



SIR HAPPENINGS

SUMMER 2012 VOLUME 9 ISSUE 3

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

President Jim's Column



We are members of this fine SIR organization which has a simple concept: to provide opportunities for retired men to socialize with each other, to renew old friendships and to make new friends. As I travel to Branches throughout the State and

meet many of you, I am told over and over again of how your retirement years are better because you are SIR members. It is gratifying to observe the camaraderie that exists among Branch members. This simple concept really works.

After these observations, I am encouraged to inform you that the future of SIR is bright. Healthy Branches are thriving. I will bring you up to date to demonstrate that this is happening. There are now about 18,000 SIR members in 142 branches located in communities from Bakersfield in the south to Mt. Shasta in the north. Our goal is to recruit and induct new members at the rate of 10% of Membership, or 1,800 new members each year. I am happy to inform you that we inducted 2,100 new members last year and we are on pace to do the same this year.

We are having this success because healthy Branches are meeting the needs of their members and are attractive to potential members. Each of us has an important role to play in this success. It is to participate in all that our Branches have to offer to the full extent of our interests. Our participation energizes our Branches and contributes to their long term health. Please take full advantage of your SIR membership, be a participant, invite your friends to join and enjoy retirement more.

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

Region 7, South Bay - Sunnyvale south to Monterey

Visual Aids to Focus on SIR Goals

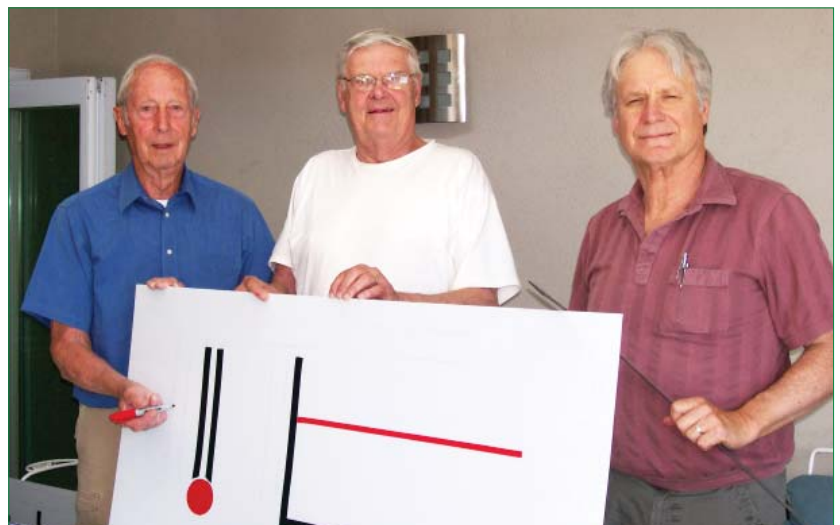
Richard Kabanek, Region 7 Director

Sons In Retirement has adopted two important goals to increase membership: 10% recruitment and 70% luncheon attendance. Historical data show that Branches that meet these two goals over a long period of time are healthy and successful. During officer training late last year, I stressed these two goals and asked that they be added to the Branch Bulletins and BEC notes. Well... after several months of not seeing them in those documents, I began to think about how we could get that message out to the membership. I kicked around some ideas and finally came up with a Visual Aid for the members to see at their luncheons.

The Visual Aid idea was discussed with the Region 7 Area Governors and they all liked it. We decided upon a Visual Aid that would have a thermometer showing recruitment and a line graph showing the luncheon attendance. The Governors came over to my house and we made a Visual Aid Chart for each of the 21 Branches in Region 7.

These charts are shown at each luncheon and the Membership Chairman explains last month's progress toward their Branch goals. It's too early to tell if they are doing any good, but at least the Branch knows where it stands on the SIR goals. I think long term they are going to help the Branches focus on their goals.

The photo shows (l to r), Area 5 Governor Richard Bischoff – Region 7 Director Richard Kabanek – and Area 20 Governor Gene Elliot, working on a Visual Aid Chart.



Pathfinder Branch 59, Fremont/Newark

Winkley Awarded HLM

John Skarpelos, Bulletin Editor

Sir Art Winkley was awarded an Honorary Life Membership by State President Jim Stedman at the June luncheon meeting. Shown in the photo are (l to r) Big Sir Jim Ferenz, Art Winkley, Jim Stedman and Little Sir Skip Mugford.

Art Winkley joined Branch 59 twenty years ago. He became assistant Birthday Chairman shortly after joining. In 1999 he became Birthday Chairman. He calls each SIR member that is celebrating their birthdays during that month and invites them to sit at the birthday table. Each SIR receives a Birthday Greeting card and is recognized by the Big Sir through a list prepared by Art.



Santa Cruz Branch 20

A Long Delayed Graduation

Jack Roberts, Past Big Sir

Recently, hundreds of Watsonville High School graduates donned caps and gowns and walked across the stage to pick up their much anticipated diplomas. Area 10 Governor Joseph "J.R." Blinkenberg, walked across the stage with them and he even gave the commencement address (see picture). His wait for a diploma had been six decades long and he said, "until now, I never had the thrill of graduating."

Toward the end of his senior year, some friends urged him to leave school and join the Navy. With the Korean War less than a year old, it seemed like a good idea so off they went to enlist, but Navy doctors discovered he had fractured his skull as a toddler and rejected him. He returned to Watsonville, but by then school had ended for the year and the possibility of graduating with his class. A few months later he was drafted into the U.S. Army, which was unconcerned about the small hole in his head. By the time his military service was over, he was married with a small son... "I had to get a job," he said. "I had a wife and baby to support."

Though he never earned a diploma, he enjoyed a highly successful career with the Southern Pacific Railroad. Perhaps even more important were his significant contributions to local sports and other community activities. He said that he didn't seek out a diploma, but was pleased when Watsonville High School Principal Elaine Legorreta decided to honor him. His honorary diploma recognized a life of accomplishment and giving. "All the work I've done, especially since I retired, has been for the betterment of the community, the betterment of kids so they'll have someone they can depend on," Blinkenberg said. "It's been rewarding."

"I have a strange philosophy," he said. "When I die, I don't want one enemy on this planet. I want everybody to be my friend."



In Memoriam - Albert Walton

Albert S. Walton, President of Sons In Retirement in 1998 and a long time member of Branch 50, passed away on May 11th of this year.

Al graduated from Sacramento High School and then graduated from Stanford University. He served in the Navy from 1945 to 1946 as an electronics technician.

In 1937 with a wedding cake in the back seat, he drove his girlfriend, Dorothea Langer, to Nevada where they were married. Two months shy of 70 years of marriage proved that teenage marriages do last.

Al was a licensed general contractor and was very active in community and civic affairs. Some of these included: Secretary-Manager Reclamation District 900, President of both the Yolo County and West Sacramento Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Club President, member of the Yolo County Board of Appeals and he received a commendation from the HUD Secretary for outstanding contributions. As of this year, Al had the distinguished honor of being the most senior Master Mason with 67 years.

He retired in 1981 and occupied his time learning about computers, playing golf, and planning trips with Dot. They traveled all over the world and lived life to the fullest.

Sirs in the News

San Francisco Branch 4

90 & 95 Year Olds Honored

Ken Reed, Little Sir

At the June luncheon meeting, Branch 4 honored members who were over 90 and 95 years old with Presidential Awards for reaching those memorable milestones. The ceremony was chaired by Little Sir Ken Reed, and the awards were presented by George Kranan, Region 5 Director, on the far right in the picture.



Lake of the Pines Branch 170, Auburn

Spink receives President's Award

Rich Hibbs, Bulletin Editor

Regional Director Gale Jeffers is shown on the right in the picture happily presenting Bob Spink with the President's Award for reaching 90 years of age.

Bob served in the Navy during WW II and was a pilot for United Airlines for 37 years before retiring in 1982. He and his wife Rosemary have lived at Lake of the Pines (LOP) since 1984. They were married in 1943 and have four children, nine grandchildren, and fifteen great-grandchildren!

Bob transferred to Branch 170 from the nearby Alta Sierra Branch 124 back in January of 1997. He was an avid golfer and played scratch golf until his health started declining. Bob has an amazing 14 Holes-In-One to his credit.



Pathfinder Branch 59, Fremont/Newark

Redeker Honored

John Skarpelos, Bulletin Editor

Sir Clark Redeker (left) received the Super Senior State President's award for having attained the age of 95 — from State President Jim Stedman at the June luncheon meeting. Big Sir Jim Ferenz (center) assisted in making the presentation.



Stanislaus Branch 103, Modesto

Futch Gets a Well-Deserved HLM

Don Reed, Bulletin Editor

SIR President Jim Stedman was in Modesto in May to present an Honorary Life Membership to Joe Futch, a very active "over 90" member, who has made numerous contributions to Branch 103 as well as to the State organization.

Joe has been an active member of the Stanislaus Branch 103 here in Modesto since 2002. To name just a few of his many contributions, he has been a Director, Assistant Golf Chairman, and member of the Membership Nominating Committee. Joe has also been a guiding force in SIR public relations programs and as Chairman of this committee has helped promote activities and business support at the Branch, Region, and State level. Joe's efforts to increase SIR membership have also included developing brochures, discount cards, and promotions for several golf tournaments and special Ladies Day events.



Sirs in the News

Lamorinda Branch 171, Moraga

Great Ambassadors for SIR

Al Donner, Past Big Sir

Branch 171 has been growing by leaps and bounds, and now has nearly 200 members. While many members contribute to the Branch's vitality by bringing in new members, several stand out, including a founding father and a relative newbie.

Ray Horton is one of the founders of Branch 171. Since then, Ray has brought in more than 15 new members. Some are personal friends, but others were virtually cold calls! "It's an easy sell," says Horton, who has cold-called several people who accepted his invitation to join. "SIR is a great organization," adds Horton in explaining his success. "I think a lot of people can enjoy what I enjoy."

At the opposite end of longevity in SIR is relative "newbie" Fernando Gumucio who joined Branch 171 in 2009. Since then, Fernando has brought in six new members. Fernando's frequent appearances at the luncheon microphone to cheerfully introduce yet another new member is something the luncheon audience looks forward to. Like Ray, Fernando tells a similar tale of enthusiasm and sharing. "I was lucky to find SIR," says Gumucio. "I thought... what a great idea, when HLM Ted Westphal introduced me to Sons In Retirement." "I enjoy the camaraderie!"... and Gumucio has joined several of the branch's active groups, including golf and fishing. And, he shares his enthusiasm with other retirees he meets. "It's a good deal," he enthuses!

Horton is a former Big Sir, and a retiree from the phone company. Gumucio retired several times... first as president of Del Monte Foods, then as head of Foster Farms and later as an advisor to former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dick Lyng. Fernando's work career ended a decade ago, and discovering Sons In Retirement added a lively new dimension to his life.

Ray Horton on the left and Fernando Gumucio on the right in the picture are great examples of the benefit SIR brings to retirees," says Big Sir Karl Droese. "They are enthusiastic about life and share that enthusiasm with everyone."



Sierra Branch 175, Fresno

Spotlight on a Bird House Man

Jerry Long, Bulletin Editor

Merle Knapp has been an active member of Branch 175 for 12 years and he has many hobbies and activities that he likes to pursue. His main passion for the last several years has been building novelty bird houses and then donating them to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust. That organization takes the donated entries and auctions them off, with the proceeds benefiting the Parkway Trusts River Center Community Programs.

His first entry was in 2006 when a friend and docent at the River Center urged him to enter. It was a two story Victorian mansion. Having gotten the "bug," his entry the next year was titled "Home Tweet Home" and won a blue ribbon. Every year since then, Merle has won blue ribbons for his entries.

This year, Merle won two blue ribbons for his entry entitled, "Meux B & B" (see lower photo) which is a miniature scale model of the Muex Museum (see upper photo) in downtown Fresno, one ribbon was for "Best Construction" and the other for "Best of Show."

Merle and his wife, Joan, have been married for 54 years and have two children and four grandchildren. He's been a member of SIR for 12 years and has served as Branch 175 Bowling Chairman, Rooster Wrangler, Assistant Secretary & Historian and Director. He also enjoys the SIR Bowling League and Book Club.

Congratulations, Merle... and, by the way, thanks for all the great things you have been doing for Branch 175!!



Sirs in the News

Peach Bowl Branch 45, Yuba City

Two Honored as Senior HLM's

Dieter Rex, Big Sir



Two members of our Branch have been recently honored as Senior Honorary Life Members.

At our May luncheon, Wilbur Wright was recognized as a Senior Honorary Life Member. In the left picture, State Vice President Richard Dettmer (on the right) is shown making the presentation.



Then during our July luncheon, Robert Hill was recognized as a Senior Honorary Life Member. Making this presentation in the picture on the right are State Vice President Richard Dettmer (left) and Region 9 Director Gail Jeffers (right).

Chico Branch 63

Nine Honored

René Vercruyssen, Secretary & Bulletin Editor

At the regular luncheon meeting in April, we honored nine members who have reached the age of four score and ten. This is a very select fraternity and we were proud to have this opportunity to recognize these nine, fine gentlemen.

Seated in the front row from left to right are Fred Smith, Stan Staples, and Cy Williams. Seated in the middle row from left to right are Ed Morrison, John Wallin, Ken Brownell, Joe Bates, and Cecil Bray. Standing in the back row from left to right are Big Sir Gary Imhoff and Win Richards.



These gentlemen were presented with a gold seal certificate by Big Sir Gary Imhoff, recognizing their entry into this select fraternity.

After awarding the certificates the entire group was given a standing ovation by all those attending the luncheon.

Peach Bowl Branch 45, Yuba City

Twin Rivers Branch 109, Marysville

Slow Trollers

Thomas Pochert, Slow Troller

Members of Branch 45 in Yuba City and Branch 109 in Marysville that belong to the Slow Trollers Fishing Club have a number of events planned this year. Four tournaments will be held, each at a different location: First, Lake Englebright in April – Bullard's Bar in May – Lake Oroville in June – and the Bay in September. We are a competitive bunch and like to earn prize money. We have two categories: game fish... bass, catfish, etc. and trout species... kokanee, coho, trout, etc. and the largest fish and heaviest limit stringer both get a \$25.00 prize.

In late May, we have an annual Lake Shasta three day fishing trip. The group fills a bunkhouse with good food, camaraderie, and fishing stories. Shasta produces some big bass and trout and it's a really great trip!

The club has a fish fry/BBQ picnic to finish off the year. The event will take place at Hammonton Grove Park on the Yuba River. Members, wives, and guests all look forward to the homemade salads, desserts, appetizers and libations and the food and drink makes for an excellent social outing. At this affair, one member is named the "Fisherman of the Year" and given a plaque to commemorate this honor.

Because of the mild winter and extensive trout plants this winter, slow trolling has produced many limits from the local lakes. As an example, Richard Minor and Manny Castro are shown holding a nice string of large mouth black bass that they caught on Lake Shasta.

Remember... you can't catch fish if you don't go fishing... so, enjoy yourself and get out on the water!!!



News from the Branches

News from the Branches

Placer Gold Branch 37, Auburn

WWII Veterans Honored

Branch 37 honored three Japanese American veterans of the 442nd Infantry Regiment for their service in World War II and one for service with the Army Air Corp in the Pacific. In the picture from left to right are 442nd Infantry Regiment veterans Shig Yokote, Norman Kamada, Frank Kageta and Army Air Corps veteran Mac Tsujimoto.



Jerry Lewelling, who orchestrated the event, introduced the four men and then showed the moving documentary "Going for Broke." The film outlined the role of Japanese Americans in World War II from their forced evacuation into internment camps to their service in the 100th Infantry Battalion and 442nd Infantry Regiment where they became some of the fiercest fighters in World War II. After the film, Kageta spoke about his experiences in the 442nd.

Admiration swelled in those attending the luncheon as they reflected on the character and accomplishments of these men. Past Big Sir Moe Griffiths remarked on the event's value as an opportunity to hear directly from these veterans as opposed to what's said about them. They've spoken many times in the community and everyone who hears them says "Wow, that was inspirational."

The veterans received a standing ovation from the Sirs in attendance, many of whom are veterans themselves. Each veteran received a certificate and commemorative medal. Frank Kageta welcomed the recognition as one that he and his colleagues will remember for the rest of their lives.

Editor's note: This is an edited version of an article by Michelle Read of the Auburn Journal brought to our attention by Little Sir Roland Gaubert.

Wine Valley Branch 149, Napa

Doing what it takes to Grow

Membership

Dave Collins, Big Sir

Our Branch is striving to meet the challenge goals set by our President Jim Stedman. I feel we are making good progress and the new Form 27 has been a helpful tool in reaching our goals. For example, our membership goal for the year is 16 and we have already added 18 new members so far this year and we are getting some really good people. The photo shows four recently inducted new members who are all prominent members of our community. They are from left to right in the photo Membership Chairman Dennis Pangburn and new members Tim Borman, Richard Hanf, Bob Weeks and Gerry Closs. These men retired from careers as a Fire Chief, FBI agent, Bakery Owner, and Engineer.



We feel that by advertising in the local newspaper and adding new activities, we have sparked an interest in our membership to bring friends into Branch membership. We also do some outreach in the community such as entering a classic convertible in the local July 4th parade with SIR banners on each side of the car. The more we expose ourselves to the public, the more interest there will be in Sons In Retirement.

Recognizing the importance of having a number of activities, we conducted a survey from the members asking them what activities they would like to be involved in. From that survey we created the following new activities: Travel, Fishing, Walking, Cards, and a Dine-Out group. In addition, we have always offered Bocce Ball, Computer, Golf, and Roving Roosters activities. This now gives us a nice variety of activities for our members to enjoy and I'm quite pleased that all of our activities are being well attended.

We plan to continue to grow in a relaxed atmosphere, meeting at the Elks Lodge in Napa, enjoying a fun monthly luncheon meeting with a reasonably priced luncheon. We currently have 164 members and are shooting for more guests at our luncheons to be considered for membership.

News from the Branches

Las Trampas Branch 116, Walnut Creek

Amiable Amblers

Joel White, Walking Chairman

Branch 116 hiking and walking group known as the “Amiable Amblers,” is now in its 5th year and has grown to about 10 participants on each walk. We try to encourage participation by those of all physical abilities by holding walks that are mostly “out and back” routes for 1 hour... so, after 30 minutes, those who walk more slowly can turn around and everyone returns to the starting point at the same time. We start out at 8:15 am on the second and fourth Fridays of the month, on a

route chosen by the walk leader, and end up with coffee and lots of good conversation.

The photo was taken on a gloriously beautiful morning. Led by Dan Green and joined by Activities chairman Jerry Hicks and new member Mark Jordan, we walked the Lafayette Moraga trail from the

Moraga commons, down past St Mary’s college to a “waterfall”... unfortunately with no water. Participants in the photo, from right to left, are: Lytton DeSilva, Norm Schoenfeld, Dan Green (behind), Andrea Green, Mark Jordan, Coleen Geary, Art Donaldson, Rich Black, Jerry Hicks (behind), Donna Argenbright, Dave Geary, Allan Chasnoff, and Joel White (behind the camera). Good fellowship followed at the Terzetto coffee bar.

Any Sirs from other Branches wishing to join this mellow group, or to be added to our email contact list, should contact me, Joel White at zp2z2mrz@yahoo.com, or 925-964-0994).



San Francisco Branch 4

Healthy Walkers

Ken Reed, Little Sir

In past months we have had some very interesting, educational, and healthy walking trips. These fun, educational, and sometimes unusual activities are planned monthly and often include a docent led historical tour, by our California history buff, Paul Rosenberg.

Our walking group has visited the USS Hornet, had a

Most recently we began our healthy historical walk, this time at Land’s End, with our San Francisco Walk for Health.

Fort Mason history walk, visited the Queen Wilhelmina Tulip Garden, enjoyed a San Francisco Railway Museum Tour, went aboard the Jeremiah O’Brien and toured – sobered up – at the Anchor Brewery, and had a fun morning at the Hyde Street Pier walk.

Most recently we began our healthy historical walk, this time at Land’s End, with our San Francisco Walk for Health. The walk included a visit to the new Land’s End Visitors Center and a four mile walk with sweeping vistas of the Golden Gate Bridge (see picture), Ocean Beach, the Sutro Baths and more. Come join us... everyone is welcome!

A recent study indicates a 20% less chance of a heart attack when you exercise (walk) 300 minutes a week and a 15% less chance if you walk 150 minutes a week... so, get off the couch and out of the house and start walking!!



News from the Branches

Pony Express Branch 69, Sacramento

Recruiting at a Golf Expo

Tom Page, Recruiting Chairman

For three days last April, the Haggin Oaks Superstore in Sacramento sponsored the largest Golf Expo demo day in the entire United States. Branch 69 negotiated with Haggin Oaks to get a booth at the event to bolster our recruiting efforts. Branch 117 joined us in presenting the benefits of Sons in Retirement to the thousands of golfers who attended the three-day gathering.

We are happy to say the Branch 69 members volunteered in large numbers to staff the booth. We had at least two Sirs at the booth from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm each day. Our booth was decked out with large photo panels of Sirs doing what Sirs do best — having fun. The panels showed various SIR activities, including golf, bowling, fishing, SIR Day at the Park, our luncheons, and RVing. In addition, we used the large display panels from the State organization to augment our own material. The picture shows our Big Sir Jim Porterfield on the left and Director of Golf Lennie Silva on the right and as you can see, the booth really looked great!

Not only did our two Branches recruit for ourselves, we met many interested men from other areas in Northern California and we referred them to the State SIR website and to Branches in their own cities. Lastly, we met lots of golfers who already belonged to Sons In Retirement from all over Northern California. We had a great time talking to them as well as the many potential new members. We are hopeful that we can repeat this experience again next year at the Golf Expo.

Now we are in the next stage of the recruiting effort. We are contacting all of the gentlemen who expressed an interest in SIR and we are inviting them to our next luncheon. This will give them a chance to meet our Branch members and see first hand, the camaraderie that is so evident in SIR.



Sierra Hills Branch 79, Auburn

Fishing on Beautiful Lake Shasta

John Rosasco, Lead Hook

The Sierra Hills Branch Fishing Group recently enjoyed a very successful trip up to Lake Shasta. About 20 members attended and most caught fish. Many of the fish were good-sized... about 2.5 pounds.

One of the members made all the arrangements and secured four well-furnished cabins. Members brought their own boats and gear. Cooking was done by teams—each team being responsible for one evening meal. Each member took care of his own breakfast and lunch. This system worked well with no one having to do too big a share of the work.

The Fishing Group has enjoyed similar outings in previous years and we look forward to these outings each year. In the picture the group is enjoying the picturesque setting on the lake while Chuck Mierkey is showing with his hands how big the fish was that he caught... or got away?



In addition to the major group outing, many members join up with each other and fish the local lakes and streams with great success and truly enjoy the camaraderie in their retirement years with SIR members of similar fishing interests.



Committee Reports

INFOSYS Committee

Dean Steichen, Chairman



The SIR Database is the basis for many reports and documents presented on the SIR website (www.sirinc.org). This database contains about 20,000 records of past and current SIR State Officers, Honorary Life Members (HLMs), State Committees, State Appointees, Regional Directors, Area Governors, Branch Officers and certain other

key Branch members. It is the basis of the State Roster and Branch Locator reports as well as Membership Statistics and a lot more. Branch membership counts, HLM, Senior, Super Senior and Century Certificates are recorded and tracked in the Database as well.

The e-mail and USPS addresses contained in the Database are used for the many communications sent to Branches, State and Branch Officers. Additionally, the Database provides an important historical perspective for all the SIR State and Branch Officer positions held by these members, the dates of their service in each position and a lot more.

A less visible, but equally important function of the Database is to provide data and documents supporting California and Federal tax-exempt reporting so SIR and SIR Branches can remain tax-exempt. This data is used by the State Treasurer and Assistant State Treasurer when they file all necessary documentation on behalf of SIR and SIR Branches. The Database also provides the Branch membership assessments which financially support State

SIR and pay for insurance.

The SIR INFOSYS Committee works hard to keep the content of the SIR Database current and relevant. Dwight Sale performs most of this work but the State Treasurer, Assistant State Treasurer as well as the Certificates Chairman also update the

Database regularly. Most of the content comes from the Forms (e.g. Form 28, Form 27, Form 20, Certificate Requests, etc.) produced by the Branches and sent to INFOSYS for processing. This data is reviewed and entered into the SIR Database to produce the reports available through the links on the Member Information web page. All this is available to SIR Leaders and members at the touch of a button. Make use of it!

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



State Bowling Committee

Del Locke, Chairman



The Bowling Committee wants to thank Richmond Branch 2, and San Pablo Branch 73, for hosting the 2012 SIR State Bowling Tournament at the AMF Pinole Valley Lanes in May. Co-Tournament chairmen, Ben Takesh'ta and Roy Rodrigues along with many Branch volunteers, hosted 42 4-man teams in two divisions over three days.

The winners for the "A" Division were from San Pablo Branch 73, and the "B" Division winners were from Grass Valley Branch 55. Team members from Branch 73 were Alan Close, John Walker, John Donkonics and Dennis Jergenson. In the picture are the "B" Division team members (left to right) Wayne Cartwright, Clay Hansen, Larry Shirkey, and Charlie Babiarz. I might add



that this is not the first time Branch 55 has won the team event at our state tournament.

This is the first year that the tournament entries were split into "A" and "B" divisions which gave more teams the opportunity to win the event within their division. Our Operations Sub-committee chairman, Bob York, is currently working with Branches to identify a 2013 SIR State Tournament host. I just want to add that just three weeks after Branches 2 and 73 hosted the State Tournament, they hosted their own annual tournament at Pinole Valley Lanes. I want to thank the tournament committee for this effort.

I was privileged to attend the Grass Valley Branch 55 luncheon on July 10th to present the "B" Division winning team and individual trophies and then on Wednesday July 11th, I attended my own Branch 73 Luncheon and was going to present the "A" Division winning trophy to our Branch bowlers, but do to vacations and travel none of the bowlers were present... I'll catch them in August.

Committee Reports

Growth & Membership Committee

Walter Schick, Chairman



Branch Focus Groups

Some active branches have hosted a focus group on a day away from the BEC meeting. This group should include any BEC members, past officers and other members that have interest in looking for opportunities for the Branch. A typical focus group might meet for two or three hours to

talk about where the Branch can improve.

After your next year's officers are elected, would be a good time to have a focus group meeting.

Once these opportunities are outlined and ranked, individual committees can gather to discuss goals and action plans to put improvements to work.

Form 27 establishes and monitors goals for each Branch to continue to be healthy and vital. These goals can start the discussions in your focus group.

Seven Branch Health Indicators

There are seven main indicators of Branch health. Including the first four that are on the monthly Form 27, these are:

1. Are new members being inducted at a 10% or higher annual rate? (Form 27, line 11)
2. Is total membership maintained or growing? (Form 27, line 15)
3. Percent of members attending regular luncheon meetings (Form 27, line 18)
4. Are guests (potential members) attending at a 20% or higher annual rate? (Form 27, line 19)
5. Do you have ten or more Branch-specific activities, including couples activities?
6. Are new members being retained at a 90% level after one year?
7. Does 35% of the membership volunteer for committees, BEC, and luncheon positions?

Five Branch Committee Functions

Branches should consider five committees to work on the goals and action plans that come up from a focus group. Descriptions of these committees are in Ideas and in the new Operation Guide & Recruiting Information pages on [www, SIRinc.org](http://www.SIRinc.org)

1. Publicity and Image
2. Recruitment
3. Activities
4. Speakers
5. Member Relations



GOLDEN GATE FIELDS

WHERE THE BAY COMES TO PLAY

Golden Gate Fields

Presents....

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

When: Friday October 19, 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.

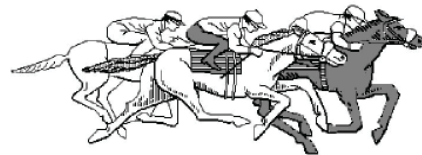
First race: 12:45 p.m.

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

Happenings Travel Bulletin

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 28-October 13, 2012

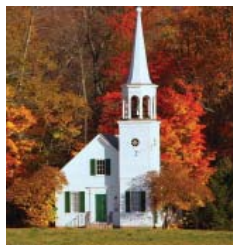
Panama Canal

This is a 15 night luxury cruise from San Francisco to Ft Lauderdale aboard the Island Princess. Ports of call include: Cabo San Lucas, Puntarena, Fuerte Amador, Cartagena, Aruba, and Fort Lauderdale. Prices range from \$2695 to \$3100 PPDO. Offered by Branch 73 Travel. Call Paul Peters at 510-724-8345.

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.



October 6-21, 2012

Hawaii Cruise

Cruise to Hawaii from San Francisco aboard the Star Princess with stops in Honolulu and the Neighbor Islands. The ship will also stop in Ensenada. Prices range from \$2100 to \$3590. Offered by Branch 19 Travel. Contact Harry Reiter at 925-709-2820.



October 11-23, 2012

Spain's Costa del Sol & the Portuguese Riviera

Thirteen day escorted tour of Spain's Costa del Sol and Portugal's Riviera. Some of the interesting highlights include: Madrid, Prado Museum, High Speed Train, Cordoba, Costa del Sol, Granada, Seville, Lisbon, Estoril, and Fatima. Cost is \$4244 PPDO and includes R/T air from SFO. Offered by Branch 38 Travel. Call Bill Rodman at 408-274-4521 or Nick Lickwar at 408-532-6992.

October 13-18, 2012

Bob Hope USO Show Tour

A 5 night trip to Washington D.C, with sightseeing in the Williamsburg area, and three live musical shows including tributes to Frankie Valli, Frank Sinatra and a live USO show with Bob Hope, the Andrew Sisters and the Glenn Miller AAF Band. Coast is \$1750 PPDO. Offered by Area 1 Travel. Call Phil Manriquez at 650-871-5009.

December 30, 2012—January 3, 2013

New Year's in Nashville

Four nights at the fabulous Opryland Hotel. Trip highlights include: Gala New Years Eve dinner dance on the General Jackson Riverboat; Franklin Plantations tour; Studio B & Country Music Hall of Fame; and a tour of the "Hermitage," Andrew Jackson's home. Trip includes six meals and r/t air. Cost ranges from \$1675 to \$1820 PPDO. Offered by Branch 73 Travel. Call Paul Peters at 510-724-8345.

January 14-27, 2013

Tahitian Breeze

Start with a 2-night stay at the luxurious Intercontinental Hotel in Papeete. After two days of exploring the boundless beauty of this French Polynesian city, we will board the luxurious Marina, one of the newest Oceana Cruise Line ships, for an 11 day cruise exploring many islands before returning to Papeete. Oceana Cruises offers the finest cuisine at sea at no additional coast. Prices start at \$5850 PPDO. Offered by Branch 114 Travel. Call Larry Martinson at 408-528-0746 or Jim Stoner at 408-238-8458.

February 6-21, 2013

Panama Canal

Fly to Fort Lauderdale and board the Coral Princess for a 14 night cruise through the Caribbean with calls at Aruba, and Cartagena before a full day transit through the Panama Canal. Stops also include Nicaragua and Cabo San Lucas before arrival in Los Angeles and a flight up to San Jose. Prices run from \$3220 to \$4555 PPDO. Offered by Branch 74 Travel. Call Allen Daily at 408-265-8140 or Don House at 408-268-1703.

The Meeting was called to order by President Jim Stedman

Treasurer's Report:

Mike Berry gave an extensive report on the following items:

- **Audit Report:** He discussed the last Audit report which had a satisfactory result and he proposed several changes to improve the annual audit process.
- **Tax Reporting:** He is still working on Federal tax filings which were not done last year.
- **Financial Reports:** Mike covered the highlights of the May Balance Sheet and Income & Expense report.
- **2012 Budget:** President Jim commented that we haven't had an annual budget approved by the Board in recent years but he has worked with Mike to develop a budget for 2012. The new budget was approved by the Board.

Remarks

President Stedman asked that we do our best to get all of the Big Sirs and Area Governors to attend the Annual Meeting on August 6th.

Vice President Richard Dettmer commented he has been to seven of the State Committee meetings (some more than once) as an Ex-Officio Member and is extremely impressed with the hard work that takes place in the committees.

Membership

President Stedman indicated that more than half of our Branches brought in 10% in new members in the first quarter. The number of branches that had 70% of their members attend luncheons increased from 40 last year to 63 in the first quarter of this year. There are some Branches that don't submit the F27 on time and a very few who have not submitted a form.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee: Dean Steichen reported there is a candidate for each State position and they will be put forth for election at the Annual Meeting in August. Candidates are: President – Rich Dettmer; Vice President – Maynard Rodland; Secretary – Dick DeVoe; Assistant Secretary – Ron Flagel; Treasurer – Mike Berry; Assistant Treasurer – Jim Long.

Training Committee: Rich Dettmer reported they did a survey of this year's Big Sirs and found they now have a more realistic view of their job. The Training Committee is developing this year's curriculum around addressing the issues learned from the survey.

INFOSYS Committee: Dean Steichen reported they have two new members to help with Data Base activities...and, on the web side of the committee, they have been keeping the information current and added a Branch website model for Branches to build their own websites.

G & M Committee: Walter Schick reported on the continued success of combining Publicity & Tools with Growth and Membership activities. One key focus is their support of the Training Committee.

Rules Committee: Maynard Rodland led the Board through the recommended rule changes and they were adopted.

Bowling Committee: Del Locke said Bowling activities are doing very well. The State Team Championships had 21 teams in each of the A and B Divisions held at Pinole Valley Lanes.

Regional Director Round Table

Each Director was requested to come up with two characteristics of Branches that meet the 10% New Member Goal and two characteristics of those who do not meet this goal. Two detailed lists were developed at the meeting.

Adjournment

President Stedman adjourned the meeting until the Annual Meeting on August 6th.

Editor's Note: In this edition of SIR Happenings, we are starting a column on computer tips called, "Hey Computer Guy." These tips are a regular feature in the Pony Express Branch 69 Bulletin and are written by the Bulletin Editor, Frank Franzago. If these tips are helpful and you would like us to continue publishing them, please let us know... and, you can also direct your computer questions to: Hey Computer Guy at Franque12@surewest.com.

HEY COMPUTER GUY

Frank Franzago, Branch 69 Bulletin Editor

A Tip for Speeding up Your PC: "Empty the Recycle Bin"

When you click "delete" on a file or a program, it doesn't go away for good – not immediately, anyway. Instead, it sits in a kind of purgatory in your computer's Recycle Bin. As things pile up in the Recycle Bin, your computer can start exhibiting some very annoying problems.

If sluggish startups and frequent crashes are occurring with increasing frequency – and your computer's Recycle Bin is very full – go ahead and empty it. From then on, get into the habit of doing this about once a week. This small but important strategy can make a huge difference in your computer's performance.

Send your computer question, problems or tips to: Hey Computer Guy at Franque12@Surewest.net

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Dwight Sale, Publisher

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