



SIR HAPPENINGS

WINTER 2012 VOLUME 9 ISSUE 1

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

President Jim's Column



I hope all of you are enjoying another year of SIR membership by attending the monthly luncheon meetings and participating in activities of interest to you. These opportunities to visit with old friends and make new friends are what SIR is all about.

Our branches are nonprofit public benefit corporations created for the purpose of meeting the needs of retired men. SIR leaders take this responsibility seriously. Every day we are looking for ways to improve our branches and provide activities that meet your needs.

We have found that the most successful branch leaders encourage their members to recruit new members at the annual rate of 10% of branch membership. These new members reenergize their branches. This 10% rate has become the annual goal for all branches. We branch members need to assist in achieving this goal by inviting our retired friends and acquaintances to join.

The percentage of active branch members attending monthly luncheons is an indicator of member satisfaction. Successful branch leaders have found that when at least 70% of active branch members attend regular luncheon meetings, they can be assured that most members are satisfied. This 70% rate has become the goal for all branches. Please demonstrate that you are a satisfied member by attending the regular luncheon meetings.

I wish all of you the best in 2012.

Jim

**BRING IN A GUEST
WE NEED NEW MEMBERS**

Confused about how to use SIR — SIR, Inc — SIR's — Sir — Sirs — Sir's — or Sirs'?

...many of us are and here are some tips. **SIR** stands for **Sons in Retirement** ...if you want to use the corporate title, use **SIR, Inc.** or **Sons In Retirement, Inc.**

Common Mistakes:

- **SIR** is never plural — there is only one Sons In Retirement — **so, never write or say SIRS** when referring to Sons in Retirement
- **SIR** is always capitalized
- There are no periods between the letters
- The possessive of **SIR** is **SIR's**

Some examples:

- John is a member of **SIR** — **Not SIRS**
- **SIR's** annual meeting is held in August — possessive

Sir Refers to an individual member of SIR

Some examples:

- **Sir** John Jones is a member of SIR — Singular
- Many **Sirs** attended the SIR luncheon — Plural
- A **Sir's** son attended a SIR luncheon — Singular Possessive
- Some **Sirs'** wives attend SIR picnics — Plural Possessive

If you agree or disagree, or have something to contribute send an email to Editor Don MacGregor at:
donmac@wavecable.com

Sirs in the News

North Bay Branch 7, Fairfax

Swalberg Honored with an HLM

Kirk Beales, Bulletin Editor

During the Branch Christmas party, Wil Swalberg was presented an Honorary Life Membership by President Bob Mannell, on the right in the picture.

Wil has been a very active member since 1988. Within the branch, he has served as Treasurer for 12 years and on the Nominating Committee for 3 years. For the past 10 years, he has been the Chairman of the Branch Bowling and Bocce teams. He is also the Branch photographer, and he leads our members in a song as part of the opening ceremonies



Mount Diablo Branch 8, Walnut Creek/Concord

Two Well-Deserved HLM's

Derek Southern, Past Big Sir

Dan Weller, Bulletin Editor

In the picture from left to right, Dave Perkins and Ron Smith are being honored with Honorary Life Memberships by SIR President Bob Mannell.

Dave Perkins and Ron Smith awarded Honorary Life Membership

Dave Perkins has been an active member of Branch 8 since 1994. During that time, he has served in many leadership positions including Little Sir, Big Sir and Director. In addition, Dave has managed our email data base for a number of years and has worked tirelessly as Assistant Orientation Chairman to introduce the SIR concept to new members. Dave never seeks the limelight and instead prefers to offer quality guidance and support to members who can benefit from his wealth of practical experience. He is always there when we need a volunteer and with his pleasant personality, good things inevitably happen.

Ron Smith has been a member of Branch 8 since 1997 and over that period he has volunteered for many positions of responsibility at both the Branch and State levels. To name just a few of his contributions, Ron has been Little Sir, Big Sir, Director and is currently serving as Area 2 Governor. Although he is in his first year as Area 2 Governor, Ron has implemented meetings among the Officers of the seven Area Branches where successful ideas have been shared and as a result, new and successful recruiting programs have been implemented Area wide. Area 2 is one of the few growing areas, and Ron's influence is helping to maintain that momentum.



Santa Cruz Branch 20

Space Hall of Fame

Jack Kemerling, Former Area 10 Governor

Jack Roberts was inducted into the Space Operations Hall of Fame in an awards ceremony at the Biltmore Hotel in Santa Clara. An Aerospace Engineer, Jack earned this



prestigious award for his many years of devotion and participation in our nation's space program.

After retiring in 2000, Jack joined Branch 20 where he became just as devoted to Sons In Retirement as he had been to the many space operations that

he was involved in. For example, Jack became our Big Sir, earned an Honorary Life Membership, and still remains quite active in the Branch.

The photo shows General William Shelton, Space Operations Commander, making the award to Jack.

Sirs in the News

Mission Trail Branch 35, Mountain View

Three New HLM Awards

Bob Simon, Branch Member

President Bob Mannell took great pleasure in presenting three Honorary Life Membership awards during our Holiday Party. More than 350 Sirs, spouses and guests were present at this festive event. Branch 35 is the largest Branch in SIR and this was the largest turnout that anyone could remember.

Pictured from left to right are: Former SIR President, Buck Kendrick (standing in for honoree Dick Knock who—true to form—was away helping others during the Holiday Season), Stan Barkey, Stephanie Barkey, Peter Barba, Sherry Barba, and President Bob.



Las Trampas 116, Walnut Creek

HLM's for Robinson & Goff

Neil Schmidt, Bulletin Editor

Two members that have made very significant contributions to Branch 116 were recently honored with well-deserved Honorary Life Memberships.

Among his many contributions, Thomas "Robbie" Robinson has been Little Sir, Big Sir, BEC Director, Membership Chairman, and Golf Chairman.

Phil Goff has filled many leadership positions including Newsletter Co-Editor, Computer & Technology Chairman, BEC Director, Branch Webmaster and is serving on the State Website Committee.

Pictured during the presentation are left to right: President Bob Mannell, Robbie & Nancy Robinson, Diane & Phil Goff and Big Sir Ron Armijo.



Twin Valley Branch 36, Santa Cruz

Two Senior Certificates

Gary Allyne, Big Sir

Area Governor Rich Dean is shown presenting Senior Sir Certificates to longtime members, Dewain Hagen (on the left), and Don Anderson (on the right), during a Branch luncheon meeting at the Portuguese Hall in Santa Cruz. Both men passed the 90 year mark in September and October respectively.



Peach Bowl Branch 45, Yuba City

Five Honored with Senior Certificates

Dieter Rex, Big Sir

At the November luncheon, Region 9 Director Richard Dettmer presented Senior Certificates to Sirs Robert Cloer, Lloyd Decker, Ernest Speckert, and Wilbur Tracy for reaching the 90 years milestone. For attaining 95 years, Sir Norman Palmer was presented with a Super Senior Certificate.

Pictured from left to right are: Big Sir Larry Rider, Robert Cloer, Wilbur Tracy, Richard Dettmer, Ernest Speckert, Norman Palmer and Lloyd Decker.



Sirs in the News

Pony Express Branch 69, Sacramento

Short Course Champion

Frank Franzago, Bulletin Editor

Branch 69 is a fairly small Branch (111 members) in the Sacramento area. It was formed in 1967, when a group of golfers from Land Park GC applied for a SIR charter. It has always been known as "The Golf Branch." A few years ago, Regional Director George Christman saw the need for a new golf group...the Branch Short Course Golf Club. It was designed for the senior golfer, the short hitter, the new golfer and for those who wanted to improve their short game. They play 18 hole courses every other week on courses that are relatively short, like Davis GC (4350 yds), Antelope Greens (3000yds) and Bartley Cavanaugh (5337 yds). The growth of the SC Group has been fantastic and it gives Branch members a choice of 3 clubs to play with: Branch 69 Golf, 69 Short Course and SIR River City Golf, an area club that is affiliated with NCGA.

This year, SC Chairman Bob Vandenburg decided to give everyone an equal opportunity to be Club Champion. He designated the low net winner in two out of 3 championship tournaments to be our Club Champion. John Martinez, a Branch Director who plays to a 23 index, was the eventual winner. John shot rounds of 53 & 55 for a 108 total, three strokes better than his closest opponent. John not only received a check for \$50, but also received a certificate from Bob Vandenburg (see picture) proclaiming him to be the Branch Short Course Champion...good going John!!



GOLDEN GATE FIELDS
WHERE THE BAY COMES TO PLAY

Lamorinda Branch 174, Moraga

First Big Sir Honored with HLM

Dick Curry, Bulletin Editor

Larry Swindell, Publicity Chairman

In the picture, President Bob Mannell is shown presenting an Honorary Life Membership to Bill Summer, the founding Big Sir of Branch 174, in recognition of his exceptional and outstanding service to the Branch.

Bill was born and raised in Alabama and attended Samford University in Birmingham. He was drafted into the U.S. Army for a two-year stint and served principally in Germany, where he was the editor of the 7th Corps newspaper. Bill came to the Bay Area in 1973 and was variously employed before settling on a career with Bechtel in San Francisco. He and his wife, Donna, were married in 1996, the year before Bill's retirement from Bechtel.

Bill has logged nearly 12 years as a member of SIR, initially with Branch 171, where he served as Chaplin, Little Sir and Big Sir and he played a key role in its division into two Branches.



Golden Gate Fields

Presents....

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

When: Friday April 20, 2012

Where: Golden Gate Fields Turf Club

Time: Please arrive @ 11:15 a.m. Gates open at 11:00 a.m.

Buffet Hours: 11:30-3:00 p.m. First race: 12:45 p.m.

Cost: \$27.00 per adult (Groups of 12+ required)

Includes: Valet parking (or parking for a bus), admission & reserved seating, daily racing program, Turf Club buffet, tax/tip for the food servers and a race named in honor of your SIR Branch!

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

For more information please call Michael Roberts of Golden Gate Fields @ (510) 559-7380

Or email mroberts@goldengatefields.com

News from the Branches

John Muir Branch 19, Concord

Adventures in Mexico

Bill Stephenson, Bulletin Editor

In October, a group of six Branch 19 members and their spouses went to Nuevo Vallarta on a golf vacation. In addition to three rounds of golf that the men really enjoyed, the group found time for some exciting excursions.

They started with a sunset sailing cruise and then swam with the dolphins (see picture).



Next was a snorkel trip with a stop at the beach in Yelapa where member Dennis Barbieri was surprised when an Iguana was placed on his chest! (see picture) The final adventure was zip-lining through the canopy of trees in the mountains above Puerto Vallarta.



Of course, there was also plenty of beach and pool time... way too much good food and drink... and lots and lots of laughs.

Stanislaus Branch 103, Modesto

An Active Computer Club

Don Reed, Bulletin Editor

Stanislaus Branch has quite an active computer group, which was started by John Johansen several years ago. Now Richard Provost conducts the classes every month for any members interested in learning more about their computers.

John, a native of Denmark, is quite knowledgeable about computers, having been a Marketing VP for Intel and has provided Branch 103 with immeasurable amounts of not only personal help, but also programs and hardware.

Richard also has extensive experience with computers. He started working with computers in the transportation industry when computers were in their infancy. After that, he went to work in the technology field and worked for many years for a data processing company, traveling all

“Come and get some of your questions and problems resolved at our monthly computer meetings.”

over the country installing new systems. He continues to take refresher classes to keep his skills up to date on the new technology.

Rich says to all of our members: “Come and get some of your questions and problems resolved at our monthly computer meetings.” Discussions cover different programs and the effects they will have on your computer. Some hardware problems are also covered. The discussions start at 9:30 am and last about two hours. On average, eight members attend the meetings with questions and different solutions to computer problems. It is an open forum and many new ideas are shared by the various members.

In the picture, taken at one of our meetings, five Sirs were sitting around the table from left to right: Rich Provost, Bob Baker, Don Baade, Mike Casares and Bill Axtell.



State Baseball

SIR Day at the Sacramento River Cats

River Cats vs. Tucson Padres

Sunday, April 29th, 2012 at 1:05 PM



All SIR Day at the San Francisco Giants

San Francisco Giants vs New York Mets

Thursday, August 2nd, 2012 at 12:45 PM



News from the Branches

Bidwell Branch 110, Chico

Supper Club Dining Experiences

Roy Rolls, Bulletin Editor

It was a warm summer August day in the northern Sacramento Valley when the Bidwell Branch Supper Club toured the Chapter House of the Abby of New Clairvaux just north of Chico and sampled the wines produced by the monks of the Abbey. The trip was arranged by our Big Sir Skip Reager.

Following the tour, the Supper Club participants and their wives gathered a little way down the road at the Lassen Steak House Restaurant for a relaxing social hour, enjoying the fruit of the vine from the tour. Then, as day gave way to evening, wonderfully prepared entrees and their accompaniments were served. The price, negotiated by the Supper Club committee and the restaurant, included tax and gratuity. This was typical of the Supper Club's many successful outings.

The members and their wives have the option of dining on a Tuesday or Wednesday evening once a month at various local restaurants that the Supper Club committee has arranged and scheduled for eight months of the year. Dinner entrees are selected by the members at the time they sign up for a particular dinner outing and the maximum number of diners per night has also been agreed to with the restaurant staff.

The Supper Club committee's goal is to choose new and traditional restaurants that bring to the table, food of both local and ethnic backgrounds for our members to enjoy in friendly surroundings.



China Camp Branch 151, Fairfax

Successful Recruiting

Eckart Sellinger, Bulletin Editor

Recruiting new members is an ongoing challenge for our Branch. One of the most successful approaches for us to gain new members is to pay for a booth at the Marin County Information Fair which is put on once a year at the Civic Center, where organizations providing goods and information to seniors, show their wares.

Pictured are KC Chew and Walt Johnson who run this operation for our Branch. Those who attend the fair are primary candidates for SIR. Even the ladies, who drop by our booth, are wonderful as they often are looking for something for their husbands to do and leave us with contact information.



Pleasant Hill Branch 146, Walnut Creek

The Song Sirs

Bill Hoban, Publicity Chairman

Over the years The Song Sirs of Branch 146 have performed throughout Contra Costa County for local retirement communities, convalescent centers, civic events, and SIR luncheons. They are indeed the "face" of SIR to many in the community. The picture of the group was taken at a performance at the Byron Park Retirement Community.

But just how did Song Sirs get started?...It all began in June of 1995 when Branch 146 was entertained by Branch 57's "Sir-Naiders" at the monthly luncheon. This performance so impressed Don Nunn that he wondered how we might develop our own singing group.

The Song Sirs are the Branch 146 ambassador to the community...

Time passed – but not Don's desire – and in 1998 it happened in an unusual way. While playing in a SIR golf outing – Owen Sullivan – who was in Don's foursome, broke out into song with a great tenor voice. That did it! Don asked Owen about starting a singing group. Initially Owen was skeptical until Don promised he'd join, become the first Director, and bring Dave Obera in as the piano player. With Don, Dave and Owen as the nucleus, 18 members were recruited to form "The Song Sirs"...who says golf and singing don't mix?

From its beginning, The Song Sirs have had many capable leaders – especially Sir Rod Sharrets – who was a high school music teacher and taught the group proper singing techniques. Currently the group is led by Pete Miller who has also brought four-part harmony to the group.

We are very fortunate to have "The Song Sirs" as a Branch 146 ambassador to the community and a delight to all who are fortunate to hear them.



Spotlight on new SIR Committee Chairmen

Dean Steichen INFOSYS

Born and raised in eastern South Dakota, Dean studied Chemical Engineering at South Dakota School of Mines & Technology for two and one half years before dropping out and entering the computer field with Litton Industries in Southern California. After working there for 2 years, he returned to Dakota Wesleyan University and graduated in 1966 with a Bachelor's degree in Accounting and Economics with a Chemistry Minor.



Dean didn't remain a bachelor for long as he married Marilyn Rennich of White, S.D. the weekend after graduation and soon departed for the University of Washington's MBA Program. Upon graduation in 1968 from the UW, he worked for Standard Oil Co. of California's (Chevron) Computer Services Department in San Francisco for 12 years and taught Information Systems Classes at night for Golden Gate University (GGU). He worked for Lucky Stores as EDP and Corporate Audit Manager, Mervyns as Director of Information Security and The GAP as Information Center Director and Director of Information Security before retiring in 2002.

Marilyn and Dean moved to Danville, California and had two children (Adrienne and Geof). Adrienne is an Architect in Oakland and Geof is a civilian contractor for the US Army in Provo, Utah. They also have two grandchildren (Signy and Colin)

Dean joined Sons In Retirement in 2002, and served in Branch leadership positions including several committees, Attendance Secretary, Little Sir, Big Sir and on the BEC. He continues to serve as a Director and Presenter for the Area 2 Computers & Technology Activity and other Branch or Area Committees. He was elected Area 2 Governor in 2009 and Region 6 Director in 2011. Dean is a member of the State Growth & Membership Committee and is the Chairman of the State INFOSYS Committee.

Discovery Bay Branch 161

Wine Tasting

Tom Jones, Bulletin Editor

Dick Donald, Wine Tasting Chairman

Discovery Bay Branch 161 has had an active wine tasting group for more than a year. Every month, one member and his wife host a group of six to eight couples for an event. Each couple brings an appetizer and a bottle of wine concealed inside a bag so that the label is hidden. During the evening, each bottle of wine is served in turn (starting with white wines and progressing to reds) and each taster rates it on a scale of 1 to 5. Between tastings, we try all the appetizers to help clear the palate as well as to prevent drinking on an empty stomach.

At the end of the event, the host will pick up the ratings slips and total the results. The results are then revealed to

Walt Schick Growth & Membership

Walt Schick is the new Chairman of the Growth & Membership Committee. Among his efforts in SIR have been documenting and testing "Tools That Work" to help increase membership. As a Branch 8 Director and Newsletter Editor, Walt participated in a focus group that defined four key Branch functions. Namely – Publicity, Recruitment, Activities, and Retention. He has been appointed each year as the Area 2 Publicity and Recruitment Chairman by four different governors and in that position has been actively promoting the four functions. These are now in place at most of the seven branches in the area and membership recruitment and retention for the whole area is outstanding. Area Round Tables are also scheduled annually to encourage idea exchange among all the branches.



He has been the State Publicity and Tools Chairman through last year, when this committee was merged into the Growth and Membership Committee. Serving on the INFOSYS Committee, and recently appointed to the Training Committee, Walt's goal is to increase the use of the "Tools That Work" throughout Sons In Retirement.

Born in Rapid City, South Dakota, he is called a "Good Guy from the Bad Lands." After earning a chemistry degree at South Dakota School of Mines, he served in a nuclear lab in Las Vegas and found that he needed to go back for a Masters or find something else. That something else was sales and marketing, and he spent his career with biotechnology instrumentation, including national sales and international marketing.

In the Walnut Creek Sister Cities organization, he is Chairman of the Youth Ambassador Exchange which will bring 8th grade exchange students from Hungary to Walnut Creek and send our students there. Next year they will expand to Italy, and Walt wants to start other YAE Groups in other cities near Walnut Creek.

Walt is married to his only wife, Ginny, and have one child and four grandchildren and have lived in Walnut Creek for forty years. Walt likes bridge, poker, cooking, nine-hole golf, walking and wine tasting (don't all cooks?).

the group. Amazingly, the ratings and prices of the wines do not always correlate! At least twice, Two-Buck Chuck (Charles Shaw wine from Trader Joe's) has finished either first or second.

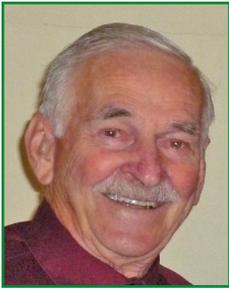
In the picture, Big Sir Vince Vargas is acting as the perfect host for the wine tasting group at a recent event.



Committee Reports

State RV Committee

Don Cummings, Co-Chairman



As we in the RV community look forward to our travels and outings in 2012, we also like to reminisce about our RV experiences last year. We have heard from the Roving Roosters of Napa and they had several outings in 2011. Their Club had outings in the Gold Country at Plymouth; in the Central Coast at Pismo Beach; the Lake Country at Clilo; and in Northern California at

Chico. Like most SIR RV clubs, golf is an important part of the outing and in the picture some of the Roving Roosters of Napa are enjoying a day of golf.

Another SIR RV Club -- the Roving Roosters of San Jose -- had a fun filled year with RV Outings in the Monterey Area at Laguna Seca; in Gilroy at the Garlic USA RV Park; in Morgan Hill at the Coyote Valley RV Resort; in Manteca at the French Camp RV & Golf Resort; and the Wine Country RV in Paso Robles.

Like most SIR RV Clubs, the Roving Rooster members enjoy many activities including golf, card games, and of course if a bocce court is available, they play a lot of bocce. In this picture the RV club enjoys playing bocce on a sunny day at the Bodega Bay RV Park in Bodega Bay. A good thing about Bocce is that everyone in the group can play.

The Rolling Roamers RV Club also had a wonderful year with RV Outings at Coyote Valley RV Resort; Vineyard RV Park in Vacaville; Betabel RV Park in San Juan Bautista; at the Jackson Rancheria RV Park in the Gold Country; at the RV Park in Bodega Bay; at Benbow Golf and RV Resort in Garberville; and October Fest at Honey Bear RV Park in Gold Beach, Oregon. The Rolling Roamers are shown enjoying happy hour at Honey Bear in Oregon.

Other SIR RV clubs had scheduled outings in 2011, but the RV Committee did not receive any reports or pictures from these clubs to include in this column.

This year will be a year of decision for the State RV Committee. Jack Streckfus and I have been working now for over two years trying to reactivate the State RV Committee.

This year will be a year of decision for the State RV Committee.

Although it has been fun, it has also been very frustrating for both of us. First we worked very hard to get RVers on our Committee. We did get several outstanding and willing members, but we fell short of the number needed to accomplish the objectives of the State Committee. Second, we tried to get all of the existing SIR Sponsored RV Clubs to help us by providing information about their RV clubs. This effort was a failure with several RV clubs telling us they did not want to be a part of the State effort.

Jack and I will continue our efforts this year but we are becoming convinced that there is not enough interest from the SIR RV Community to continue with the reactivation of the Committee. Perhaps there are other SIR RVers that would be willing to carry the effort forward in 2013. Jack and I would certainly help. Just contact us at sirstaterv@gmail.com.



Committee Reports

INFOSYS Committee

Dean Steichen, Chairman



In this first Column I would like to introduce you to the SIR INFOSYS Committee members and give you a brief description of what we do.

Nearly everything produced by SIR is developed, processed or published by the SIR INFORMATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE (INFOSYS). These dedicated and talented men maintain the SIR Information Assets (e.g. SIR

Websites, the SIR Database, SIR Happenings Newsletter, etc.) on a nearly daily basis.

After many years of dedicated service, Dwight Sale, “the face” of INFOSYS, stepped down as Chairman but remains an essential member of the team. Dwight is the Chairman and primary technical support and data entry person for the SIR Database which is the basis for nearly all records, statistics and reports on the website (e.g. Roster and Branch Locator, Branch Data Sheets, etc.). Dwight also is the Chairman of the Email Subcommittee, State Roster Subcommittee, SIR Manual Subcommittee and member of SIR Forms Subcommittee.

Dwight’s Database Subcommittee consists of Carlo Pedron, John Skarpelos, Dean Steichen and a new member, Nick Yannaccone. They are attempting to make the SIR Database more accessible and easier to use for those few who need to maintain its’ content.

Dean Steichen has accepted the Chairmanship of the INFOSYS Committee and is Chairman of the Website Subcommittee. Dean, along with Bill Winslow (primary technical support and Branch Websites support), Rich Dettmer (Content Manager), Phil Goff, John Skarpelos and Derek Southern are the guys doing yeoman work to keep the SIR website (www.sirinc.org) fresh, appealing and informative.

Jim Donovan, as Chairman of the State Certificates Subcommittee, is a very busy man as he creates, records, emails and mails hundreds of certificates and related correspondence to members, Branch, Area and Regional leadership.

Don MacGregor is the Chairman and Executive Editor of the SIR Happenings Subcommittee. He and John Skarpelos create and publish the excellent SIR Happenings newsletter filled with interesting and informative articles and photos about SIR members enjoying an active retirement.

As Chairman of the SIR Forms Subcommittee, John Skarpelos, along with Dwight Sale, create and maintain the SIR Forms needed by Branch, Area and Regional leaders to report, record or order SIR things.

As mentioned earlier, Dwight Sale is Chairman of the SIR Manual Subcommittee. He and Dean Steichen are responsible for maintaining and publishing the SIR Manual. This job is easier now that we are “all electronic” and paper copies are being phased out.

State Bowling Committee

Del Locke, Chairman



This year starts off with a new State Bowling Committee Board of Directors. Some members are new...some are in new roles...and some are returning to their previous positions. The first few months will be transition months for the Committee. I was the Committee Secretary for 3 years and am now the Committee Chairman. Jerry Sabo formerly filled the role of Assistant

Secretary and is now our Committee Secretary and the SIR Bowling Activity Web Master. Ray Young returns as our Treasurer for a second year. Ray Buttacavoli will return as our Committee Vice Chairman and Dick Martegani is our new Assistant Treasurer. Two more important positions are Chairman of our Policy Sub-Committee and Chairman of the Operations Sub-Committee. Bill Cooper and Sir Bob York will chair these indispensable committees for us again this year.

Our 2012 Tournament Schedule has been finalized, approved, and is posted on our website. SIR will host 20 USBC certified bowling tournaments this year. We have lost several branch tournament hosts for a variety of reasons but we have also gained two additional tournament sites. Our goal for the next several years is to grow the tournament schedule to include tournaments in Regions 7 and 8.

We have a strong presence in Northern California but need additional tournaments in Central California. Two years ago, 2,488 bowlers participated in tournaments and last year, we had 2,505. We have room to grow in 2012 and beyond. Take a look at our 2012 Tournament Schedule and join us for some really good competition. If you bowl in a SIR league and would like to host a SIR tournament, contact any of the Bowling Committee officers and we will be happy to get you started in the right direction.

Del

Mike Berry assists Dwight Sale with the Email Subcommittee and are responsible for sending out all the emails to Branch, Area, Regional and State leadership. You Branch leaders can attest to the significant number of emails produced by these two. Who knew we had so much to be informed about?

In future columns, I will let you know more about what INFOSYS is doing. For example, what’s new on the SIR website (e.g. new SIR banner) or how all those Certificates get processed.

If you are interested in assisting any of these interesting INFOSYS functions, contact Dean Steichen, djsteich@comcast.net.

Dean

Committee Reports

State Golf Committee

Bob Mannell, Chairman



As I begin 2012 as the new state golf chairman, I have begun to look at SIR golf in a much more detailed way and have found an interesting and somewhat disappointing trend. After the golf committee did some research on the membership history of all SIR NCGA golf clubs, we found that those clubs whose members are active NCGA participants in SIR Area, Division,

and State events have either grown or maintained a high percentage of their members. Conversely, those golf clubs whose members are not NCGA members or have seldom participated or not participated at all in these events, have almost universally seen a significant decline in membership of not only their golf club but their branch membership.

So far I haven't been able to gather enough detailed information to have a complete explanation for this, but certainly one of the important factors is that of the 18,000+ SIR members state-wide, about 5,000 are members of SIR NCGA clubs. That means that roughly 28% of our overall membership is involved in golf. It also means that since we golfers account for more than 1 in every 4 SIR members, we have a chance to positively impact membership and participation of not only our golf clubs, but our Branches and SIR overall.

Based on the above observation, it seems one of the easiest and most enjoyable ways to improve participation and retain membership is to make a dedicated effort to publicize, promote, and participate in golf activities outside your branch events.

My request is that, before you dismiss this as just another promotion of SIR State Golf and the NCGA, look at you and your club and see where you fit. Do you and most or many of your members participate in qualifiers for State individual and team tournaments? Do you play in State sponsored tournaments like Las Vegas, Reno, and Solvang? Are you gaining or losing members? If you find this relationship between minimal or no active participation and membership loss is true for your local club, what are you going to do?

I certainly don't think this is the only answer to the continuing decrease in SIR golfers and likely not even the best one, but it is certainly worth thought as we all try to keep our Branches and Branch golf clubs healthy and growing.

The complete 2012 SIR State golf schedule information is available now on the SIR Golf web site calendar. Individual tournament information is also available on the web site. Both can be found at <http://www.sirstategolf.com/>.

All state sponsored tournaments are handicap tournaments suitable for all levels of players and are open to any SIR member with a current NCGA handicap. Come join us and meet and compete equally with SIR golfers with handicaps ranging from single digits to the max of 36.4, all enjoying this great game called golf.

Bob

Growth & Membership Committee

Walter Schick, Chairman

"Couples Activities for Sirs"

The revised Form 2 Membership Application has renewed Branch efforts to add more activities to attract new members that might not be interested in Golf, Fishing, or Bowling. Branches that have more than 10 activities can have double their number of golfers, for example. Each Branch can help meet their new membership goals



of 10% if they show a guest that they could help him start a new activity that fits his interest.

What's new, and not on the list? Area 6 in Marin County, who share twenty-nine activities with seven branches, sent me their list and they have: Applied Technology, Fly Fishing, Great Books, Military History, Science Discussion, Time Shares, and Vintage Autos.

Over thirty of the activities on the back of the membership application form are "couples-ready". In addition to Couples Bridge and Couples nine-hole golf, start 4 or 5 new ones in your own branch and your home life becomes happier. Dine-In, Dine-Out, and Wine Tasting are good mixers. The happy ladies also talk to their friends and their friends send their husbands to SIR.

So, how do you increase your activities? One branch took the back of the form, added a line for member signature and gave out copies at their luncheon. Another Branch asked each member to take the list home to discuss with their spouse and then bring it back the next meeting or mail it in.

Activities Coordinators can talk up one new activity at each luncheon, maybe getting a director or a friend to lift his hand when he asks for a show of hands for interest. Then ask those who are interested to meet at a table after the luncheon to talk about ideas for the activity. You are sure to find one of the Sirs to chair and another to co-chair.

Walt



Happenings Travel Bulletin

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 100th 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.



September 28-October 7, 2012

Western Mediterranean Cruise

An all inclusive luxury cruise of a lifetime. This is a 9-day western Mediterranean cruise from Barcelona to Monte Carlo. Some of the ports of call include: Marseille, Cannes, Florence, and Rome. Accommodations are all suites with ocean views & balconies. Prices range from \$5299 to \$6300 PPDO and include everything!! Special bonuses are available if you sign up early. Offered by Branch 22 Travel. Call Henry Puccinelli at 415-457-3990.

September 23-October 2, 2012

New England for the Fall Colors

This is a 10 day trip to New England for the fall colors. We'll fly to Boston and then tour several states in the area, using buses and trains. We'll also have 2 days at the end of the trip in Boston at a very centrally located hotel, with time on your own for sightseeing. Price is \$3280 PPDO. Offered by Branches 101 & 121 Travel. Call David Abrahams at 925-447-9386.



Happenings at the State Board Meeting

Excerpts from the Minutes of the January 17, 2012 Meeting

Study Session: Prior to the Board Meeting, President Jim Stedman led a study session focusing on the mission and objectives of Sons in Retirement at the State and Branch levels.

President Jim Stedman called the meeting order and thanked those who participated in the Study Session about what SIR is and what SIR should be in the future. He noted that we need to support the Area Governors and Branches in reaching the goal of increasing membership by 10% each year and having 70% luncheon attendance.

Secretary Eckart Sellinger asked the Directors to follow up with their Area Governors to make sure Branches submit a printed copy of their Branch Rosters on time.

Membership & Form 27: The President said that the Form 27 End of Year Reports were sent to all Directors. He then referred to the year-end reports and recapped some of the Branch successes last year. Two Directors commented that we need to continue to emphasize the value and need for the Form 27.

Training Committee: Chairman Dettmer identified the Training Committee members and said they will meet for the first time next month.

Golf Committee: Chairman Bob Mannell said the State schedule is set and is on the SIR Website.

INFOSYS Committee: Committee member, Derek Southern reporting for Dean Steichen, said the Committee had redesigned the lead page of the SIR Website with a new look involving banner graphics and are looking for further ideas to improve the page. They are also developing analytics to track usage of the website, and specific pages on the site, so they can focus their energies on improving the most used areas.

Treasurer's Report for 2011: Outgoing Treasurer, Gus Lopez, indicated SIR was in good financial health at the end of the year. He will be transferring the books to current Treasurer Mike Berry today. Treasurer Berry indicated he would have a 2012 budget available for review before the April Board meeting.

G & M Committee: Chairman Walt Schick pointed out that Bumper Stickers and Hats are available and that 350 hats were sold in 2011. He modeled a new high quality SIR jacket that will soon be available. Walt discussed the updated new member application form with a list of 70 SIR activities on the back of the form. President Stedman said he and Walt have agreed on the following roles for the G&M Committee: 1-Membership Development (programs etc to help Branches and the State meet their objectives); 2-Eventually take over the management of the Form 27; 3-Manage the SIR email and phone communications; 4-Both internal and external PR; 5-Round tables.

Rules Committee: Chairman Dick DeVoe said there are 363 Rules and 90 Bylaws as of this time and they are working

to simplify and reduce duplication. At today's meeting, the Board approved 6 rule changes.

Travel Committee: Chairman Larry Garvin said the work to celebrate our 50th anniversary with a Cruise to Alaska in August 2013 from San Francisco is still ongoing.

Insurance Committee: Chairman John Thomason said our premium is only increasing \$600 for this year. John has chaired this committee for 8 years and wants to find a replacement by next year.

Bowling Committee: The new Committee Chairman, Del Locke, said the committee has already set their objectives for this year.

Certificates: Chairman Jim Donovan said 38 HLM, 19 Senior HLM, 4 Century, 36 Super Senior, and 241 Senior Certificates were made in 2011 which was close to the 339 made in 2010.

Regional Director Reports: The 8 Regional Directors that attended the Board Meeting gave reports basically covering what they are doing to increase membership in their Regions.

President Jim Stedman closed the meeting, thanking everyone for their participation and reminding all that the next meeting will be on April 3, 2012.

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

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