MINUTES

(including commentary)

Sons In Retirement, Inc.
State Board Meeting - April 7, 2009

Elks Lodge - Vallejo, CA

"Let's Have a Good Time in 2009"

Present were the following: **Revised 4/30/09 - added G&M attachment**

State Board Members -

Elected Officers	Regional Directors	
President David Reiser	1 Kenneth Edson	6 James Stedman
Vice President Floyd Kendrick	2 Ronald McCall	7 Gary Pelton
State Secretary Gary Gruber	3 George Christman	8 David Reynolds
State Treasurer Robert Mannell	4 Larry Powers	10 Eckart Sellinger
Asst State Secretary Harold Stephens	5 John Mason	

State Appointees, State Committee Chairmen, other participants -

Past Presidents - Mel Augustine (2000), Dwight Sale (2001), Jim Donovan (2005), Art Pufford (2008)

Chaplain/Parliamentarian - Bill Short	Publicity - Walter Schick
90% of the Area Governors	Public Relations - Don MacGregor
	Rules Committee - Thomas Smith

President Reiser called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Chaplain Short gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Reiser asked each attendee to introduce himself, and Regional Directors individually introduced the Area Governors in attendance.

Secretary Gruber stated that a quorum was present, with the required two-thirds of Board members present. The minutes of the January 20, 2009 State Board meeting were approved as published on the official SIR Website.

President Reiser gave a brief review of how the Leadership Action Plan got started. He is opposed to any mandatory provisions and is supportive of all Branches no matter their size. He wants to dispel the notion that the LAP is only for successful Branches. He mentioned that the tri-fold brochures were produced at State expense to help all Branches. The smaller Branches should especially benefit since their treasuries could ill afford to pay for them. They should provide a good tool for recruiting new members.

Vice President Kendrick reported that he has been attending State Committee meetings as an ad hoc member, and also has started the Leadership Action Committee. He mentioned that he presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Sir John Cooper for his efforts in the SIR golf program. Kendrick then summarized his handling of Form 15 Expense Vouchers that are submitted to him for approval.

Meanwhile he has been working on some "tweaks" to our leadership culture. This work has been approved in principle by President Reiser. Kendrick emphasized that participation in the Leadership Action Plan (LAP) is strictly voluntary for Regional Directors, Area Governors and Branches.

Secretary Gruber reported on the status of the organization, indicating that of the 169 incorporated branches, 18 are inactive, leaving a total of 151 active branches. The State Roster dated March 20, 2009 is available on the website, and the state organization is represented on pages 10 thru 19; Past President Jim Donovan is our new Certificates Chairman and Nat Lord is now in charge of Rooster Hardware.

The State Treasurer's Financial Report is being posted to the website every month now. Membership Statistics are also posted monthly. On the subject of SIR pins, Gruber mentioned the switch from Di Angelo's to Arnolds Awards is a much needed change. New Forms 23 and 23A were developed with Arnolds and are available via the website. Branch membership rosters for the IRS have been collected from all but 27 branches.

Regarding inactive branches, when a branch surrenders its Charter the Area Governor receives several boxes of Branch records. Area 7 Governor Dave Rohrer brought this up several weeks ago. The procedure that is on the website does not indicate what the Area Governor is supposed to do with all those documents. Emails have been flowing between Rohrer and Gruber in attempts to figure out what needs to be kept and by whom.

Regional Directors and Area Governors need to really insist that their Branches send the Big Sir or his replacement to the August 3 Annual Meeting of the Corporation. We almost didn't have a 2/3 quorum last year, and without a quorum we cannot conduct any business. Parliamentarian Bill Short made the point that if we do not get a quorum there is a way under Robert's Rules of Order to suspend the rule and be able to conduct business.

Treasurer Mannell reported that an Insurance Reserve of $25,000 has been established in a separate bank account. He stated that the SIR Insurance Committee thinks that the downward trend in premiums will continue for another year, as opposed to earlier indications that the premiums would be rising.

He made his annual plea to the Area Governors that he needs the Branch Audit certification letter or Email from each Area Governor. This document should be short and with no attachments. Branch assessment invoices, including $10 for prepayment of the meal at the Annual Meeting, are in the mail.

Treasurer Mannell reported on behalf of Assistant State Treasurer Berry. Mike has been working with the branches that have repeatedly been unable to balance the figures between Total Cash and Cash Elements reported on Form 28. Mike has also not received Form 28 from several branches. Another issue concerning Form 28 is when branch reports are not received or received later than the due date, the figures reported on the website statistics are not correct and are unnecessarily late.

President Reiser thanked Treasurer Mannell and Region 7 Director Pelton for spending five hours with him counting and bundling the new 3-fold brochures for faster distribution after today's Board meeting. Then he started the Committee Reports, beginning with a letter received from SIR State Audit Committee Chairman Harry Slack that indicates that all State audits were completed and all were in order.

Nominating Committee Chairman Pufford stated that a broadcast email went out to the branches and State Administrators in January, soliciting applications for the State Elected Officer positions. To date, no interest has been received from any branch. He has received applications for four positions, but nothing for State Secretary and Assistant State Treasurer. A general discussion of possible candidates for Assistant State Treasurer ensued.

Badges Chairman Stephens described his responsibilities involving procurement of badges. He mentioned that a badge with a safety pin on the back can be replaced with a badge with a magnetic back. He stated how his badges job has sort of expanded into including pins for branch officers and Honorary Life Members. Pursuant to the switch from Di Angelo's to Arnolds, new forms have been developed and can be acquired via the website. He went on to highlight the new HLM pin and acquisition of same. The simulated gems that formerly came with some pins are no longer available. A general discussion followed concerning pins as well as badges for branch officers. Also the pricing. There was a suggestion that the State Board consider establishing a Senior HLM pin and the procedures to obtain it.

Rules Committee Chairman Smith presented a revision to Rule 617 pertaining to the due date for the Insurance Committee to provide a price and procedures to all branches for covering themselves with Errors and Omissions (E&O) insurance. The State Board approved moving the due date ahead from December 15 to February 28. Following is the revised rule -

RULE 617.   The State Insurance Committee will negotiate insurance coverage with knowledgeable and reputable insurance firms on an annual basis. The Committee will also obtain an annual quote on the cost of Errors and Omissions (E&O) Insurance for Branches and provide this information to the Branches by February 28 each year, along with instructions on how to implement the exemption for E&O Insurance for its Officers and Directors. (Revised 4/7/09)

President Reiser handled a question about insurance, where a branch puts together a travel event dealing through a travel agent that is not on the SIR Qualified Travel Agency list. He replied that the rules in the SIR Manual must always be followed or else the branch event would not be covered under the state insurance policy. Another question came up as to the status of getting coverage for the higher risk activities prohibited in the rules, and Reiser replied that the matter was still under study.

Certificates Chairman Donovan began by citing the certificates that he is mostly responsible for -- HLM certificates and State certificates including Senior Certificates. He is receiving requests for Senior Certificates up to many months before the member's birthday, and he is providing those Certificates. He only requests that the award not be presented before the milestone actually arrives. He prepares an HLM Certificate on receipt of the approved form from President Reiser, and retains on file all of the paper work enclosed with the approved form. When applying for an HLM award, allow lead time not only for the preparation of the certificate, but more importantly the scheduling problem for presentation of the award by the President.

He receives requests for specially worded Certificates of Appreciation that he is willing to handle, but members are encouraged to obtain the Word version of Form 7 from the website and edit it to suit any special situation.

Donovan went on to cite nine branches that have no HLMs at all, and they probably should be reminded of that fact. He also named an additional 9 branches that have HLMs, but still have room in the 2% limit rule for additional HLMs. He offered copies of a point system for use in selecting an HLM candidate, where different points are awarded for the various jobs in a branch. Dwight Sale interjected that the application must be based entirely on branch jobs and not work done at higher levels such as Area or Region service.

At this point a general discussion was handled by President Reiser concerning HLM qualifications and other matters, and he cited some of the situations he encounters with the applications that he receives from branches. A point was raised suggesting that the need for a cover letter over the HLM application form be more emphasized on the form since some branches often fail to include a cover letter -- forcing him to return the application to the branch as incomplete. This led to a question as to why a cover letter is necessary at all, and President Reiser stated that the cover letter is very helpful to him. Donovan said that the cover letter can serve as sales pitch for the applicant. Sale commented that the branches are being automatically notified buy mail when any of their HLMs has been reclassified to Senior HLM.

Public Relations Program - MacGregor presented a Power Point production covering an overall, generalized, system-wide public relations program for SIR. A general discussion followed. He pointed out that the activities of our branches may not meet the desires of the younger semi-retirees -- our target audience. A comment was offered to the effect that activities offered in a branch reflect the interests of the members, and if a branch doesn't have a poker group for example, a neighboring branch might.

MacGregor emphasized that every branch should appoint a PR person and there must be someone out their among our membership that would be willing and capable of heading up the program.   Several questions were raised about how to acquire copies of the presentation material, and Sale stated that it would be posted to the website. Reiser suggested that Regional Directors and Area Governors keep looking for good PR people in the organization. One branch is developing a 15-minute DVD of all SIR activities. Augustine indicated his support for the program, how well it was done and that everybody there today should acquire a copy of the presentation and study it. Kendrick mentioned the overlap between the program and the Leadership Action Plan, and how the two should be working in sync with each other. Reiser acknowledged John Skarpelos for his work in preparation of the presentation.

Information Systems Chairman Sale gave us the goings-on with this committee and how they got where they are today. He pointed out that originally there were thirty administrative tasks being done independently. There was no coordination, so this committee was formed to put all of the administrative tasks in this committee. The basic report is attached hereto.

President Reiser recessed the meeting for lunch at 11:40 a.m.

President Reiser called the meeting back to order after lunch and informed the group of the resignation of Gary Pelton as Chairman Growth and Management. Reiser appointed Vice President Kendrick to replace Pelton as Chairman, and the Board promptly voted to waive the ex-officio status of his membership on the committee as specified in Rule 605. Pelton presented some ideas that came out of the G & M Committee meeting of March 4. A summary is attached hereto.
Oakland A's Chairman Augustine outlined the arrangements for the SIR Day versus Texas Rangers. The Board approved the date of Friday August 6, 2009.

Vice President Kendrick reported on the Leadership Action Plan progress. Five Regions are actively pushing the plan, and a total of 25 Branches are involved. Regional Directors and Area Governors need to lead in the process -- promoting the reading of SIR Happenings, take copies to Branch meetings, etc.

Publicity Chairman Schick gave his recommendations concerning "outreach to newly retired". Place brochures in small numbers, hand out general-purpose business cards, recognize sponsors of new members, appoint Branch Activities Chairmen for the purpose of starting new activities.

President Reiser thanked the attendees and especially appreciated the participation of the Area Governors. He adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m..

Gary R. Gruber, State Secretary

Attachments - INFOSYS Committee Report
            - Growth and Membership Committee Summary

INFORMATION SYSTEMS COMMITTTEE (INFOSYS)
Report to the SIR State Board, April 7, 2009
Dwight B. Sale, Chairman, dwight.sale@comcast.net

INFOSYS, a SIR Standing Committee, is a 4-member Committee that administers 8 Subcommittees: Website, Database, Email, State Roster, State Manual, State Forms, State Certificates (HLM) and State Newsletter.

Website

Webmaster, Bill Winslow handles the technical issues while John Skarpelos and Gary Gruber handle content and updating. Sirinc.org is the "Home Page" for the general public. Interested candidates for membership can communicate directly with Jim Stedman, a member of the Growth and Membership Committee or call the hotphone, 877-747-9066. More than 350 new members, 50 last year, have taken this route. The "Documents" section is constantly improved so that it is more effective and easier to use. Documents are added and revised on a continuous basis. The membership documents are slated for a complete overhaul. The "Documents" section has an option to view the State Roster but requires a password which is available from the Branch Email Contact. The Rule Manual, State Roster and forms distribution is now exclusively through the SIR website.

Database

Today there are 9,565 names in the State Database which contains SIR State officers and Committee Chairmen since 1974 and Branch Administrators since 1994 as well as Branch Corporate information. It continues to serve as an historical record as well as a source for current data. Many SIR administrators use the database to assist them in their duties. For instance. the State Treasurer uses a subset of the database to produce the quarterly prorata invoices which, in turn, furnishes active count information membership statistics that appear on the SIR website. The SI-lOOs renewing all branch corporations are produced 100 % from the database. The sign in sheets used today also come from the database.

Email

Our email list grows daily. Today there are valid email addresses for all Branch Email Contacts, 70% to 80 % of Branch Officers and all State Board members and Area Governors. Last year Chairman Mike Berry sent more than 30 SIR official emails to various groups. They ranged from notification of Giants Baseball to use of Form 28. This was more than 15,000 individual emails on which SIR did not pay postage.

State Roster

Roster Committee Chairman Gary Gruber produces the State Roster, the Branches by Region & Area, and the Branch Locator by City and posts them to the Website. During September, the 2008 Branch data for the State Database were entered based on the Form 20s received from the Branches. This annual project involves entering and validating some 10,000 database entries. (The data pertaining to State Officers and committees were entered by the INFOSYS Committee Chairman.) We have added the number of active members to each branch listing as well as several pages of Region Area Branch data including a detailed report on inactive branches. There is also a word description of the geographic boundaries for regions and areas.

State Manual

Manual Chairman, Gary Gruber produced the revised SIR Manual after the January State Board meeting. The SIR Manual will again be produced after every State Board Meeting.

State Forms

There are 57 different forms on the SIR Website. Forms Chairman Gary Gruber originated or updated 18 forms during 2008.

State Certificates

Jim Donovan took over January 15, 2009. In 2008 we made certificates for 27 HLM certificates, 187 Senior, 20 Super Senior and 6 Century Sir Awards in addition to many special certificates.

State Newsletter

"SIR Happenings" is a quarterly publication with the first 19 issues a huge success. Don MacGregor and John Skarpelos do inspired and professional work putting all your news together in this great publication. More and more information flows in from the Branches as they become aware of " Happenings." Branch Email Contacts are sent an email with a "Happenings" link asking them to distribute Happenings to their members that have an email address. Copies of this email are also sent to Branch Big Sirs and all State Administrators.

New Blood

We are actively seeking to have more Sirs involved with all aspects of INFOSYS. We badly need a backup for the database manager.

INFOSYS Meeting

Our annual INFOSYS meeting was held on February 21, 2009. We assigned responsibilities for various parts of the site. Put a 5-yr sunset rule on documents. Plan to have a list of all Branch activities. Review prohibited activities. Completely revamped home page which should be ready middle of May. Will make the Treasurer's page more graphic. Will work on a revised Form 28 that works better and includes some new reporting. Sale is working on a generic Branch database. Suggest a hidden question in Happenings. Adding 'Branch Activities Coordinator" to the state roster was rejected because of the widely variant Branch organizations. Decided to produce a new three fold brochure. Suggested we need a written strategic PR Plan for SIR.

SUMMARY RESULT OF MARCH 4th SIR G&M BRAINSTORMING MEETING

1. Visit local spots of Active retired persons such as Senior Centers, Community Centers, local Bocce courts, horseshoe pits, etc. Become involved in some outside activity that you like and talk up SIR.

2. Carry Invite cards and use them.

3. Present a perspective new member a Free Lunch Card with your info on the back.

4. Distribute a few fliers, brochures, and business cards. Don't leave it up to the other guy.

5. Give your sweetie a couple of brochures and cards to hand out to her lady friends. They are usually more sociable than men.

6. Offer an End of Year surprise award to the top branch recruiter such as a perpetual trophy cup or plaque with the winners name and year engraved on it.

7. Talk to branch members who also belong to other organizations and ask them to contact those friends who have dropped out about what a unique organization SIR is and invite them to lunch or some SIR event.

8. Tell someone about SIR then take them to their first SIR meeting. This step is very crucial. It may be the only chance you get.

9. Ask any and all of your recent inductees about their hobbies and ask them to head up their favorite activity whatever that may be in your branch.

10. Make sure that when you have a Ladies Day event someone should personally present each Lady with something SIR that they can carry home such as Branch Business Cards, the "New" glossy Tri-fold brochures, a news letter, etc. In some cases widows are non-paying guests and should help out. Remember this, women are usually more social than men and they have more contacts.

11. If the new "LAP" program isn't for your branch of less than 100 members but you still want to continue to bring in new members and keep them, you might do well to re-visit the long standing "Membership Program" found on the SIR website under Documents, then under "Membership Program".

12. The best tool you will always have is still your hand shake.