



SIR HAPPENINGS

FALL 2013 VOLUME 10 ISSUE 4

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

President Rich's Column



I hope that you're having as much fun as I have. Many Sirs worked hard to make SIR Better. We saw a new Branch form in the Modesto region. We started bringing help to the Branches via the Survivability Action Team. The continued use of our personnel report assisted both State and Branches monitor their strengths. By establishing a State Budgeting Oversight Committee, we can better track our expenses vis-à-vis goals and multiyear planning.

Recognizing excellence in SIR Branches by regions quarterly, served to give credit where credit was due. To better facilitate the State training effort we charged the Growth and Membership Committee with that responsibility. A change in SIR Rules now allows Branches to assess per capita dues to cover their administrative costs instead of having to rely on illegal raffles or donations. We even took time out for fun with over 400 of us enjoying the SIR 55th Anniversary Cruise to Alaska.

So there you have it! Sirs are doing outstanding jobs to make SIR Better. Where do we go from here? What I can tell you from experience and observations is this. If Branches want to maintain their strength or maybe do a little better, they must recruit at the attrition rate of their Branch, ipso facto. If they want to do even better they must also provide a variety of activities. If they want to excel, they must also include coed activities and engage wives as much as possible.

The culture in SIR has changed from 1958. Then men worked and women were homemakers. Both were not terribly socially engaged. Today it is different. Both work, both are far more social and connected digitally as well. Retired couples socialize more together now. Though SIR is a men's social organization, if we fail to include wives in a sufficient number of activities, we do so at our own peril. Culture change – yes -- a must!

Rich

Miwok Branch 134, San Rafael

We the People

Dick Crocker, Bulletin Editor

The Branch 134 Great Books Group has been studying the Constitutional Convention which met to revise the Articles of Confederation, but ended up with the U.S. Constitution, which was finally signed by the delegates on September 17, 1787.

At our September meeting, ten Branch members presented "*We The People*", an examination of the Preamble to the Constitution. We were fortunate to have some of the original delegates to explain this including (see picture) George Washington (Howard Bassett), Benjamin Franklin (Bob Hibbs), Alexander Hamilton (Dan McGreevy), Robert Morris (Bill Cline), James Madison (Don Polhemus), William Johnson (Jim Rohde), and Chancellor Robert Livingston (Ron Koenig). Howard Bassett put the presentation together and assisting these important founding fathers were Michael Bozzuto, Al Crozier, and Frank Sokolowski.



BRING IN A GUEST - WE NEED NEW MEMBERS

Sirs in the News

Rocklin Branch 98

An HLM for a Busy Bob Frick

Giorgio Dina, Bulletin Editor

Bob Fricke transferred to Rocklin Branch 98 from Branch 146 in Pleasant Hill in 1998. He immediately became active as Merchandise Chairman and purchased, displayed, and sold at our Branch luncheons, such items as: golf hats, shirts, windbreakers, pins, all with the Branch 98 logo. He did this for eight years and then started up the ladder going from Assistant Secretary to Secretary to Little Sir and finally to Big Sir.

Bob started the "Know Your Sir" column for our Rooster Tale Branch Bulletin and while serving as Big Sir, he appointed the first Branch Photographer and Recruitment Chairman. He has also served on several committees. Bob started our Bocce Group in 2008 and still coordinates it. He also plays in two bridge groups and has volunteered to run the games at all of our Branch Picnics for the last eight years. Bob is also known as "Busy Bob," because it's hard for him to say "No" whenever he is asked to do something for Branch 98.

From left to right in the picture are: Gale Jeffers, Region 9 Director – Honoree Bob Fricke – and State President Rich Dettmer.

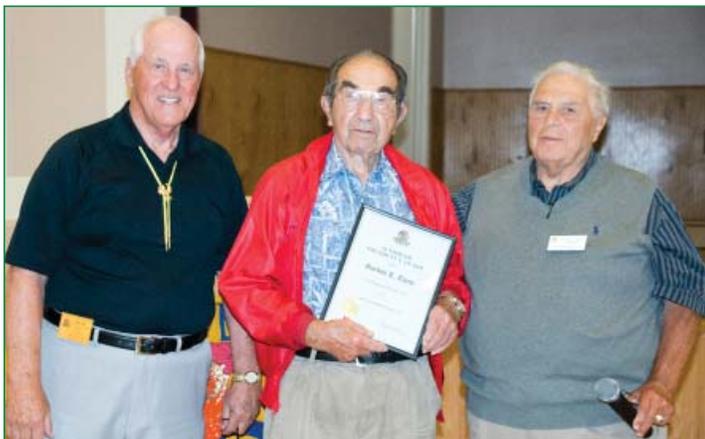


Pathfinder Branch 59, Fremont/Newark

Gordon Thyme Senior Award

John Skarpelos, Newsletter Editor

In the photo Sir Gordon Thyme (center) receives the Presidents Senior award for having reached the age of 90 from Area Governor Bob Aiello (right) with Big Sir Skip Mugford assisting.



PRESIDENTIAL CITATION FOR PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE Third Quarter 2013

It is my pleasure to announce the selection of nine Branches and their Big Sir – one in each Region – that have been selected to receive an award for Pursuit of Excellence in SIR for the third quarter of 2013. They were selected based upon input from their Regional Directors for having performed at the highest level among their Branches in the Region. They will be presented with a State Certificate of Award by their Regional Directors. Congratulations to the following recipient Big Sir and their Branches:

- William M. Jamison, Branch 110, Region 1**
- Tom Sawyer, Branch 160, Region 2**
- Alphonsus Furr, Branch 145, Region 3**
- Juergen Haller, Branch 133, Region 4**
- John Haffner, Branch 171, Region 6**
- George H. Warren, Branch 39, Region 7**
- Charlie Martin, Branch 179, Region 8**
- Vincent J. Cardinale, Branch 124, Region 9**
- Fred Rose, Branch 10, Region 10**

I thank each of them and their membership for putting forth their best efforts in keeping Sons In Retirement a dynamic, relevant, and strong organization.

Rich Dettmer, President

Sirs in the News

Napa Valley Branch 65

Napa Valley Seniors

Bob Boucher, Branch Photographer

Napa Valley Branch 65 recognized its Senior and Super Senior members with an awards ceremony during a Branch luncheon meeting this summer.

Standing in the picture from left to right are Area 17 Governor and presenter Harvey Durrant, Bob Biniek, Ernie Arietta, Marvin Atkinson, Bill Garibaldi, Don Hamburger, Ed Reddig, Vic Burt, Jim Elder and Joe Hill.



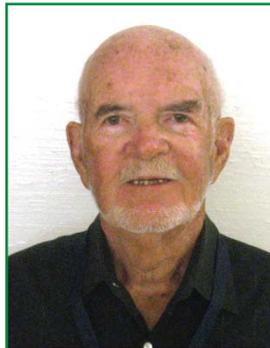
Crystal Springs Branch 142, San Mateo

Hole-In-One

Bob Chang, Golf Chairman

Bernie Olson, Bulletin Editor

Branch 142 received some exciting news that one of our golfers, Jim Cunningham (see picture), had scored a hole-in-one, using his 9 iron, at the 12th hole at the Sky West Golf Course in Hayward in August. Jim followed this great accomplishment the following week by shooting an 80 ...our second golfer in the past two years to shoot his age or better.



Congratulations are in order for Jim's significant golfing accomplishments. There were many excellent scores posted by other members during that month, but Jim's accomplishments outshone them all.

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

Pathfinder Branch 59, Fremont/Newark

Bill DeLucchi Senior Award

John Skarpelos, Newsletter Editor

In the photo Sir Bill DeLucchi (right) receives the Presidents Senior award for having reached the age of 90 from Area Governor Elect Jim Ferenz.



News from the Branches

East Bay Branch 2, Richmond

SIR Day at the Races

Alan Blavins, Bulletin Editor



Branch 2 had a really good turnout for SIR Day at the Races. It was great to have Dick Swarts (second from the left) with us and he didn't let his 100 years slow him down.

Editor's Note: Michael Roberts, the Sales Manager at Golden Gate Fields, informed SIR Happenings that the last SIR Day at the Races was another fun filled day for 278 Sirs and their guests from 12 SIR Branches. Michael wanted our members to know that the next SIR Day at the Races is scheduled for Friday, March 21, 2014.

Lake Tahoe Branch 160

Golf Champions

Larry Coffman, Bulletin Editor

What a great year! We played in over thirty golf outings at beautiful golf courses from Apple Mountain, Dayton, Eagle Valley, Lake Ridge, Lake Tahoe Golf Course, Plumas Pines (three day tournament)...just to name a few. With different formats, we had winners from all handicaps. Our most senior members were afforded the opportunity to play the forward tee areas and they played well.

Our Memorial Golf Championship Tournament was held at the Silver Oaks Golf Course in Carson City, for the second time since 2010 and we had two club champions...Tim Donley and Carl Slate. Tim had a gross score of 80 and net score of 63. Carl had a gross score of 82 and net score of 63. Both individuals will have their names engraved on our #4 iron trophy and receive a dinner for two.

Pictured from left to right are: Golf Chairman Sig Heidemann and the champions, Tim Donley and Carl Slate. Congratulation to both of our champions!



News from the Branches

Las Trampas Branch 116, Walnut Creek

Another Great Time in Carson City

Tim Hubbard, Golf Trip Coordinator

Every September our Branch has a 3 day golf outing in Carson City. This annual event has been a tradition for over 20 years with 60 to 80 members, wives and guests attending. Those women who don't play golf enjoy themselves with a bridge game, or they "shop till they drop," sightsee in places like Virginia City, Reno, and Lake Tahoe or have lunch at a wide variety of restaurants.

We play two rounds of golf at two different courses: The first day is couples day and the second day ladies play separately from the men. We generally have 2 or 3 flights for the men and 2 for the ladies and pay prize money for top 5 in each flight. We also pay prize money for the most improved from day one to day two and closest to the hole both days for both men and women. The payoffs are designed to award money for as many golfers as possible.

Each night we have a banquet which is preceded by hosted cocktails. The last night we award the golf prizes and hold a raffle for some very nice prizes. Our banquets are held at the Carson Nugget and the Nugget has always done a superb job of organizing and assisting us for many years. The beauty of this outing is the low price and another plus is the almost perfect September weather.

The picture collage shows some of the SIRS and guests that attended the event. We have a "blast" every year and those that attend on a regular basis feel this is one of the very best outings in our Branch. We always include guests, relatives and SIRS from other branches. We'd welcome anyone who enjoys a good time and if anyone reading this is interested in joining us next year in Carson City, contact Tim Hubbard at 925-944-0742.



News from the Branches

Orchard Valley Branch 54, San Jose

New Almaden Mine Museum

Bill Dematteis, Bulletin Editor & Secretary

Ken Walling, Branch Member

Last September, Region 7 Director Richard Kabanek and Robert Hartle led a Branch 54 tour of the New Almaden Mine Museum (see picture). The museum is located in the Casa Grande...the original home of the Cinnabar mine manager. As can be seen in the picture, the house and grounds are beautiful. It's hard to imagine the splendor it presented in the 1840's.



The Cinnabar was mined and refined into the mercury that was required to recover the gold and silver from the California and Nevada mines. John, our docent, was very knowledgeable of both the residence and the mine. He explained the history of both, as well as life of the minors and the mining technology. Seeing this piece of history made this a very interesting tour. Next we plan to visit the Computer Museum in Mountain View.



Tri-Valley Branch 34, Pleasanton

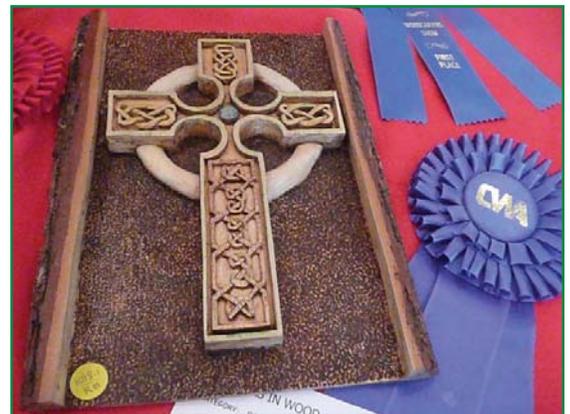
Pyrography Wood Carving

Alan Brooks, Bulletin Editor

Bob Kehl, Wood Carvers Club

We would like to introduce Happenings readers to a fun category of wood carving called pyrography. Pyrography, meaning to draw with fire, was fashionable in the Victorian and the Art Deco periods and is really becoming popular today. In its most basic form, it is used to enhance carvings and wooden objects as a form of decoration. In its most complex form, the combination of texture and drawing on wood can create pictures that appear almost real. Several in our Wood Carvers Club like to decorate boxes and other items we have carved from wood. As shown in the photos, the background of a relief carving of a Celtic cross was highlighted using pyrography. The other photo is a portrait pyrography of a young woman. This process is a lot of fun to experiment with on an endless variety of projects.

The Woodcarvers Club meets twice a week with one meeting at the Pleasanton Senior Center and the other one at the Livermore Community Center. The Club is open to any Sir interested in learning and participating in the art of wood carving, whether experienced or just a beginner. Remember, no experience is necessary to learn how to carve...we will get you started with safety and easy to do projects and then you can progress from there. No tools or wood are necessary to start. If you are interested, call me, Bob Kehl at 925-443-5632. Come and join us for a fun experience.



News from the Branches

Wine Valley Branch 149, Napa

Roving Roosters

Visit Feather River Falls

Rex Williams, Roving Roosters Coordinator

The Napa Valley Roving Roosters is sponsored by Branch 149 and now has 72 rigs and 142 members. Our last outing was to the Feather River Falls Casino RV Park in Oroville and the Wagon Masters were Russ and Laurel Barker.

On the first day, we had our usual four o'clock happy hour, followed by dinner. The next morning, the Casino put on a delicious pancake breakfast and then we were off for a round of golf at the Table Mountain Golf Course.

The following day, the Larson family barbecued a whole pig on a spit (see picture). The pig weighed in at 75 pounds and took all day to cook, using up about 60 pounds of charcoal and around 30 pieces of oak logs. We had quite a banquet that evening!



The next four days were quite busy and a lot of fun. Among our activities were a tour of a Chinese Museum with a private guided tour (our tour guide was the vice-mayor of Oroville), a very

interesting visit to the Tool and Bolt Museum, a brewery tour and dinner at the Sierra Nevada Brewery, and a comedy play at the Chico Playhouse that was laughs from beginning to end.

Of course there was another round of golf, this time at the Kelley Ridge Golf Course in Chico, and then on the last day, we had a private tour of Oroville's Fish Ladder and Hatchery. It was very interesting to see the salmon making their way up the ladder, which is about a half block long, and every four feet or so there is about an 18 to 24 inch jump that the salmon must get over to get to the hatchery.

This was a really great trip and we are already looking forward to our next outing to Calistoga for our annual Thanksgiving celebration.

Hangtown Prospector Branch 137, Placerville

How One Branch Got Its Name

Ron McCall, Bulletin Editor

Our Branch got its name from our location in Placerville, also known as "Hangtown." The history of our town began when gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in Coloma. After that, hopeful prospectors flooded the hills and streams in search of gold and the town became an important supply center for the many mining camps in the area.

There are many stories about how our town became known as "Hangtown." The most famous one involved an event that occurred in 1849. A gambler by the name of Lopez gained a lot of attention for his big winnings at a local saloon. After retiring for the evening, several men overpower him. The robbers were captured and three of them were also accused of being wanted for a murder and robbery. With no more evidence than that, a short trial took place, and a unanimous verdict of "guilty" was given. The crowd demanded that the men be sentenced to "death by hanging."

The rest is history. The famous hanging tree once stood in a hay yard behind the Jackass Inn and the original stump from the old tree is said to remain in the cellar of the Hangman's Tree Tavern in downtown Placerville where the picture shows a reminder of the hanging. Unfortunately, this old building has been condemned and the future of this historical building is in question.



Wine Valley Branch 149, Napa

Biking for Fun & Good Health

Dale Parker & Herb Christian, Bike Club

The Branch 149 Bike Club was formed back in 2012 with only 3 members. We now have 10 bikers and average 6 to 8 riders every Thursday, weather permitting.

Our rides take us through 10 miles of the Napa Carneros Vine District. It has some challenges but mostly moderate hills. Our goals are to have fun, ride together, help each other and improve our health, fitness and riding skills. Also as a bonus, we go to lunch at Panera Bread after the ride

In picture left to right are bikers: Herb, Preston, Dale, Mark, John, and Doug



News from the Branches

San Ramon Valley Branch 128, San Ramon

Trekking the Pacific Crest Trail

Bill Buhl, Past Big Sir

Inspired by the national best seller “Wild” by Cheryl Strayed, four Sirs decided to hike a section of the Pacific Crest Trail. The organizer and planner for the trip was Tom Kirk whose extensive research provided detailed information on what to expect on the trail.

Our hike started at an elevation of about 9,000 feet. Unfortunately, due to breathing difficulties at this altitude, Tom could not continue on the hike, but armed with his research, Bob Slyker, Chuck McCormick, and Bill Buhl continued on.

The hike took five days and required climbs over three passes that exceeded 10,500 feet. The biggest challenge for us was finding water since the creeks were dry due to the lack of rain this past winter. Most of the water for the trek came from mountain springs that were often quite difficult to locate. Fortunately, passing hikers shared information with us on the location of the springs and each day we were able to find water.

The remoteness of the area was also a concern. Without cell phone access, there was no way to get assistance if one of us got injured. Chuck, who has hiked extensively, felt this was the most challenging hike he has ever done. Bob Slyker, a lifelong hiker who has climbed as high as 17,500 feet on Mt. Everest, agreed it was very difficult. And for me, it was my first – and last – backpacking trip.



Bidwell Branch 110, Chico

Getting Outdoors for Some Exercise

Ray Rolls, Bulletin Editor

Jim Hertl, Hiking Group Founder

Our Hiking Group was started by Jim Hertl as a way of getting himself and his fellow Sirs in Branch 84 outdoors for some exercise. The hikes are low to moderate impact and mostly use established trails. Physical condition, safety and proper equipment are stressed. The monthly hikes are published in the newsletters of the SIR Branches in the area, stating the date, time, location, and difficulty of each planned hike. It is our policy that each planned hike be “pre-hiked” by the leader to check trail conditions, etc. before the scheduled group hike.

We have found that the hikes are a great way for SIR members to get to know not only their fellow Branch members, but also Sirs from the other Branches in the area. We invite wives, special others, friends and especially prospective new members to enjoy the hikes with us.

Pictured, left to right, are Bill Jemison (Branch 110 Big Sir), Michael Kobelt (110), Rich Fish (84), Bob Dinger (110), and group leader Jim Hertl (Past Big Sir of Branch 84), enjoying a four mile hike last August in lower Bidwell Park in Chico.



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

Committee Reports

Survivability Action Team (SAT) & Branch Survival

Dick DeVoe, SAT Chairman



“The most critical issue facing SIR for the long-term is Branch survival. NO Branch is immune to failure.” With over 50 SIR branches lost within 25 years -- the failure rate accelerating – and more than 50% of the failed Branches once had 200+ members – Branches ignore these words at their peril!

The Survivability Action Team (SAT) was formed to address Branch survival and is completing its first year of operation. Phase 1 focused on identifying survivability indicators, developing effective tools for improving Branch survival, and then getting the word out.

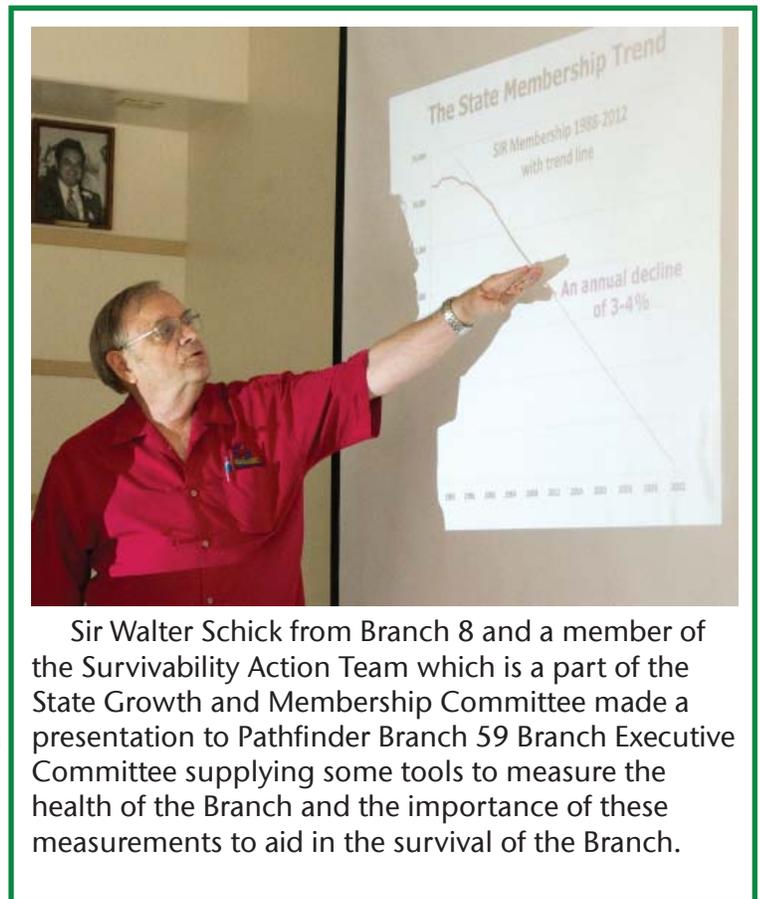
Power Point presentations were held with Regional Directors, Area Governors, and Branch Big Sirs in many Areas over several months. These presentations included membership-trend graphs and other pertinent factors, which were compared with data from highly successful as well as failed branches. The Branch summaries can be found on the SIRinc website (sirinc.org), on the Member Information Page under Branch Information a link named **“SAT Branch Membership Charts.”**

Phase 2 is completing original presentations in Areas not yet scheduled, while focusing on Branches requesting SAT assistance. In that regard, SAT members have met recently with leaders from several individual Branches having difficulty filling key Branch positions for 2014. Those efforts thus far have proven successful. In the past, Branches have unfortunately closed (typically at year-end or early in the New Year) because no one would step up to fill key positions. The tragedy ...Branch members who had enjoyed years of fellowship in their Branch suddenly found themselves with no Branch at all!

Phase 2 also addresses the reality that Branches at risk of failure typically require considerable change from within. The SAT is available to assist in survivability plan development. Of paramount importance are (1) recruitment of sufficient new members (including younger members) to offset annual attrition and (2) retention of existing members. Therefore, leaders in Recruitment, Member Relations, and Activities development become crucial. There are many things a Branch can do to improve its survivability short and long term. With the SAT’s support and Branches’ commitment to survive, good things can happen.

An integral part of the SAT’s Phase 2 includes encouragement of Branches to establish a Branch Growth Coordinator reporting to his BEC through the Big Sir. He would act as liaison to his BEC and to the Survivability Action Team on Branch growth and survivability, plus provide continuity on these matters as Branch leaders turn over. A Branch Growth Coordinator job description is found on the SIRinc website under: <http://www.sirinc.org/protected/BrAreaTools/recruitingleaders/>.

The Survivability Action Team exists as an educational resource and experienced support group for Branches at all levels of survival risk. Contact your Area Governor whenever you perceive the SAT can be of assistance.

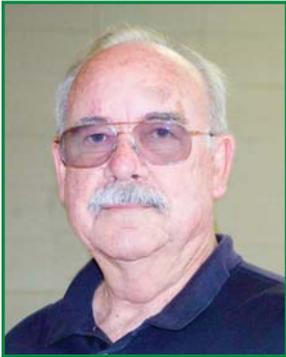


Sir Walter Schick from Branch 8 and a member of the Survivability Action Team which is a part of the State Growth and Membership Committee made a presentation to Pathfinder Branch 59 Branch Executive Committee supplying some tools to measure the health of the Branch and the importance of these measurements to aid in the survival of the Branch.

Dick

State Bowling

Del Locke, State Bowling Committee Chairman



With only two SIR tournaments left this year, I look back on a very good year for SIR Bowling. We had great attendance for both the Reno and the Carson City Tournaments. David Wells hosts two very well attended tournaments each year.

The State Bowling Committee presents an award to recognize SIR bowlers who bowl exceptionally well in a SIR Tournament. Stephen Szasz from Branch 87 bowled a 300 game in the Brentwood Tournament and Bruce Peterson from Branch 136 bowled an 808, three game series, in Reno. As far as I know, the Bowling Committee has only awarded one other 800 Series watch to a SIR bowler. Congratulations to both of these Sirs who will receive a SIR watch for their accomplishment.

Some of our SIR Tournaments are held in AMF bowling centers, which has recently been acquired by "Bowlmore." Bowlmore has some very strict corporate policies, one of which applies to hours of operation. This policy could impact a Branches' ability to host a tournament in an AMF/Bowlmore facility. We have already lost the Petaluma Tournament for 2014 and may need to relocate the Pinole tournament to a different bowling center. The Bowling Committee will be working with the Branch tournament managers to address this issue and continue to provide tournaments for SIR bowlers.

Our tournament schedule is pretty much set for 2014 and is available on the SIR Bowling website. The committee will keep the 2014 Tournament Schedule updated so SIR bowlers can make plans to attend as many tournaments as they care to. The 2014 SIR State Tournament will be hosted by Ray Buttacavoli from Branch 45, at the Nu Generation Lanes in Yuba City in late May. Please watch the SIR Bowling website for details.

Del

Big Sir Elect Training Meeting

Derek Southern, Training Chairman

Ninety eight Big Sirs Elect ("BSE") attended our training meeting on October 15th and sixty eight of those attending the meeting responded to an opinion survey. Overall, when asked how useful they found the entire training session, 83% were quite positive. The responses to two other open-ended questions were as follows:

What will be your greatest challenge as Big Sir in 2014?

1. Membership: recruitment and retention
2. Creating enthusiasm, participation, recognition, and involvement
3. Recruiting leadership
4. Maintain or beat 70% luncheon attendance and better meetings

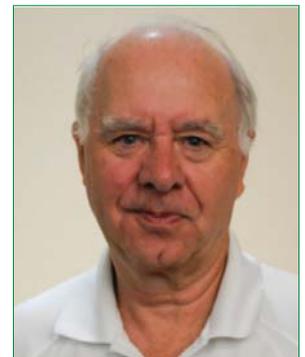
Note: The responses showed that the number one challenge anticipated by 53% of the BSEs was membership recruitment and retention. Tied for second, with 19% each, were creating enthusiasm, participation, recognition and involvement...and recruiting leadership.

What was the most useful information you received from the Training Session?

1. Schedule of Branch operations
2. SIR Website
3. SIR Leaders Guide
4. Importance of reports and submitting them on time
5. Talking with members from other Branches
6. SIR administrative structure

Note: The responses showed that the most useful information gained from the session were: First The Schedule of Branch Operations, Second The SIR Website and Third The SIR Leaders Guide.

The Training Committee wishes to thank each participant who took the time to complete and return the survey. Your candid feedback is extremely valuable, and will definitely be used in the planning the 2014 Training Meeting for the 2015 Big Sirs Elect.



Happenings Travel Bulletin

December 30, 2013- January 3, 2014 New Year's in Nashville

This trip includes four nights at the fabulous Opryland Hotel, New Year's Eve gala dinner dance onboard the General Jackson River Boat, New Year's brunch (out of this world), tours of the Franklin Plantation, Studio "B" Country Music Hall of Fame, tour Hermitage, Andrew Jackson's home and more. Cost is \$1730 PPDO. Offered by Branch 98 Travel. Contact Sam Kemp at 916-781-0822.

December 30, 2013- January 3, 2014 New Year's Celebration in Albuquerque

Enjoy a New Year's Eve gala dinner dance and New Year's Day brunch. Then tour Albuquerque with visits to the Pueblo Cultural Center. Next, an all-day tour to Santa Fe with stops at Sandia Peak Tram Ride and Georgia O'Keefe Museum. Cost is \$1580 PPDO. Offered by Branch 96 Travel. Contact Lee Sues at 209-296-2235.



January 9-22, 2014 Cuba

See and hear the music, culture and the roots of the Cuban revolution. This is a people to people program that visits Santiago de Cuba, a cultural melting pot of Afro-Cuban traditions, as well as Baracoa an unspoiled gem on the coast. The Cuban capital will also be included. The cost of \$5295 PPDO, includes R/T airfare, all accommodations, 28 meals, private motor coach, and an English speaking guide. Offered by Branch 171 Travel. Call Russ Aubry, at 510-644-2692 for more information.

May 9-17, 2014 Mississippi River Cruise

Travel the Mississippi River from New Orleans to Memphis aboard the authentic paddle wheeler, The American Queen. The trip includes a pre-Night stay in New Orleans and a post-cruise tour of Graceland. Prices range from \$4235 to \$7140 for a superior cabin with a private balcony. Offered by Branch 144 Travel. Contact Bill Stires at 209-544-2684.



March 5-15, 2014 Mexican Riviera Cruise

Cruise aboard the Grand Princess for 10 night's roundtrip from San Francisco. Ports of call include: Cabo San Lucas, Loreto, La Paz, and Puerto Vallarta. The sun-kissed Mexican Riviera is filled with rich culture, bright flowers, and scenic vistas. Get a taste of the rich heritage in this vibrant country from friendly people and magnificent cathedrals to flavorful, authentic Mexican cuisine. Prices range from \$1460 to \$1985 PPDO. Offered by Branch 91 Travel. Contact Midge Damonte at 650-588-6645.

May 13-29, 2014

Hidden Gems of the Dalmation Coast & Greece

This is a 16 day Cruise aboard a privately owned Grand Circle small ship with a maximum of 50 passengers. Ports of Call will include Zagreb, Split, Hvar, Korcula, Dubrovnik, Montenegro, Butrint, Albania, Corfu, Delphi and Athens. Prices range from approximately \$4595 to \$6170 PPDO, depending on accommodations and airfare. Trip also includes 37 meals, 12 exclusive tours with personal headsets, home hosted dinner, and resident Grand Circle Program Director. Offered by Branch 146 Travel. Contact Ken Richter at 925-689-6217.



September 5-12, 2014

Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, & Cape Cod

Tour the Rhode Island mansions and gardens, visit the Korean War Museum, and enjoy a high speed catamaran ride to Martha's Vineyard and so much more. Cost is \$2676 PPDO. Offered by Branch 125 Travel. Call Dick Kohl at 408-268-0428 or Bill Kurtz at 408-268-8830.

November 3-17, 2014 Spain

During this 13 day trip, we plan to experience the historic and cultural diversity of Spain. We arrive first in Madrid for 5 nights, with a city tour and day trips to Segovia and Toledo. Then we proceed to Valencia with a stop at Cuenca. From Valencia, we have scheduled day trips to Manises and Lake Albufera. Next, it's on to Barcelona with a city tour and day trips to the Llado Museum, Montserrat, and Codornia Winery. The cost is \$4195 PPDO. The price includes all air fare, accommodations, tours, all breakfasts, and some other meals. There is also available an optional pre-trip to Basque Country (Bilbao and San Sebastian) and an optional post-trip to Malaga. Each optional trip is for 4 nights and costs \$795. This trip is offered by Branch 62 Travel. Call Jim Hohenshelt at 408-394-7226 or Roy Jordan at 408-735-8765.

INFOSYS Committee

Dean Steichen, Chairman



Who are you going to call when you have a question about a SIR Rule, Procedure or Practice? Where can you find information about Branch activities or events or who to contact about them? Where can you find an answer?

I hope, by now, you know the answer. The SIR website (www.sirinc.org) contains the answers to just about any SIR related issue you can think

of. If you can't find the answer, you can find the contact information to a SIR Leader who will have the answer or know where to find it.

The SIR Leaders Guide is a synopsis of the most common Rules, Procedures and Schedules. It should be the Branch Leaders most used publication. The State Roster has the names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers of all State, Region, Area and Branch Leaders. It also has contact information of all State Committees (e.g. Insurance, Golf, Bowling, Travel, INFOSYS, etc.). The SIR Manual has all the State and Branch Rules as well as some guidelines for implementing them.

You can even find information about what's going on in your own Branch or nearby Branches from Branch websites where newsletters and other publications can be found. Branch specific regulations should be printed in Branch Rosters and may be available on Branch websites.

The SIR website has all the **SIR Forms**, links to order **SIR Apparel** and **Banners**, links to this publication (**SIR Happenings**) and lots more.

If you are interested in what is happening at the State Leadership level, check out the SIR State Communications section for **Treasurer and Board Meetings** reports.

If you are interested in helping to keep this information current and meaningful, contact Dean Steichen, SIR INFOSYS Chairman, djsteich@comcast.net.

Dean

Get SIR Happenings Quarterly

If you want to get on the "Happenings" notification list, just mention it to your Branch Email Contact. Every Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall you can go to

<http://sirinc.org/sirhappenings/>
and download the latest issue.
Happy Reading!

Hey Computer Guy

Frank Franzago, Branch 69 Bulletin Editor

At the last BEC meeting, I was asked to say something about Windows 8 in my "Hey Computer Guy" Column. I had to admit that I knew nothing about Windows 8 and had never seen it or used it. Since then, I have done a lot of research, and even got to use it. Just about all the computers that you can purchase today come equipped with Windows 8. Some manufacturers allow you to upgrade (?) to Windows 7 for an additional price. For example, Dell charges an additional \$15.00 for Windows 7.

Windows 8 is very controversial. Some people love it, but others are unhappy with it. Windows 8 is fast, stable but can be very confusing. Windows 8 represents the biggest and most dramatic shift for the Windows platform since Windows 95. It's a melding together of desktop and mobile platforms in an attempt to create a single operating system that will work on the desktop, notebooks, and tablets. It combines traditional programs (anything that works on Windows 7 works on 8) with apps. It is loved by the younger generation who are used to using apps on their tablets and smart phones and disliked by us old dudes

who struggle to navigate around a traditional computer. One thing is for sure, if you have Windows 8, it will be a learning experience. You can expect a lot of time reviewing tutorials and studying manuals. But, help is readily available on the internet and you might want to review some of the tutorials before you buy.

Send your computer questions and comments to Hey Computer Guy at franque12@surewest.net



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