirits, so when we play, we invite anyone who would like to sing... to join us.



## John Muir Branch 19, Concord

### ***Beautiful New Bocce Courts***

**Bill Stephenson, Bulletin Editor**

Last year Branch 19 didn't have a Bocce activity, but when the City of Concord built four new bocce courts at Baldwin Park this year, a questionnaire went out to our membership as to their interest in Bocce. The response varied, but ten members indicated an interest in playing and signed up. Now, we already have two very active teams playing on the wonderful, new Baldwin Park courts (see picture) and thoroughly enjoying the game.

Bocce is a very social activity. Participants not only get to know their fellow Sirs on a more personal level, but they also become acquainted with the members of the opposing teams, providing an opportunity to bring in more members.

The game of bocce not only builds skill in becoming a better player, but also expands a person's ability to meet many new and interesting individuals... all while having lots of fun!

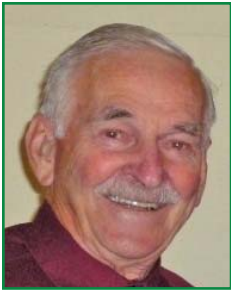




# Committee Reports

## State RV Committee

Don Cummings, Co-Chairman



Many of us around the age of 75 remember the song "Enjoy Yourself." The words went like this:  
Enjoy yourself, it's later than you think.  
Enjoy yourself, while you're still in the pink.  
The years go by quicker than a wink.  
Enjoy yourself; enjoy yourself, it's later than you think.  
You work and work for years and years, you're always on the go.  
You never take a minute off, your too busy making dough.  
Next year for sure, you'll see the world, you'll really get around.  
But how far can you travel when your six feet underground?



**But how far can you travel when your six feet underground?**

I think we need to bring this old song back to remind all of those potential members that SIR has many fantastic activities that they can enjoy. These activities include golf, bowling, fishing, and of course recreational vehicles (RV) and dozens of other fun and exciting activities. We know there are men retiring from the work force every day. How can we in SIR attract these new retirees to join us and our activities? One very important way is to let them know what is available and let them try us out. Let's get our message out to these potential members at the places where these activities take place... such as golf courses, bowling

alleys, bait shops, and RV parks and dealers. A simple flyer on a bulletin board or handout material can be effective in attracting people to our SIR activities.

One of the most frustrating things that Co-Chairman Jack Streckfus and I have experienced in trying to reactivate the State RV Committee is the attitude of many of the SIR Branches that have RV activities... they "don't want to join us." They say they are happy with their activities as they are. I would hope that every Big Sir, Area Governor, and Regional Director with a SIR sponsored RV activity will contact the State RV Committee and provide us with some information and support. How can the RV Committee provide information on RV activities when the Branches with these activities fail to provide us with this information? One of the first actions of the RV Committee was to establish a State RV Website where members and prospective members can view information on SIR RV activities throughout the state. To date we only have five clubs listed on our website and two of those did not send us the information... it was gleaned from their Bulletins.

SIR RV clubs are local and sponsored by a SIR Branch to provide RV activities to their Branch and other Branch members. The State RV Committee does not interfere with their outings or activities... but we do want to have information about them and their activities so we can share it with other members in the SIR family. Please Share with us photos and information so we can publish them in our RV Bulletin. Visit our Website by clicking the RV Icon at [www.sirinc.org](http://www.sirinc.org) and contact us by email at: [sirstaterv@gmail.com](mailto:sirstaterv@gmail.com).

**If you own an RV, join one of our SIR RV groups and "Enjoy yourself!"**

*Don*

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## State Bowling Committee

Carl Elvik, Chairman



I hope everyone has had fun this year...2011 is coming to a close and we still have a couple of tournaments left.

This is my last year as your State Bowling Committee Chairman and I want all of you to know that I appreciate the help you have given me. I also want to thank all of you for the work you have done for the State Bowling Committee, not just during this year, but in years past, as well. I think Sir Bowling is doing OK, according to our Treasurer anyway.

Our new State Bowling Committee Chairman will be Del Locke -- our Secretary will be Jerry Sabo -- and our Treasurer will be Ray Young. I think all of us should thank these gentlemen for volunteering their time. The entire State Committee can be found on our SIR website under Bowling.

Again, many thanks and remember Bowling is just a game... and enjoy it!



*Carl*

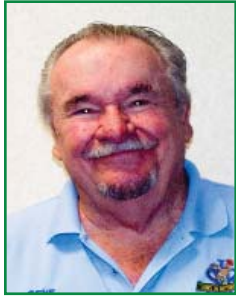
# Committee Reports

## State Golf Committee

Gene Drennan, Chairman

### “The Last Hurrah”

It doesn't seem possible that three years have gone by since I assumed the role of your Golf Chairman. I have enjoyed serving you, and I hope that in some small way you have enjoyed -- or at least tolerated -- my writing efforts.



This year has been a real mixed bag of great, to not so great tournaments put on by your State Golf Committee. From our opening in Las Vegas, to our closing in Monterey -- just 3 days past -- we have endeavored to bring to the golfing community, tournaments that you could not only enjoy, but be financially sound.

For the most part we feel good that we have successfully accomplished these goals. We have visited many old and trusted golf sites such as Las Vegas, Reno, Solvang, Corning, and the beautiful Monterey Peninsula, and next years' Golf Committee is hard at work putting together the 2012 slate for your enjoyment.

I know that, as is with the rest of the good old US of A, it has not been the financial years that we would have liked to have, and it has affected the turnout of golfers more than we anticipated.

Hopefully, next year and the ensuing years will be better and many of our old friends that couldn't make it this year will return.

I would now like to take this opportunity to thank all of my fellow committee members for their dedication and hard work...to all of the golfing community that have supported our efforts...and to all of you that have not participated in the past, but hopefully you will take another look at our offerings for 2012, and join up with the hundreds of Golfers who have.

To sum up... I hearken to the old philosophy: “Golf is not a life or death experience”... it's much more important than that!!!! CIAO.....

*Gene*

## Growth & Membership Committee

Walter Schick, Chairman

I would like to remind all Sirs to replenish their SIR cards when they run out. Also don't forget to handout the TriFold Brochures to friends and also to your wives for their lady friends, who may want their retired husbands out of the house from time to time ...note the picture below on the left.



poster is printed at 10x14 inches at Costco and mounted on a 10x15 inch foam board. To hold it up, a slot is made in a primed 2x4, 10 inches long, which is simpler than a tripod. These, and a supply of TriFolds, SIR Car Stickers, and Sir calling cards all fit in a document case from a Container Store... see photo at right:

A set of holders and poster in the carrying case can be ordered from Walt Schick for \$45 including shipping. Please order the TriFolds, Stickers, and Cards separately.



An easy way to remind members to pick up some of these is to place them near the beginning of the luncheon registration table. One branch places them on a cocktail table and another places them on the front end of the table itself. The small sign reminds members to pick up some for their use.

The brochure and card holders come from TAP Plastics or an office supply store. The



*Walt*



# Happenings Travel Bulletin

**January 21-27, 2012**

## **Florida Keys Adventure**

Enjoy a prime time visit to Miami, Key Largo, the Florida Keys and four nights in Key West. In Miami we'll take a city tour and a short air boat ride in the Everglades National Park. Then in Key Largo we'll cruise in a glass bottom boat through the largest living coral reef off our coasts. In Key West we'll stay at the Crowne Plaza La Concha in the heart of town on historic Duval Street. Key West features a host of interesting things to see and do. Cost is \$3380 PPDO which includes r/t air from SFO and 13 meals. Offered by Branch 62 Travel. Contact Roy Jordan at 408-735-8765 or Jim Hohenshelt at 408-241-4421.

**February 22-March 1, 2012**

## **The Wonders of Costa Rica**

Experience the lush forests, magnificent waterfalls, rumbling volcanoes, endless coastlines, and diverse ecosystems in a place that preserves its delicate ecology for all to enjoy along with some of the most spectacular scenery you will ever experience. Trip includes r/t air, 18 meals, deluxe motor coach, hotels, and a professional naturalist tour director. Cost is \$2579 PPDO. Offered by Branch 32 Travel. Contact Mike Console at 408-246-1080 or John Pletsch at 408-274-2992.

**April 9-26, 2012**

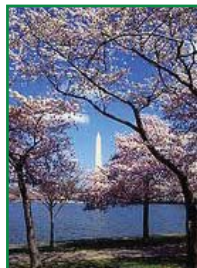
## **Hong Kong to Tibet via the World's Highest Railway**

Fly from San Francisco to Hong Kong. Visit Hong Kong, Shanghai, Yichang, and take a four day Yangtze River cruise. Then fly to Lhasa for three days of touring and ride the luxury Tibet Express train to Xi'ning and then on to Beijing for two days before returning to SFO. Cost is \$5191 PPDO and includes r/t air, meals, accommodations, etc. Offered by Branch 35 Travel. Contact Neil Jameson at 831-336-2476 or Wayne Dawson at 408-972-1054.

**April 11-16, 2012**

## **National Cherry Blossom Festival**

Celebrate the beauty of spring in Washington D.C. as the nation celebrates the festival's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The tour includes reserved seating at the Cherry Blossom Parade, tram tour of Arlington, many national memorials, Kennedy Center, Smithsonian, Mt Vernon, and a Potomac River Cruise. Cost is \$2170 PPDO. Offered by Branch 32 Travel. Contact John Pletsch at 408-274-2992.



**April 13-28, 2012**

## **Hawaiian Cruise**

Cruise round trip from San Francisco to the beautiful Hawaiian Islands on the Star Princess. Stops include Hilo, Honolulu, Kauai, Maui, and Ensenada. Prices range from \$2090 to \$2990 PPDO. Offered by Branches 101 & 121 Travel. Contact David Abrahams at 925-447-9386.

**May 19-June 3, 2012**

## **Romance of the Rhine and Mosel**

Cruise aboard a private Grand Circle river ship starting in Basel, Switzerland and ending in Antwerp, Belgium. The ship will make stops at Strasbourg, Speyer, Baden-Baden, Boppard, Koblenz, Cochem, Bernkastel, Trier, Bonn, Nijmegen, Kinderdijk, and Antwerp. Prices range from \$3895 to \$5295 PPDO. Pre and post trips are also available. Offered by Area 2 Travel. Contact Ken Richter at 925-689-6217.



**June 6-12, 2012**

## **Canyon Country Experience**

Spend seven days exploring the best National Parks of the Southwest and immersed in Native American Culture. Tour highlights include: Las Vegas, Grand Canyon National Park, Navajo Culture Monument, Valley Arches National Park, Colorado River jet boat ride, Dead Horse Point State Park, Capital Reef National Park, Scenic Highway 12, Bryce Canyon National Park, and Zion National Park. All inclusive trip is priced at \$2040 PPDO. Offered by Branch 73 Travel. Contact Paul Peters at 510-724-8345.

**June 7-20, 2012**

## **European Cruise**

Cruise aboard the Avalon Tranquility. Visit such places as: Prague, Budapest, Vienna, and Nuremburg. All meals and nightly entertainment, including shore tours. Round trip air from SFO. All inclusive cost is \$5150 PPDO. Offered by Area 1 Travel. Contact Harry Redlick at 650-583-3961.

**June 15-23, 2012**

## **Harbor-Hopping in New England**

Spend two nights in Boston followed by a six night harbor-hopping cruise on the American Star. Ports of call include Providence, New Port, Bristol, New Bedford, Fall River and the storied islands of Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard and Block Island. Prices range from \$4408 to \$5268 PPDO, including r/t air. Offered by Branch 153 Travel. Contact Ralph Hunt at 650-967-8467 or Alan Patmore at 408-867-4197.

**September 1-14, 2012**

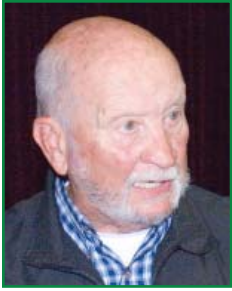
## **Paris, Rhone River, and Provence**

Fly from San Francisco to Marseille. Cruise the Rhone River for eight days on the luxurious (5 Star rated) ship, the River Royale. Take the TGV (Bullet Train) to Paris and stay in a luxury hotel near the Eiffel Tower for five nights and enjoy guided tours of Paris and Versailles. Prices range from \$6995 to \$7915 PPDO, including r/t air. Offered by Branch 62 Travel. Contact Jim Hohenshelt at 408-241-4421 or Roy Jordan at 408-735-8765.



# California Sons In Retirement (SIR) Part 4

By Harry Hubinger



*Editor's Note:* Harry Hubinger, the former Chairman of the Growth & Membership Committee, has written a four part series for "Alive" magazine, an East Bay publication. This interesting series tells how Rob, a fictional retiree, joins Sons In Retirement. We thought the series would be of interest to our readers and so we decided to publish the four part series. The following is

the fourth and last episode.

Update: The enjoyable path of our fictional hero, Rob, continues as he "reposts" himself after retiring from full-time business activities and discovers SIR.

Well, it has been over two and a half years now since Rob packed his belongings at work and headed home. In some respects it's hard to believe. He still remembers, talks about it, and even occasionally hears from some of the old gang. But, the freedom he now enjoys more than overcomes his desire to return to work.

One of the major contributions to his retirement enjoyment has been the membership in SIR. Admittedly, he approached joining with a bit of trepidation, but that is now long gone. He plays golf with the Branch almost weekly and has gone on several week-long outings put on by the State organization. He's back to playing cards several times a month as well. His wife has joined him and other SIR couples on morning walks and day-long exploratory trips to local venues. Although they have not gone on any of the international trips as yet, the possibility of their joining the travelers remains strong.

Best of all, Rob, has made a number of new friends. Similar to work, he found some guys he identified with and a few with which he had nothing in common. Here he was allowed to choose and soon became quite close to a number of the men. He sits with them at lunch and often stays for a drink with them after golf.

But now Rob was faced with a new dilemma... one that required some thought. He was asked, by the nominating committee, to become an officer in his Branch.

Rob had joined SIR purely for selfish reasons. He had been lonesome and at loose ends, and the organization had remedied that. The fact that there were about twenty thousand SIR members and one hundred and twenty plus branches in northern California was of minor interest to him. He focused on his own Branch of about one hundred and twenty members and didn't bother about the details.

But now Rob began to feel a little guilty about his early selfish reasons. He had received a great deal of pleasure from SIR; and being the kind of person he was, he realized he needed to return the favor and give something back... and, becoming an officer in his Branch might solve that need.

He had often wondered early on how SIR could do so much without membership fees. How could they put on so many events at a reasonable price? Then he learned there

were no paid employees or positions. All of this work was being done by volunteers, and now he was being asked to give back a little of what he had been given. Frankly, it seemed more than fair to him.

As you've probably guessed, Rob became an officer, and well, the rest is history. I'll leave it to you to finish the story.

## Fresno Branch 159

### Newspaper Stories for Recruiting

Allan Baxter, Big Sir

Roger Deal, Membership Chairman

We asked our local newspaper to do a story on our Branch and they sent out a reporter to one of our luncheons and ended up doing a nice story with pictures that has had excellent results for our Branch.

After the article appeared, the response was fast and furious... within hours, the emails and phone calls started. The responders were serious and looking for something like SIR has to offer. Nine of our guests at the next luncheon meeting came because of the article and all nine have been inducted as members... one of them even brought a guest on the day he was inducted.

We actively use the Tri-fold Brochure in our recruiting efforts. In addition, our Branch golf group is extremely active and contributes a sizeable number of new members each year. In the first ten months of this year, we have brought in 44 new members, well over our goal of 27 for the year. We formerly had a membership limit of 275 members before starting a waiting list, but now we have eliminated a waiting list. We are, however, approaching the limit of the number the Ramada Inn can accommodate for our luncheons, but we have found ways to work around that... any way, that's a nice problem to have.

The Fresno Bee has been very cooperative and we hope they will do a follow-on story sometime next year.

*Editor's Note: To read the complete newspaper article and three other articles about SIR Branches, go to Branch & Area Ideas & Tools on the [sirinc.org](http://sirinc.org) website.*

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

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