



WHAT IS SIR?

<https://youtu.be/5j5WsiyKp5s>

Branch 8 Website:

<https://www.sirbr8.com>



"MAKE NEW FRIENDS FOR LIFE"

February 2024

Editor: Steve Moore

BIG SIR COLUMN



**Rich Carlston
Big SIR**

As we roll into Spring, and watch the crocus and tulips begin to bloom, we are reminded about nature's renewal each Spring. With that renewal comes new beginnings. As with nature, so with us. We can have new beginnings as well. As you ponder that thought, I hope that you think of the activities and programs which you have thought about participating in but haven't joined yet. Now is the time to take that step and stop procrastinating. Get involved. Join that new activity or rejoin an old, but not

forgotten, one. **We have so many wonderful activities!**

From Astronomy to Bocce Ball to Bowling to Dining to Photography to Dominoes to Fishing to Golf to Hiking to Mixers to Opera to Pickle Ball to Pinochle to Podcasts and Sirs at the Games to Wine Finders just to name a few. We have over 50 activities already, and likely with more to come this year! Think how much fun you will have by engaging in just one more activity this year. And don't forget to bring a friend or acquaintance to the activity with you. They will also love it.

While I'm on activities, I want to personally thank each one of our Activity Chairs. These gentlemen, all volunteers, do an outstanding job. Our Branch's success is built upon our activities and these men are the bedrock. Please take a moment to thank them for their service.

Let's all spring into Spring with gusto and have loads of fun this year!

Remember, our Mission: To improve the lives of our members through fun activities and events while making Friends for Life!



LITTLE SIR SEZ



**Tom DiGrande
Little SIR**

As winter set in with grey skies, rain, cold and short days - many of us get "grumpy" 😞 & depressed 😞. Wishing we had an opportunity "get out" & go somewhere 🗺️.

BUT WAIT!!

SIR Branch 8 has an activity for **YOU** 🙌. Inside or outside, it is on our list. Maybe rejoin the membership at our monthly luncheons. Rekindle the camaraderie, previous friendships and

acquaintances, or start a NEW one! Enjoy the luncheon speakers, like our own David Bushnell, scheduled for February, speaking on; International efforts to harness wave & tide energy. The Branch 8 membership will enjoy a wide range scheduled speakers from mayors to volunteering, to voting. 🗳️

The speaker committee has done an OUTSTANDING job lining up and organizing these quality candidates. 👍

One of the goals this year is to enhance our speaker system, adding additional speakers for the back of the room and "clip on mics" for better mobility at the luncheons.

Let's have a GREAT year

Cheers,

Tom

IN MEMORIAM

Branch 8 is saddened to learn that Peggy Watkins, Tony de Losada's deeply loved companion of 33-years, passed away on the morning of January 16, 2024 after a long illness. Services are pending and as more information is available it will be made known to the Branch.

Peggy was known and loved by many SIRs and spouses in Branch 8 who knew her thru her involvement with Tony in various Activities and Functions. She was a beautiful woman, always gracious and kind and could converse with you about anything. Peggy especially enjoyed talking about her garden which was her first love.

She will be missed greatly by all who knew her.



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Next SIR Luncheon:
February 12, 2024
Boundary Oak Golf Course
3800 Valley Vista Rd.
Walnut Creek

Executive Meeting: 9:00am
Social Hour begins: 10:15am
Luncheon starts: 11:30am
Cost \$36 INCREASED
Greeters: TBD

 MENU House Salad
Bistro Filet Smashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables Or Citrus Salmon Smashed Potatoes Seasonal Vegetables Or Penne Alla Vodka
Molten Lava Cake Coffee/Iced Tea

NEW ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER or E- mail

If you change your address, phone number or E-Mail address, please notify Rich Knowles at (925) 370-6239 or send him an E-mail at: sb8msec@hotmail.com



LUNCHEON SIGN-UP

Sons in Retirement originated in 1958 in San Mateo when four retired businessmen got together for a social luncheon with the purpose of promoting this activity for all retired men. This idea evolved into the organization that you are involved with today. We continue to believe that holding luncheons for social interaction and to listen to timely presentations is a wonderful activity. We hope that you value this, as well. **The monthly luncheon is the backbone of SIR and why SIR exists. If you have not attended these luncheons for a while, we encourage you to join your fellow SIR members and enjoy retirement life.**



We ALL must sign up to attend the Branch 8 luncheon held at Boundary Oak Golf Course, 3800 Valley Vista Rd., Walnut Creek, CA. You will have a choice of a meat, fish, or vegetarian entrée. You can also select no meal. **Please tell us which entrée you want when you sign-up:**

1. Three sign-up methods will be available for yourself and if you want to bring a guest. Just let us know including your choice of meal:
 - a. A Constant Contact email requesting your action to sign up to attend a Branch 8 luncheon will be sent to you. Click on the link in this email to electronically sign up for the next luncheon. You will need to enter your name as well as any guest's names, your and your guest's meal preference. You should receive a message immediately that your response has been recorded. This is the preferred method.
 - b. Send an email message to sirbr8attendance@outlook.com. You will receive a confirming email.
 - c. Call 925-901-4826 to sign up for the luncheon by phone.
2. You must sign 5 calendar days before the next luncheon (i.e., the Wednesday before the luncheon). This deadline is necessary because we must provide a final headcount to Boundary Oak.
3. We have been fortunate in being able to accommodate those who sign up late or simply walk-in. If you are not on the sign-up list for the meal and want to attend; do come, and, if available, we will sell you a meal. If meals appear to be sold out, we will ask you to wait until 11:15 AM so we can confirm that a meal is available. You are always welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the speaker.
4. As before, you will bring a personal check for **\$36.00** made out to SIR Branch 8, or cash to the luncheon as payment.

5. If you sign up, but do not attend the luncheon, or if you cancel after 5-days prior to the luncheon, you remain subject to payment because we owe Boundary Oak for the lunch that they have prepared for you.
6. If you have any questions regarding the sign-up process, contact Manuel Dominguez (dominguezx@comcast.net) or Dan Smith (dns.lns02@astound.net).

Constant Contact emails have been very successful and makes sign-up easy. However, these emails do not reach all members for one reason or another. If you believe that you have been missed, or if away during the sign-up period, you can always use the attendance email or voicemail given above anytime. You should do this at least 5-days prior to the luncheon to ensure that you have a meal.

Again, we request that if you sign up and then change your mind about attending, please cancel before the 5-days prior to the luncheon cutoff. Late cancellations and no shows cost the Branch. We do not charge membership for missed meals when the reason is health related.

NEED A RIDE

In the interest of getting more guys to our monthly luncheons, the BEC would like to know who needs a ride to and from Boundary Oak and has not yet arranged for one each month. If you need a ride to/from the luncheon, please send an email to Ray de Wit at raydewit11@gmail.com by the first of the month.

In addition, we have arranged to have a golf cart available for transporting limited-mobility members to and from the upper parking lot to the luncheon entrance. Please email Ray de Wit at least 3 days before the monthly luncheon if you need that service.

NEW MEMBER BADGES



These badges belong to our newest members. Don't forget to say "Hi" and introduce yourself. Let's make them feel at home. Talk about your SIR activities and ask them to join you.

**NEW SIR STORE
APPAREL- NEW ITEMS!
NEW SHIPPING
CHANGES!**



ALL SIR orders over \$50 ship FREE! Shop now to take advantage of this offer!



SHOP NOW:

<https://sir.go.customprintcenter.com>

**SHOW YOU ARE PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF SIR
BRANCH 8, SPORT A LOGO! Be well!**

Public Relations Chair: Tony de Losada

PUBLIC RELATIONS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH



No new report submitted for
FEBRUARY.

**Tony de Losada Tom Mohrman
Chairmen**

Tony de Losada tonydelosada@gmail.com 925-945-1730
Tom Mohrman mustangpm@gmail.com 516-242-1635

COMMUNITY OUTREACH – SIR GIVING BACK

The regularly scheduled monthly Food Bank activity had 13 members and 1 spouse (Roisin Scimonelli), sort incoming donations from Food Barrels, for proper packaging, label of ingredients and expiration dates. Each box of the category products are then weighed, placed on pallets and stored for later distributions. 🚚

Our other activity was a “Boxing Event”. 📦

In a “Fun Filled” environment, with music blasting - assembly line format, boxes are assembled and on a manual conveyor type belt, the box is loaded with juice, cereal, milk, corn, canned potatoes, beans, rice and other products. The box is then sealed, placed on pallets and loaded into trucks. With 1 short break, a

group of approx 35 individuals prepared 1500 boxes. WOW! 😊
SIR volunteers enjoyed this “fast paced” activity.

You talk about “moving”, this is the activity for YOU. 😊

Thanks for the Support 🙏

Volunteers needed for the upcoming scheduled activities at the

Food Bank: 🍎 🥥 🥕 🥦

Wednesday, 2/14/24

Wednesday, 3/13/24

Wednesday, 4/10/24

Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano

4010 Nelson Ave

Concord, CA 94520

All scheduled from 1 to 3pm

(Minimum of 15 members)

* No open toed shoes

* Masks are optional

* Wear your Red SIR volunteer T shirt

* Arrive 15 minutes prior to scheduled time

The Community Outreach - SIR Giving Back activities are co-ed.

Spouses, partners & significant others are encouraged /

welcomed to participate and sign up for any upcoming activities.

If you have volunteered in an activity previously, please contact us again for the upcoming activity that you want to participate in.

We will continue to provide Food Barrels 📦, or large food bags

🛒, for needed donations, at our scheduled monthly luncheons.

Look for the SIR “greeters”, the barrels or bags will be close!

Your continuous contributions are appreciated. 😊

SIR Branch 8 participation in the Community Outreach - SIR Giving Back program demonstrates the heart felt effort of the members support for the community.

“Giving Back” doesn’t require inordinate commitments of time or talent, you can do what you want, when you can and still reap the rewards of Volunteering.

To sign up contact:

Tom DiGrande
tomdigrande@comcast.net
925 876-7851

Phil Scimonelli
rosescim@aol.com
661 917-8060

MEMBER RELATIONS COMMITTEE



Rich Knowles
Chairman

The Member Relations Committee (MRC) reports to the Branch Executive Committee (BEC) on member concerns. To do this effectively we need input from our members. The MRC wants to hear from you on all issues concerning the viability of Branch 8. MRC welcomes any comments from members on how to improve their branch experience.



Chairman: Rich Knowles 925-681-9191 grichthek@gmail.com

DOCTOR'S OFFICE



Dr Bill Adler
Chairman

We have retired MDs, who are willing to give informal medical information to SIR members. The doctors do not diagnose illness, but will answer basic questions, provide referrals, and direct our members to medical resources.

The "Doctor's Office" is open at 10:45 AM on Luncheon days.

Dr. Bill Adler, Chairman
Dr. Bob Stein, Co-Chair

LADIES DAY LUNCHEON



Buck Cheshire
Chairman

Holiday Ladies Day Luncheon

The December 11, 2023 Holiday Ladies Day luncheon had 143 attendees, and everyone had a very enjoyable time. The door prize recipients were spread out across the room of beautifully decorated tables. The wine, See's chocolates, dinner discounts, and donated prizes were very well received. The luncheon was capped by



a performance by the extraordinary COSMO, who besides being a great magician, is part motivational/inspirational speaker and comedian. His performance kept the audience fascinated by how he was able to perform his magic. The performance was the highlight of the luncheon and was enjoyed by everyone, with the floral center pieces being taken home by the seat-holder having the lucky number seat at the table.

The spring LDL will be held on June 10, 2024. A theme has yet to be determined; however, once again there will be tasty food, wine, and flowers, along with many door prizes awarded to lucky ticketholders.

Buck Cheshire
Chairman Ladies Day Luncheon (Ret.)
BJCHESHIRE@COMCAST.NET

OKTOBERFEST



Leo Dominguez



Ron Maciak



Thom Watkins

SIR BRANCH 8 OKTOBERFEST!!!

Our first Oktoberfest was on Thursday October 19, 2023. We had 93 members and guests, the weather cooperated and Concord Community Park looked like a German Bier Garden with all the terrific decorations everywhere. We began with pretzels and a variety of mustards, while the chefs were hard at work.

The cooking began the day before with three of us at Leo's place and after 5 hours of cooking potatoes, cabbage, and other prep, we were ready for the next day. On event day Exec Chef Thom Watkins, led the crew to cook sausages, kielbasa, German potato salad, cabbage etc. Ron Maciak, could not attend, but he was a key player with Thom to hunt down all the food, recipes etc, we missed Ron. The volunteers made this happen, Rob L and Ray W picked up all the supplies and returned to the storeroom Dan Crowley has provided, thanks Dan. Ron M, Thom W, Ken S, Leo picked up coolers at the rental company days before. Ken M picked up ice cream and another cooler. We had about 25 volunteers from Branch 8, and then many spouses pitched in to help set up bar, hang decorations etc. Dennis R. pre and day of cooker, Dan K enjoyed using Thom's propane grill torch to start the coals, careful Dan! Pete J did a great job using his ladder to hang Oktoberfest banners and all sorts of other items. Roger L, treasurer extraordinaire. Terry M decided to recycle, since park does not offer. Jim S, head environmentalist, he cleaned up previous refuse from other events. Tom D, manned the welcome table, wearing his lederhosen, we had to pull him away, so he could partake of all the food and drink. The name labels by Paula M were decorative and fun. All enjoyed German beers, wine, sodas, water, even non-alcoholic beer! Big thanks to the spouses that helped, Dale J, Gayle D, Linda G, Paula M, Maureen M, Sandi L.



We could not have succeeded with the event without the numerous volunteers, that cannot all be listed here, but you all know that you were highly valued and we all benefitted from great conversations and physical work setting up and taking down all the rental equipment.

Remember that SIR enriches the lives of our members through fun activities and events-while making friends for life. SO TRUE!

SUNSHINE REPORT



Rich Knowles
Chairman

Please contact Membership: sb8msec@hotmail.com to report illnesses/surgery or passing of members. Membership will send electronic "Get well" Cards via email and continue to mail condolence cards to the families via the mail. Membership will report member deaths to the branch via email and as they become known obituaries and services. In addition, Membership continues to maintain a current obituary file on the web site



Sunshine regrets to inform the Membership of:

The passing of Bob Olson just before Christmas. No further information yet available

Bill Bargaquast is in hospice at home and not receiving calls or visitors

Bill Phelon is in hospice at Tiffany Court at 1866 San Miguel Dr in Walnut Creek. He is doing well and can have visitors and does take phone calls on his cell phone (925) 285-7496. Best times are between 11 am and 7 pm. No advance notice is needed to visit him. He is in room 204. He does not respond to emails or text messages.

And the Membership has been informed of the passing of Tony de Losada's longtime partner Peggy Watkins.

Membership Secretary: Rich Knowles, grichthek@gmail.com or call (925) 681-9191

BIRTHDAYS



Membership began sending birthday emails to members during the Covid-19 shut down and has continued daily since. The Sirs below have a birthday in February. Be sure to open your birthday greeting. **Highlighted names are those who are our nonagenarians!** Looks like nobody is 90 this month – next year.

Al Reichard
Andy Jaramillo
Art Fabsits
Bill Babbel
Chris Wehling
Gary Nicholson
Gordon Linebaugh
Joe Karg

John Osborne
John Sutton
Ken Micheli
Lee Hannam
Martin Hawco
Mel Petersen
Robert Wells
Roger Lockwara

Ron Draper
Ron Maciak
Ron Shahade
Steve Burrows
Steve Moore
Terry Norton
Thom Flaherty
Tom Hodgson

ACTIVITIES COORDINATING COMMITTEE



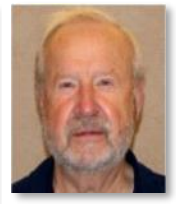
Mike Frey



Ken Main



Chick Lowry



Dennis Mierzwa

ACC Report for February 2024

With the holiday events behind us the ACC is moving into the New Year making changes to your Branch 8 website. The Activity list has undergone some changes with the loss of 3 activities. Birders, DanSIRS, and Dine In #3 have disbanded. Always a possibility to have interesting opportunities go away, but a reality as the branch evolves.

The Website Activity index will be revised to reflect the current activities and be easier to navigate so members and the public visiting can find descriptions of our various offerings with the Activity When, Where and Meeting Times and then allow a deeper view of what happens if you join the organization. It will allow the ACC team to assist with keeping the information as current as possible.

The Ladies Day Luncheons will now be planned via a committee process rather than putting the entire responsibility on a single Activity Chairman and assistants. Ray de Wit will lead the committee and find volunteers to spread the work load. Your committee will be announced as soon as Ray has gathered his planning cohorts.

The ACC Team has undergone a leadership change with Mike Frey mfrey1784@gmail.com now leading the group. The four of us, Mike, Chick Clowry2845@gmail.com, Ken mainkenneth46@gmail.com and Dennis dennis.mierzwa@att.net, will continue to assist Activity Chairs with any problems where they require assistance and maintain the Activity elements of the Website.

The next ACC meeting will be held on January 22nd at 2 PM.

Current 2024 Branch 8 Activity status:

BR 8 Activity Count = **50**; Co-Ed = **35**; Includes 3 Events; **2** Community Outreach

Shared Branch Activity Count = **22**

FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Activities at SIR Branch 8

Today

◀

▶

February 2024

Print

Week

Month

Agenda

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	Feb 1	2	3
	10am 18 Hole Gol	10am Hike: Hard 3pm Mixer	9am 9 Hole Golf. 10am Bowling	8:30am Pickleball 9:30am Heads-Up 11am Bridge - Rut	8:30am Open Boc 1pm Poker 1pm Internet Mex	10am Woodpecker
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	10am 18 Hole Gol	10:30am Book Gro 12:30pm Car Enth 1pm Poker 5pm Dine Out Sin	9am 9 Hole Golf. 10am Bowling 11am LIVE-Domin 1pm Cribbage 1pm Cribbage Tou	8:30am Pickleball 9:15am Mixed Lea 9:30am Heads-Up 1pm Recently Rea 6pm Wine Finders 6pm Wine Finders	8:30am Open Boc 9am Duplicate Bri 1pm LIVE-Mexica	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	9am BEC meeting 10am Book Excha 11:30am SIR Lunc	10am 18 Hole Gol 10am Easy Hike 4pm Podcast	9am 9 Hole Golf. 10am Bowling 1pm Community (C 1pm Pinochle	HOTLINE input 8:30am Pickleball 9:30am Heads-Up 6pm Dine out 1 6pm Wine Finders	8:30am Open Boc 10am Digital Phot 1pm Internet Mex	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	HOTLINE input 1pm Bridge - Part	10am 18 Hole Gol 1pm Cribbage	9am 9 Hole Golf. 10am Bowling 1pm Poker	8:30am Pickleball 8:30am Fishing 9:30am Heads-Up 1pm Poker	8:30am Open Boc 11:30am BRIDGE - 1pm LIVE-Mexica	
25	26	27	28	29	Mar 1	2
	10am 18 Hole Gol 12pm Poker	10am Hike: Hard 1pm Poker 1pm Writing Your 3pm Mixer 4pm Podcast	9am 9 Hole Golf. 10am Bowling 1pm Pinochle 1:30pm \$UMS in R	8:30am Pickleball 9:30am Heads-Up	8:30am Open Boc 1pm Poker 1pm Internet Mex	10am Woodpecker

Events shown in time zone: Pacific Time - Los Angeles

+

GoogleCalendar

Events shown in time zone: Pacific Time - Los Angeles

 Google Calendar

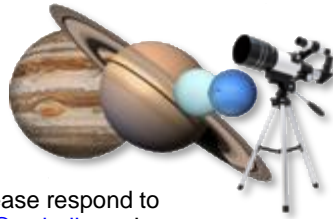
ASTRONOMY ONLINE



David Bushnell
Chairman

David Bushnell, Chairman and Editor, dbushn@swbell.net, 925-838-3914

Larry Lange, Assistant Chairman



If you would like to get the semi-daily emails about astronomy, please respond to me at dbushn@swbell.net. I get them from Sigma Xi SmartBrief, where they have been "down-edited" to language we can all understand.

OPERA IN THE THEATERS



David Bushnell
Chairman

No Metropolitan operas in the cinemas in February. The next opera will be Verdi's La Forza del Destino on March 9



David Bushnell, Activity Chairman,
dbushn@swbell.net, 925-838-3914

BOCCE BALL - LEAGUE PLAY



Chick Lowry
Chairman

Asst. Chair: Bob Barnes Bob_Barnes@msn.com

League Bocce Play for SIR is a seasonal opportunity made available through the Concord Bocce Federation. We currently have one ten-person team available. If there is interest beyond those currently on the team, we can investigate adding another. Contact either of the names listed below for additional information. Bocce Ball League play will resume next spring.

Chairman: Chick Lowry,
Clowry2845@gmail.com

BOCCE BALL - OPEN PLAY



Martin Hawco
Chairman

Bocce Ball Open Play will resume Spring 2024. I will contact you then; I have a contact list that includes players from past seasons who did NOT play at all this season. If anyone is not interested and is on that list I have, please let me know and I'll remove them from that distribution list.

Chairman: Martin Hawco 925-689-4251,
not4u2bee@gmail.com

BOOK EXCHANGE



Alan Curtis
Chairman

As shown below, plenty of SIRS enjoying our book collection at the August Luncheon. We have lots of new titles, including history, fiction, and nonfiction, some first editions, and some large print editions. Come check out the Book Exchange!



Be sure to stop by and browse, a good opportunity to pick up a book or two, and chat with your fellow readers and book-lovers. As usual, we welcome donations of titles you think your fellow SIRS might enjoy. Happy reading!

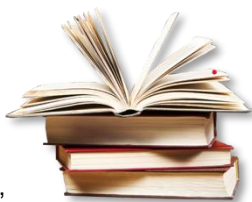
Chairman: Alan Curtis, alancurtis@sbcglobal.net
Assistant Chairman: Ron Rizzo, ronbrizzo@gmail.com
Assistant Chairman: Rob Laaback, rlaabak@yahoo.com
Assistant Chairman: Tom Keehn, tom242g@gmail.com

BOOK GROUP



Ron Rizzo
Chairman

In January the Book Group discussed the novel *My Absolute Darling* by Gabriel Tallent, which has been called a masterpiece by Steven King. It is a tough read, with some graphic depictions of physical violence and sexual abuse, counterpointed by vivid descriptions of the natural environment, heroism, and excellent



writing and character description. The book evoked an animated discussion and diversity of opinion from the members who attended. On a scale of five stars and with 17 total votes, it received 4 5-star ratings, 2 4-star ratings, 7 3-star ratings, 3 2-star ratings, and 1 1-star rating. The overall rating was 3.3.

Our next book is a work of non-fiction *Benjamin Franklin* by Walter Isaacson—which will be discussed at our meeting on Tuesday, February 6.

We meet at the Concord Round Table Pizza on Treat Boulevard on the first Tuesday of each month. If you like to read and have lively discussions about the books you have read, you should think about joining our group. If you are interested, please contact our chairman, Ron Rizzo, at ronbrizzo@gmail.com.

Our reading lists for 2024 and 2023 are in the Book Group activity section of the Branch 8 website.

RECENTLY READ BOOKS



Ron Rizzo
Chairman

The Recently Read Books Group consists of members who share short summaries of the book(s) they have read the previous month and pick up ideas about what to read next from other members. There are always a variety of books covered, both fiction and non-fiction, such as novels, literature, biography, history, science, and current affairs.

Please feel free to join us if you've read a book (or two) you've enjoyed that you'd like to recommend to other members or if you just want to some suggestions for your own reading. If you're interested, contact our Chairman, Ron Rizzo, at ronbrizzo@gmail.com. We meet on Zoom at 1:00 PM the 2nd Thursday of each month.

The books recommended by members in 2021 and 2022 are listed in the Recently Read Books section of the SIR Branch 8 website. Each recommendation includes the title, author, and a short summary of the book. The recommendations made in 2023 will be added to the website within a month of each meeting.

BOWLING



Dan Weller
Chairman

SIR Bowling Report for February 2024

Bowling League

The 2023 - 2024 "winter" league started September 6. We have thirteen teams of four bowlers each. We are looking for four more bowlers to create the fourteenth team. Low average bowlers, spouses, and friends are welcome.

Please contact Dan Weller if you are interested in league and / or tournament bowling.



New Type Bowling Pin Setter

The last SIR Bowling Tournament was held at the Napa Bowling Center. These lanes are using a new way to set the bowling pins by having strings in the top of each bowling pin. The strings lift and set the pins. For example, your first throw "leaves" three pins standing. The setter pulls all of the pins, standing and laying, to clean the deck. In then lowers the three pins that you left standing for your second throw. Most of the 84 bowlers were comfortable with this new bowling architecture.

SIR State-Wide Tournament Schedules, Applications, and Results Are On-Line: Upcoming SIR Bowling Tournaments:

DATE	LOCATION	COMMENTS
February 15 – 16	Sacramento / Country Club Lanes	
March 5	Citrus Heights / Fireside Lanes	

To access the SIR State bowling information, open the state bowling web site at SIRBowling.org. You can find tournament schedules, applications and results on the site.

ACTIVITY CHAIRMAN: Dan Weller 925-935-5510
dweller@astound.net

ASSISTANT CHAIRMAN Rob Norris 925-788-6958
robert.norris@natca.net

CAR ENTHUSIASTS



Chick Lowry
Chairman



Car Enthusiasts for February 2024

Efforts continue for Car Enthusiasts to visit the California Highway Patrol Academy in Sacramento as our first event of the year. The proposed tour was originally going to take place in January, but logistics will move it until February. Possible dates and time have yet to be accepted by the CHP representative we are working with to schedule the event. If you are interested in joining this event, please contact me at Clowry2845@gmail.com

The planning of a 2024 event schedule is taking longer to develop than usual. We have discussed many possibilities and the survey I planned to have ready in early January has been delayed due to a lack of available info that I pull from the internet. I find many of the sites I usually use to be slow with posting of scheduled possibilities. I hope to have the survey available CE members in early February. Our member's response will set the events for 2024.

Some certain repeat events will be part of our plan. A couple of local Rally Drives will be developed, The Poker Run will again be a highlight, and at least one travel (overnighter) event will be planned. There were many good suggestions mentioned at the monthly CE in January. We're moving forward with the year's activities.

The next CE meeting will be **Tuesday, February 6th, at 1 PM.** We will meet in at Round Table Clubhouse Pizza, 2960 Treat Blvd. Concord, CA (corner of Treat and Oak Grove). Arrive a little early in order to get your food and drink ordered prior to the meeting. Meetings last about an hour. Come join us and see what Car Enthusiasts is all about.

If interested in joining the Car Enthusiasts Activity, please contact any of the folks listed below.

Happy Motoring...

Activity Chair - Chick Lowry Clowry2845@gmail.com
Assistant Chairs: Tom Mohrman - mustangtpm@gmail.com
Bill Koski - billkos36@comcast.net
Tom Hodgson - tomehodgson1945@gmail.com



CRIBBAGE



Dennis Mierzwa
Chairman

The Cribbage Activity meets on the 1st Wednesday and 3rd Tuesday of each month. We play at Rocco's Pizzeria at 2909 Ygnacio Valley Rd in Walnut Creek. Social hour/lunch at noon and play is from 1pm to 3pm. Please join us if you have played or wish to learn. Sometimes Rocco's will schedule other groups for the room on the restaurant side. In these cases, we are moved to the space on the bar side in the back. Be prepared to look for us on either side. Depending on attendance we play

two, three or four person games. We normally get in five games in the two hours we play. Members prefer to play four person games, which is two partners with the two winners advancing to the next table. This is a fun, friendly, fast-paced game.

Send Hotline comments to Dan Smith at dns.lns02@astound.net

January 2023 RESULTS

We met on January 6th, the first Wednesday of the month and had twelve players. We were able to play three tables of four each. The winning scores follow:

1 st	Dennis Mierzwa	165 points
2 nd	Jerry Ward	154 points
3 rd	Don Atwater	148 points
4 th	Greg Ryan	139 points

On the third Tuesday, January 19th we had eleven players. We had two tables of four and one table of three each. Bob Beitler and Bud Grisanti tied for second. Our winners were:

1 st	Don Atwater	203 points
2 nd	Bob Beitler	181 points
3 rd	Bud Grisanti	181 points
4 th	Jerry Ward	119 points

Chairmen, Dennis Mierzwa: dennis.mierzwa@att.net

Assistant Chairmen, Dan Smith: dns.lns02@astound.net

BRIDGE ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ RUBBER



Rod Spicer
Chairman

The No report this month.

We meet on the first Thursday of the month at the Round Table Pizza ,2960 Treat Blvd., Concord. Lunch and social stars at 11 AM.

Rod Spicer, Chairman, 1-925-935-5306, marod61@att.net

BRIDGE ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ DUPLICATE



Bud Grisanti
Chairman

Sir Duplicate Bridge II members play on the fourth Friday of the month. We meet at Round Table Pizza at 1938 Oak Park Blvd., Pleasant Hill. Arrive early by 11:30 AM to get your lunch and sign up. The game starts at 12:00 PM. If a Member is unable to attend, please notify Bud Grisanti.

Substitutes are often needed. Please contact the chairmen below to get on the substitute list.

Chairman: **Bud Grisanti**, 672-3023 budgrisanti@gmail.com

PARTNERS BRIDGE



George Schulze
Chairman

Combining friends, food, cards, and friendly competition made for a nice afternoon of Partner's Bridge on Monday, October 16th. This month Steve & Honora Greytak were high scorers followed by Rod & Mary Ann Spicer and Ron Rizzo & Chloe Laube.

We enjoy meeting and dealing in new players (intermediate). So, if interested, give us a call (925-429-1756). Partner's Bridge plays at 1:00 on the 3rd Monday of each month at

Round Table on Treat.

George & Charlene Schulze, 925-429-1756

PINOCHLE



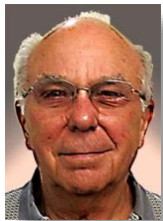
Stan Johnson
Chairman

We are meeting in person twice a month on the second and fourth Wednesdays at Rocco's Restaurant, 2909 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Walnut Creek (in the Encina Grande shopping center near Whole Foods). We have lunch starting at noon with card play 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. We play 3, 4, 5, or 6 handed games so we can accommodate any number of players. Ladies and new players are welcome.



Stan Johnson, Chairman, 925-938-7016,
stan.johnson88@gmail.com

POKER, COME JOIN US FOR POKER!



Ron Draper
Chairman

Poker games are being played throughout the month, but openings are limited. If you're interested in joining, I'm establishing a new member poker list. Call Ron Draper at 925-324-6786 or send an email to r-draper@pacbell.net.



DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY



Bill Phelon

The Digital Photography Group met January 19. This was a business meeting with no photographs shared. The purpose of the meeting was to explore possible changes we might make that would enhance member satisfaction and increase participation.

Those who attended were Rich Carlston, John Crooks, Dave Davis, Dick Hixson, Robin Lamont, Steve Moore and Meng Horng.

At this meeting, it was decided that:

- We will continue to meet monthly on Zoom.
- Possibly changing the frequency of meetings. We are considering meeting every other month in person; possibly at a public space such as a library, restaurant or other venue which would be comfortable for members and easy to access. Dick Hixson and Rich Carlston will explore the venue options. We should know more by next month. It was decided that when/if we meet in person, all attendees should be current on their COVID19 vaccination.
- Once a year, we would also like to have meeting at the nearby park, garden, or other public space for a group photo shoot followed by lunch.
- We would like to see more member pictures incorporated more pictures from our members to be included in the Branch 8 lunch slide show slide show, which routinely showing during our monthly SIR Luncheon. First, we would like to have members to select 4-5 photos and them send to Meng Horng at mengymc@gmail.com by Feb. 3, 2024 so he can select ten to send to Rich Carlston for the pre-lunch slideshow.
- At regular meetings, we still will be using a topic for the month for the showing. 10-12 recently taken photos. Smart phone photos are welcome.

Our February meeting topic will be **"SIGNS"**, in which anything goes: use your imagination. It should be fun.

Meetings will continue to be every 3rd Friday at 10:00am. The meeting link will be sent a week earlier.

Since our Chairman, Bill Phelon is currently unable to lead the monthly meetings, Meng Horng will act as chairman pro-tem this year. So, please, if you have any suggestions as how to improve the Branch 8 photo group, let Meng know. Our main goal is to improve the member experience and grow membership.

Let's also keep Bill Phelon in our hope and prayers.

Bill Phelon, Chair
rphelon@juno.com
925-254-8338 (lv. msg.)

Dave Davis, Vice Chair
dav.davis@comcast.net
925-838-1753

SIR SCIENCE

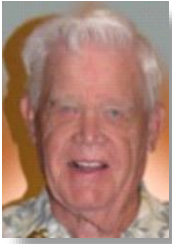


David Bushnell
Chairman

If you would like to get daily emails about science, please respond to me at dbushn@swbell.net. I get them from Sigma Xi SmartBrief, where they have been down-edited to language we can all understand.

David Bushnell, Chairman and Editor
dbushn@swbell.net, 925-838-3914

INTERNET GAMES



Don Atwater
Chairman

Internet Games is an activity you can enjoy wherever you have an internet connection. But instead of playing against the computer, here you get to play against SIR friends. New games may be started and that is where it is hoped we will help interested members to connect as well as find links. So let Chairman Don know of your interest and perhaps others will be found for the game.

Mexican Train – Currently, we play Mexican Train on the 1st & 3rd Fridays of each

month with games starting at 1:00 p.m. Thanks to Danny Rinaldi, our connection is via Zoom to razzle our competitors while playing on a site reserved just for us.

Each month we have a Cribbage tournament where competitors play each other on an internet site while conversing on the phone with one another. Internet Cribbage is played as a two-man game during the first 2 weeks of the month. We connect on a good Cribbage Internet site that deals with the cards and counts the points. Last month Dennis Mierzwa, Don Atwater, Stan Johnson, and Greg Ryan had double digit wins, with Don Atwater the winner with 16

Come join us for these games or perhaps suggest a new game for this internet connection.

Chairman, Don Atwater
925-673-1669, datwater@pacbell.net
Asst. Chairman, Dan Rinaldi
925-381-5485, danrinaldi944@gmail.com

DOMINOES



Dan Rinaldi
Chairman

We need new players. Call "Dan Rinaldi, 925-381-5486 or email danrinaldi944@gmail.com if you are interested in playing.

Co-Chairman: Alan Schulze 925-876-7537 a_schulze@sbcglobal.net



MEXICAN TRAIN DOMINOES

Mexican Train Dominoes meets in-person on the second and fourth Fridays of each month at 1:00 PM in the Round Table Pizza at Treat and Oak Grove in Concord. We generally come earlier to have lunch as well. We need new players. We can accommodate any number of people. Ladies and beginners are welcome.

We also have online Mexican Train on the first and third Fridays, also at 1:00 PM. Contact any of the people below if you are interested.

Chairman: Danny Rinaldi, 925-381-5486 or email danirinaldi944@gmail.com
Asst. Chairman: Terry Norton, 925-798-6023, nortont@sbcglobal.net
Asst. Chairman: Stan Johnson, 925-938-7016, stan.johnson88@gmail.com



DINING OUT

BARGAIN BITES



Ron Smith
Chairman

HELLO BARGAIN BITERS!!



By the time you read this we will have feasted at - China Palace in Walnut Creek and celebrated the YEAR OF THE DRAGON!!! Table decorations and chocolate dragons-- Oh My!!

We pretty much took over the restaurant as 40 SIR including spouses descended on them and devoured Hot and Sour soup and Spring Rolls as appetizers and then dug into four main courses plus steamed rice. They included Garlic Prawns, Lemon Chicken, Sweet and Sour Pork, and Broccoli Beef.

There was something for everybody. If you couldn't make it, maybe next year or sooner.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024 AND HOPE YOU WILL JOIN US.

Remember the motto of Bargain Bites: Good Food! Good Price! Good Friends! And guests are always welcome. This is a really good event for inviting friends to introduce them to SIR, but do it early as we often fill up.

If you would like to be placed on the Bargain Bites e-mail list, just send a note to resmith62@aol.com and say "Place me on the Bargain Bites List." Oh yes, include your name. You will receive personal e-mails in advance of the Hotline. Again, thanks for your interest and wonderful support. It makes the effort worthwhile.

Chairman: Ron Smith, 925-314-3066, resmith62@aol.com
Asst. Chairman: Bill Barber, 925-222-0095, billhiker4411@gmail.com

DINE IN #1



Ron Cassano
Chairman

We dined at the Smith's. Great meal again. Fellowship and "tall" stories abounded. We overate and drank as usual. Just can't say more. Great time.

Ron Cassano, Head Eater
roncassano@gmail.com

DINE IN #4



Roger Lamm
Chairman

No new report submitted for **JANUARY**.

Roger Lamm, Chair,
rogerlamm@gmail.com
Dan Casella, Co-Chair

DINE OUT - SINGLE SIRs



Glenn Gilman
Chairman

Tuesday, February 6, host Hugh Barnett has selected La Pinata Mexican Restaurant & Tequila Bar, 2301 Willow Pass Rd, Concord for our dining pleasure. We will gather at 5:00 p.m. with dinner ordered shortly after our arrival. Let host Hugh Barnett know whether you will be attending or not.

Last month we started the new year with eleven of us enjoying good food and conversation at La Tapatia in Concord.

Chairman, Glenn Gilman, 798- 5155 glennfam@sbcglobal.net
Asst. Chairman, Don Atwater, 673-1669 datwater@pacbell.net
Hugh Barnett, Host – hughbarnett@att.net

JIGSAW PUZZLE EXCHANGE



Carl Moyer
Chairman

Carl Moyer has a new activity called **Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange**. The jigsaw puzzle exchange will be at the Luncheon fishing table with Carl Moyer. Bring Puzzles & Take Puzzles. Contact Carl @, carlmarc@astound.net



MIXER



Ray de Wit
Chairman

Our group didn't meet in December as it was the day after Christmas and I suspect everyone had had enough "cheer" the day before. We did, however, meet on Tuesday, January 30th, to kick off 2024 with a great crowd. Looking forward to having more friends show up as the year progresses. Our February "meeting" is on 27th, so come on by.

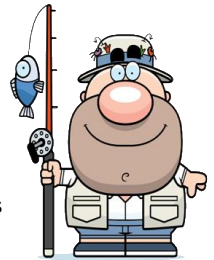
Everyone is welcome and we meet at Jack's in Pleasant Hill at 3:00. Hope to see some new faces and smiles at the Mixers. Please contact Ray de Wit (raydewit11@gmail.com) or Alan Curtis (alancurtis@sbcglobal.net) for information and to reserve a spot. All are welcome (spouses, significant others, or guests), so watch for information on upcoming events.

FISHING - AREA 16



Carl Moyer
Chairman

SIR members and guests are welcome, and indeed encouraged, to participate in fishing trips as well as attend the monthly meetings. Contacts are Bob Lively 925-383-5193 and Carl Moyer 925-685-5243. Next meeting will be at the Legends restaurant at the Diablo Creek golf course on Port Chicago Highway and Highway 4 on Thursday, February 22nd at 8:30am. Come early.



Oh! Woe is us!! Rockfish is closed now, nobody knows when it will open. Salmon will most probably be closed for the year. Sturgeon are now limited to one a year in a slot limit. The crab catch is decreasing, and the commercials started so that is severely diminished. That leaves trout, which has been slow this winter, but Pete Gates caught a nice one almost 7 pounds. Carl Moyer, Stan Wong, and Ken Bellinder got a few. Bob Lively got some on his kayak, and a bonus 5 pound catfish, Ron Lew also kayaked for a few trout. Tom Kostik, Stan Wong, Ron Lew, Phil Scimonelli, and Harry Sherinian got stripers in the delta. Many of us enjoyed our annual Christmas Dinner at Zio Fredo. Thank you, Pete Gates for your work on this. So we wait for warmer weather to chase more trout, bass, halibut in the bay, stripers, black bass, and maybe rock fish.

Come join us! **Carl Moyer**, Chairman, carlmarc@astound.net

GOLF - 9 HOLE



The weekly 9-hole golf group at Diablo Hills Golf Course!!



Following is a summary of recent play:

Jan 3rd and Jan 10th, 2024

Play Rained Out

Mike Frey
Chairman

Dec 27th, 2023

2 hardy golfers (Gary Grice and George Vogt) teed off today starting at 9:00 AM at Diablo Hills Golf Course on a chilly morning for golf. Gary Grice recorded the low rounds of the day with a scores of "45". Gary recorded the lone par of the day and neither golfer recorded a birdie.

Dec 20th, 2023

Play Rained Out

*Top Three Individual Low Gross scoring averages for the year with a minimum play of 20 rounds:

Rich Knowles – 44.2

Ray de Wit – 45.1

Mike Frey – 46.2

You are welcome to join us for a round of golf followed by a bite to eat. Go to the Branch 8 website and, under the Nine Hole Golf link, click on the Signup link. Call or email me with any questions.

Mike Frey, Chair: mfrey1784@gmail.com 925/699-1784

GOLF - 18 HOLE



David Platter
Chairman

2024 play started at Franklin Canyon on January 9. Buck Cheshire was low net with a 74. Bob Samson had a low gross score of 87. Our February schedule includes Franklin Canyon February 5, Diablo Creek February 13, Rancho Solano February 20, and Boundary Oak February 26. Franklin Canyon will be closing, date not yet known, so we are playing the course as much as we can before closing. The Golf Schedule has been finalized and



Marshal's are in place. The schedule includes the nine Branch 8 Tournaments, a joint Branch 8/161 match as well as our Branch 8 Golf Outing later in the year (October). Golf can best defined as an endless series of tragedies obscured by the occasional miracle, followed by a good bottle of beer. If you find you do not mind playing golf in the rain, the snow, even during a hurricane, here's a valuable tip...your life is in trouble. Golf! You hit down to make the ball go up. You swing left and the ball goes right. The lowest score wins, on top of that, the winner buys the drinks.

Correspondence: Bill Koski, billkos36@comcast.net 925-672-7650

Membership/Handicap/Data: Buddy May, fytprylut@comcast.net 925-833-6098

GOLF - 9 HOLE MIXED LEAGUE ♀♂



Gordon Batesole
Chairman

Maybe the "Faithful 8" should be called "SIR golf snowbirds," for we truly had the Diablo Hills Golf Course all to ourselves on that lovely, cold morning of December 14, at 10:00 am. Golfers were Stan Johnson, Roger and Mardee Lockwara, Paul and Elaine Laderer, Paul and Millie Hersch, and Margaret Batesole, with chairperson Gordon Batesole giving us our Start Times. Pars were made by Stan, Mardee, Roger, Paul L., and Paul H., and

Elaine and Millie. Stan even made a birdie. If you doubt these facts, come join us, and you, too, will surely make a PAR!

The Sir Mixed League Golf group is always welcome to all golfers! No handicap is necessary, nor do you need a partner to play. Friends are welcome, too! We look forward to meeting on the 2nd Thursday, JANUARY 11, 2024, at Diablo Hills Golf Course, at 10:00 am (note new time)

To sign up, contact Gordon Batesole, gkbatesole@aol.com, or 925-946-1989, or go the SIR website and sign up to play. (www.sirbr8.com/sign-up-to-play, password par4, double-click on "Click Here" for signup sheet.)

MODEL TRAINS



Rich Knowles
Chairman



There is no report this month. **Model Trains:** Nothing to include – about to close/terminate/remove but not quite yet.

Rich Knowles, grichthek@gmail.com or call (925) 681-9191.

PICKLE BALL ♀♂



Nick Maufe
Chairman

Pickleball is a great activity for keeping you fit, enjoying a social get together and having fun. It will bring back those long dormant bat and ball skills from an earlier life and remind you how much of that life is still left in the old bones! Come out and give it a try. Free introductory lessons (from yours truly) guaranteed to get you to the level of a few laughs.



We meet every Thursday at 8:30 AM at the Willow Pass Community Park and play for a couple of hours.

Email Nickmaufe@gmail.com to join. Nick Maufe, Chairman

PODCASTS



Rich Knowles
Chairman

On December 12, the podcast activity met and discussed two podcasts from opposing sides. One was about what it is like to be a Palestinian in Gaza, by a Palestinian. The other was what it is like to be an Israeli in Israel, by an Israeli. Basically, both discussed the reasons the two sides are at odds with each other and how fundamental the differences are. What

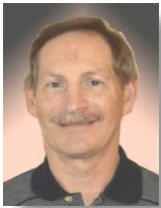
was clear was that there is reason for strong feelings and no solution in sight. Both have valid reasons for their positions.

On January 9, we will be discussing a light-hearted look at the 10-ish Worst Business Decisions ever. Please join us. Contact the Activity Chair for Zoom credentials.

Rich Knowles, grichthek@gmail.com, or call (925) 681-9191.



SIRS AT THE GAMES



Steve Schramm
Chairman

SAVE THE DATES! ST. MARY'S AND WARRIORS BASKETBALL

It is time to plan for our winter season activities. Here are a couple of fun events for you to put on your calendars.

Instead of balls, strikes, and home runs, let's think about baskets, rebounds, and 3-point shots.

The St. Mary's Gaels made the NCAA Basketball Tournament in March. They are projected to have another outstanding team, and perhaps even win their conference. Mark your calendars for a Thursday night game in Moraga on **January 11**. Details to come.

Also, the Golden State Warriors will play Kevin Durant and the Phoenix Suns on **Saturday February 10**, at 5:30 pm at the Chase Center. We are exploring options to include bus transportation to this game from the Sun Valley Mall in Concord. Please consider joining us with your family and friends. Warriors vs. Suns should be a good matchup.

Please send an email to Steve Schramm at "sschramm01@gmail.com" if you are interested in either of these two basketball games.

SIRS IN THE GARDEN



Tony de Losada Tom Mohrman
Chairmen

Master Gardeners. TIPS!

Fall is the ideal time to plant California natives and other Mediterranean plants that grow with our winter rains and bloom in late winter and spring. Planting now gives the roots of these plants time to grow into the soil and become established before the high temperatures and dry climate of our summers.

Shrubs are multi-branched plants smaller than trees and more prominent than bushes. Shrubs are long-lived perennial woody plants that can be evergreen or deciduous (lose their leaves). Although not as long-lived as multi-century-old trees, most native shrubs can live for decades in nature and our gardens, compared to commercial, hybridized, and non-native shrubs, which must be replaced more frequently than native shrubs.

Chair Tom Mohrman: mustangtpm@gmail.com OR
Co-Chair: Tony de Losada: tonydelosada@gmail.com

HEADS-UP WALKERS

February 2024 Walks

We walk every Thursday morning at 9:30 AM. We walk for one hour and then go for coffee and snacks. Go to our online page for further info -<https://www.sirbr8.com/heads-up-walkers/>

1/25/2024: Pleasant Hill: C.C. Canal. Meet in the shopping center parking lot at the corner of Taylor & Morello, (North of the service station). Cafe: Panera Bread Cafe. Leader: Rich Rosin. Difficulty: M

2/1/2024: Concord: C.C.C. Regional Trail, Via Montanas. Take Treat Blvd east. Go 3/4-mile past Oak Grove and turn left on San Miguel. Turn right on Via Montanas. Turn left into the Parking Lot just past the bridge over the canal. Cafe: Peet's Coffee. Leader: Dan Smith. Difficulty: E

2/8/2024: Lafayette: Lafayette Reservoir. WARNING!! THIS IS OUR MOST DIFFICULT WALK WITH MANY FAIRLY STEEP HILLS. PLEASE SKIP THIS WALK IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS DOING OUR FLAT WALKS. Entrance on Mt. Diablo Blvd., about 1 mile west of Happy Valley Rd. Meet at the EAST (far left) end of metered parking lot. Bring 8 quarters or use a VISA or Master Card. Cafe: Peet's Coffee. Leader: Dan Weller. Difficulty: H

2/15/2024: Walnut Creek: C.C. Canal Heather Farm. Meet at the Heather Farm parking lot at the far North end of San Carlos Dr. Cafe: Sweet Affair Bakery. Leader: Dave Allen. Difficulty: E

2/22/2024: Concord: Newhall Community Park. Meet at parking lot on Turtle Creek Rd. off Ayers Rd. Some elevation changes to the Viet Nam Memorial. Cafe: Whole Foods - Oak Grove / Ygnacio Valley Road. Leader: Dave Davis. Difficulty: M

2/29/2024: Martinez: Martinez Regional Shoreline. On I-680 N, take Exit 56, the last offramp to Martinez. Turn left on Marina Vista. Turn right on Ferry St. And cross the RR tracks. Meet at the first parking lot on the left. Cafe: Starbucks Martinez . Leader: Ira Dorf. Difficulty: E

3/7/2024: Lafayette: Lafayette / Moraga Trail. Laf. Community Center. Meet at the Lafayette Community Center at 500 St. Mary's Road. Parking is near the sport arena. Cafe: Peet's Coffee. Leader: Jan Persson. Difficulty: M

CHAIRMAN Dan Weller 925-939-5510
dweller@astound.net
ASSISTANT CHAIR: Dave Morse 925-938-3078
dmorse88@yahoo.com
ASSISTANT CHAIR: Phil Trapp 925-963-1819
ptrapp@sbcglobal.net

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ptrapp@sbcglobal.net

SIR HIKERS



Carl Ludwig
Chairman

There will be two hikes in February 2024. Detailed information for interested hikers will appear by the end of January on the Hiker's webpage of the Branch 8 website at <https://www.sirbr8.com/hikers/>.

February 13, 2024, Easy Hike – South Park Drive, Tilden Regional Park - 10:00 a.m.

Hike Description – Every Year, Tilden's South Park Drive is closed to vehicle traffic for a few months so that newts can safely make their way to mating ponds and streams. This road closure affords Sir Easy Hikers an excellent wet-season opportunity to hike on paved surfaces and explore one of nature's more intriguing migrations in our own backyard. We start at the South Park Drive gate near the Tilden Botanical Gardens and hike uphill for about a mile before reversing direction to our parked cars. We can round out our hike by entering the Botanical Gardens if we so choose. Total distance is about 3.0 miles with a net elevation gain of about 350 feet. Hope for mist or light rain on this day.

For an interesting primer on the newts of Tilden Park, please read [It's newt crossing season in the Bay Area \(berkeleyside.org\)](http://berkeleyside.org)

Directions to Trailhead – From Walnut Creek, take Highway 24 west to Fish Ranch Road (last exit before the tunnel). Turn right onto Fish Ranch Road and head uphill. At the 4-way stop turn right onto Grizzly Peak Road. Turn right at 3.0 miles onto Golf Course Road and right again in 1.0 miles at Shasta Road, merging right onto Wildcat Canyon Road toward the Botanical

Gardens. There is a small parking lot across from the main entrance to the Botanical Gardens and along the road/gate at South Park Drive and Wildcat Canyon Road. Restrooms can be found at the parking lot. Meet at 10:00 at South Park Dr. gate.

Optional Lunch – in downtown Orinda at the Europa Hofbrau, 64 Moraga Way, Orinda, CA.

Hike Leader – Carl Ludwig, cludwig171@gmail.com, 415.350.7372

Hike Coordinator – Phil Trapp,; ptrapp@sbcglobal.net, 925-963-1819

February 27, 2024 Hard Hike - Redwood Regional Park– 10:00 a.m.

Hike Description – The February hard hike will be in the forests of Redwood Regional Park. The hike will be an intermediate level hike of 5 miles with about 550 feet of cumulative elevation gain. The Hike Starts at the Wayside Staging Area at 7867 Redwood Rd., Oakland CA. This is the first parking/staging area after entering the park from Redwood Road. The hike will start at **10am** on the Stream / Bridal trail and then turn onto the French Trail. Then follow the French trail for roughly 2 miles and connect with the Orchard trail and follow it for a short distance before connecting with the Stream Trail again and back to Wayside.

Directions to Hike - From Walnut Creek take Hwy 24 West thru the Caldecott Tunnel. Use the right-hand tunnel and stay in the right lane and prepare to **exit onto Hwy 13 South**. Take Highway 13 to the Redwood Rd Exit and follow Redwood Road, up and over the hill, to the Wayside Staging Area. Total distance from WC is approx. 19 miles and takes about 30 minutes.

Optional Lunch: in downtown Orinda at the Europa Hofbrau, 64 Moraga Way, Orinda, CA.

Hike Leader: Steve Moore 925-699-9001
semoore9128@gmail.com

Coordinator: David Glazer 415-847-2046
dbglazer@comcast.net

\$UMS IN RETIREMENT



Dave Sutton
Co-Chairman

We still haven't decided on a meeting date for February: Either the 4th Wed or last Thurs, so stay tuned.



The group met on Jan. 24th and the conclusion was to continue meeting on 4th Wednesdays.

February's meeting discussion will be: Does the Economy influence the election and the markets, or does the election influence the economy and the markets?

Chair: Tom Henry, Branch 174, tomhenry925@gmail.com
Co-chair: Dave Sutton, Branch 8, davesutn@comcast.net

TRAVELING SIRS



Larry Yarberry
Chairman

Larry is putting together a trip, "The Best of Spain & Portugal"; April 27 - May12, 2024. It will include Grand Castles, Incredible Art & Iconic Sights. This will be a 15-day guided tour. He will have flyers at the Ladies Day luncheon.



L.yarberry42@comcast.net 925-890-9245

BARGAIN WINES



Dennis Mierzwa
Chairman

Bill Koski took the lead with Dennis side lined and set up a wine tasting event at Total Wines in Pleasant Hill as Bargain Wines' November activity. Bill had reserved 20 seats for Bargain Wine members plus we opened up reservations across the entire Branch and had 23 members signed up for tastings!

The event was two hours and we had mixed reviews. Our more sophisticated members with a well-developed palate thought the presentation was too basic but the majority enjoyed the presentation and would consider future classes about different wine regions.

Bargain Wines meets on an ad hoc basis. Our objective is to find a reasonably priced wine that you would drink as an everyday wine- not every day of course -let's say your Thursday wine!

At most of our tastings the attendees will have the opportunity to rate the wines being presented. As our name Bargain Wines denotes, we are not high-end wines and often our selections go unappreciated and unpurchased, but everyone enjoys the event.

For 2023 we raised our purchase amount but will stay below \$9.00 per bottle and hope to find wines our members will consider as their weekday wine.

While we will still explore Contra Costa vineyards the planned event of a tasting at Shadow Brook Winery in Walnut Creek was met with an almost universal NO!

We will be working towards a first quarter 2024 event. One member expressed an interest in Livermore Valley and if other members have a recommendation- please let Bill and I know!

Chairman: Dennis Mierzwa, dennis.mierzwa@att.net
Assistant Chairman: Bill Koski, billkos36@comcast.net

WINE CELLAR FILLERS



No new report submitted for FEBRUARY.

If you have questions, would like your name added to the mailing list, or would like to join the purchasing committee, please contact one of us:

Jim Sowell, Chair, sowell4jim@aol.com, 925-457-7746 (cell)
Scott Graff, Ass't Chair, scottkgraff@gmail.com, 925-552-6097

WINE FINDERS 1



Ron Smith
Chairman

Our opening tasting for each year is always near or on Valentine's Day and for the past four years it has been hosted by Tom and Sheila Mohrman at the beautiful Mercer Club Room but they have decided not to return to the "left" coast this winter. Tough



decision given the weather so far this winter. So this leaves us with a big void _____

But not to worry, Gay and Rob Laaback have stepped forward and will be hosting the Valentine's Day event (on Feb 8). Knowing Gay and Rob, it will be a festive evening and the Zins are always interesting. But you'll have to wait for the March Hotline for the results.

Ron Smith, Chair, resmith62@aol.com, 925-314-3066
Tony de Losada, Asst. Chair, tonydelosada@gmail.com

WINE FINDERS 2



Ron Cassano
Chairman

Our Our next tasting is Feb 8. Happy New Year

Ron Cassano, Head Wino,
roncassano@gmail.com
925-944-1238

WINE FINDERS 3



Larry McEwen
Chairman

Chairman Larry McEwen: elmwoodeux@comcast.net

No new report submitted for **FEBRUARY**.

WOODPECKERS



Thom Watkins
Chairman

In The Woodpeckers Activity did not meet in January as usual. We traditionally take a January hiatus. We will meet again at our normal date and time (first Saturday @ 10.00am) in February.

Thom Watkins
Chairman, Woodpeckers
925-330-3780
Bob Wheaton, Co-Chair

WRITING YOUR LIFE STORY



Tom Hodgson
Chairman



Many of us have wondered what our grandfather's life was like, the questions we never had a chance to ask.

Our group meets as a fun way to document fun and interesting memories from your past or current situation. It's fun to share stories with friends, who actually care to listen. Their stories also trigger memories for us. Someday your kids or grandkids may also find them interesting.

WYLS Has been meeting for the past 3 months IN PERSON & via Zoom.

We meet on the 4th Tuesday from 1:00 to 2:30 PM at:
Rocco's Ristorante Pizzeria
2909A Ygnacio Valley Rd. Walnut Creek, Ca

(It's located at Oak Grove Rd & Ygnacio Valley Rd – near the center of the "L" shaped strip mall.)

Contact SIR Tom Hodgson Tomehodgson1945@gmail.com or call 925-818-1533 for more information or to join the group



HOTLINE E-MAIL ADDRESS:

Hotline@sirinc3.org

Send your articles and photos BEFORE the 20th of the month. Include meeting information & dates for the following month, to keep your group informed about meetings, deadlines and upcoming events. Late reports may not be included in the Hotline.

HOTLINE EDITORS



Steve Moore
semoore9128@gmail.com



David Glazer
slwcylst@gmail.com



Chris Wehling
chriswehling@sbcglobal.net

COORDINATOR



Dan Smith dns.lns02@astound.net

PUBLISHER



Rob Laaback
rlaabak@yahoo.com

WEB MASTER



Derek Southern
derek.southern@gmail.com



STATE SIR HAPPENINGS

A Home Page for SIR Members on the State website is at:
[Home – SIR \(sirinc.org\)](http://sirinc.org)



Held once a month on the SECOND THURSDAY!
Sponsored by the City of Concord and Contra Costa Legal Services. Sixty years of age and older, M/F invited to attend for a 45 Minute personal advice from Attorneys on: Advance Health Care Directives (AHCD). No income requirements. By appointment only! Call Concord Senior Center: 925-671-3320 and sign up. There are six appointments

Mention you are a SIR from Branch 8!

Tony de Losada P & I Chairman

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES:(APS)

There is a free non-profit facility in Concord that provides assistance in case of elder abuse (physical or financial), domestic violence or sexual abuse.

It is the Family Justice Center at 2151 Salvio St, Room 201 (office building opposite Todos Santos Plaza behind the fountain). Their website is:
<http://www.cocofamilyjustice.org/>

We also have literature about Adult Protective Services run by the county. They have offices in Martinez at 2530 Arnold Dr. #300. **To report abuse please call Adult Protective Services at (877) 839-4347.**



RESOURCES FOR OUR MEMBERS, FAMILY & FRIENDS



mowdiableregion.org

(925) 937-8311

Meals on Wheels, Fall Prevention
Care Management, Friendly



Visitors/Callers

So that No One Faces Cancer Alone
www.cancersupport.net / (925) 933-0107,
3276 McNutt Ave, WC., 94597





WC Canal Trail Easy Hike



Bargain Bites at China Palace



This activity typically draws about 40 members and guests

SIR Biographies

Director, Michael Frey



I was born and raised in San Francisco, CA where I attended Grammar School, High School, and College.

In 1966 while attending college, I joined Crown Zellerbach Corporation on a part-time basis working in their Mail Room. In 1968 I started working in their "data processing" department as a computer operator. Within a couple of years, I was offered the opportunity to become a programmer. I ended my 16-year career at CZ as a Programming Project Manager. For the remainder of my career, I worked in several Information Technology positions including Application Development Manager for a Transportation Services Company and VP, Consultant Operations for an IT Consulting Services Company.

Lorraine and I were married in 1973 in San Francisco and in 1976 moved to Walnut Creek where we have raised a daughter and two sons. We have been blessed with seven grandchildren.

I have been a member of SIR since 2012 and I am currently the chairman of the 9 Hole Golf. I am a member of the Activity Coordinating Committee and a Director on the Branch Executive Committee.

Director, Chick Lowry



Hi! I'm Chick Lowry, I was California born and raised on the San Francisco Peninsula in Redwood City. I married my wife, Elaine, 58 years ago and we are still talking to each other. We have 5 adult offspring, 4 boys and a girl, and 5 grandchildren, 4 girls and a boy. We moved to Walnut Creek in 1979 when I was transferred to Chevron's Oakland Operations offices after working many years for Standard Oil in San Francisco. The change in commute methods, from train to car, was just too time-consuming so we became East Bay residents.

I went to work in a Standard Oil Service Station in Redwood City as a summer job following graduation from San Carlos High and continued in many capacities for 47 years, retiring in 2005.

After joining SIR Branch 8 in 2014 I found that there was no car related activity in the Branch 8 activity opportunities, so I founded the "Car Enthusiasts" Activity. I have always had an interest in automotive-related activities, thus, a Car Enthusiasts. I enjoy working on classic vehicles and the challenge of diagnostic problem resolutions; however, it is becoming more difficult to work on computerized late-model vehicles. I did some straight-line racing (1/4 mile stuff) in my younger years. We currently have 36 Sir's Car Enthusiasts in our activity. One of these days I will find the project car that meets my dreams, and I will get started on a restoration of my own.

I chair a league play Bocce Ball team that makes an effort to keep up with many more experienced players in the community league and enjoy Branch 8 weekly "open play Bocce" during the seasonal play opportunity. I enjoy Dominos and have joined the Model Trains Activity. I am also a current Branch 8 Executive Committee Director and a member of the Activity Coordination Committee.