



# MARCH

## WHAT IS SIR?

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

**Branch 8 Website:**

<https://www.sirbr8.com>

# HOTLINE

**"MAKE NEW FRIENDS FOR LIFE"**

**March 2024**  
**Editor: Chris Wehling**

## BIG SIR COLUMN



**Rich Carlston**  
**Big SIR**

A big thank you to our own SIR David Bushnell for his outstanding presentation on efforts to generate energy from wave energy at our February luncheon.

I'm sure you know that Branch 8 is one of SIR's outstanding branches. It is looked at as an example both by State SIR and other branches. I'm not aware of any other branch that provides so many activities for their members. Our members willingly volunteer and provide the leadership which moves our Branch

forward. Over the next several months, I will be nominating these tireless leaders for a Doing My Part Award. The Doing My Part Award provides special recognition for members who have contributed to the success of the Branch. At our March luncheon, we will be honoring members of the BEC. If you get a chance, thank them for their service. In the months to come we will honor other key leaders within our Branch.

Given the number of activities that we have, we may tend to limit our enjoyment the exclusion of others we would greatly enjoy. To help remind us of what is available, I will be having a couple of activities highlighted at each lunch. We kicked off this program by highlighting our photography group in February. For those of you who love to take pictures, give them a try. **You don't need an expensive or fancy camera; all you need is your phone.** You will get to know some great SIR members. Check with Meng Horng or let me know and I'll let Meng know for you.

Remember, we are here to have fun, socialize and make 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



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**Next SIR Luncheon:**  
**March 11, 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**  
**Greeters: Mike Anderson**  
**Martin Hawco**

 <b>MENU</b>
Cucumber Salad
Corned Beef and Cabbage
Red Potatoes and Carrots
Or
Herb Marinated Cod
Red Potatoes, Steamed
Cabbage and Carrots
Or
Pesto Cheese Ravioli
Baileys Irish Cream 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:dominguezx@comcast.net)) or Dan Smith ([dns.lns02@astound.net](mailto: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](mailto: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  
**MARCH.**

**Tony de Losada Tom Mohrman  
Chairmen**

Tony de Losada [tonydelosada@gmail.com](mailto:tonydelosada@gmail.com) 925-945-1730  
Tom Mohrman [mustangpm@gmail.com](mailto:mustangpm@gmail.com) 516-242-1635

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH – SIR GIVING BACK**

Join your fellow SIR Branch 8 members in the Community Outreach - SIR Giving Back program / activities. Participate when you can, in assisting with projects, while aiding others in our communities. SIR Giving Back gives you that opportunity!

The regularly scheduled monthly Food Bank activity had 18 members 🍌, guests and 3 spouse / partners, sleeving oranges for the local distributions.

A "WHOPPING 5000lbs"!! OUT A SIGHT 🤖👁️

Our other activity was at a Community Church in Pittsburg. Distributing produce and fruits to the local residents. This is a great way to meet and talk to the people of the area, really "opens you eyes" to their needs.

Send Hotline comments to Dan Smith at [dns.lns02@astound.net](mailto:dns.lns02@astound.net)

Also, the attending members recognize how SIR Branch 8 volunteering is fulfilling.

Thanks for the Support 🙏

Volunteers needed for the upcoming scheduled activities at the

Food Bank: 🍌 🍌 🍌 🍌

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

We have added a "Boxing / Bagging" 📦👤 activity to the calendar in March 😊-

Friday, March 22nd

9am - noon

Food Bank Warehouse - Concord

(Minimum of 10 volunteers)

This "fast paced" activity is SOOO much fun & rewarding -

Give it a try!

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](mailto:tomdigrande@comcast.net)  
925-876-7851

Phil Scimonelli  
[rosescim@aol.com](mailto: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](mailto: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



On June 10, 2024, the spring LDL will be held. The theme will be Spring Fling, and once again there will be tasty food, wine, and flowers along with several door prizes awarded to lucky ticket holders. There will be lively entertainment. We are looking to provide live music and dancing for those who are feeling the spring spirit and want to kick up their heels. The entertainment details will be provided in future hotline reports.

We are hoping for maximum participation and look forward to seeing everyone enjoy this event.

Signup sheets are available on the website under Ladies Day Luncheon.

[Ladies Day Luncheon Sign Up Form](#)

Buck Cheshire  
Chairman Ladies Day Luncheon (Ret.)  
[BJCHESHIRE@COMCAST.NET](mailto:BJCHESHIRE@COMCAST.NET)

Send Hotline comments to Dan Smith at [dns.lns02@astound.net](mailto:dns.lns02@astound.net)

## OKTOBERFEST



**Leo Dominguez**



**Ron Maciak**



**Thom Watkins**

### SIR BRANCH 8 OKTOBERFEST SUCCESS!!!

Expect a return of our new outdoor activity in 2024. We need volunteers to help, with the festivities, but remember, your participation will keep you young and happy, along with any friend/partner or spouse you convince to help. More to come as we approach October 2024 with lots of advance notice. Thanks, from Thom Watkins, Ron Maciak and Leo Dominguez.

**Thom Watkins:** [thomwat831@gmail.com](mailto:thomwat831@gmail.com) 925-330-3780

**Ron Maciak:** [ronald41mac@gmail.com](mailto:ronald41mac@gmail.com) 925-357-8005

**Leo Dominguez:** [leordominguez@gmail.com](mailto:leordominguez@gmail.com) 925-949-6454

## SUNSHINE REPORT



**Rich Knowles**  
Chairman



Please contact Membership: [sb8msec@hotmail.com](mailto: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:

**Tom Hensley** passed on January 10, 2024.

**Bill Bargaquast** passed on February 8, 2024

And former member **Larry Mersmann's spouse, Ruth**, passed on February 18, 2024.

**Membership Secretary:** Rich Knowles, [grichthek@gmail.com](mailto: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 March. Be sure to open your birthday greeting. Highlighted names are those who are in their 90s this month.

Bob Barnes	John Hayes	Lynn Oakleaf
Wally Blackwood	Larry Jasmann	Danny Rinaldi
Naryan	Stan Johnson	Ron Rizzo
Chandrasekaran	Ed Kirscher	Dean Steichen
Rob English	Sal Lombardo	George Vogt
Mark Evanoff	Mike Loonin	Bob Weede
Mike Frey	Steve Monksfield	Brian Woolf

## ACTIVITIES COORDINATING COMMITTEE



Mike Frey



Ken Main



Chick Lowry



Dennis Mierzwa

### ACC Report for February 2024

For new member information & consistency, the ACC agreed to send membership (ie [sb8msec@hotmail.com](mailto:sb8msec@hotmail.com)) our latest list of

activities. In addition, ACC will send membership an updated AC list when/if there are any changes. Membership will update their new member information (eg via on-line and mail-in) & applications as needed.

In regards to emails being sent to members who have resigned (or passed), Membership will send a copy of their monthly membership report to the ACC. This report includes the names of members who have resigned or passed. The ACC agreed to contact the AC's requesting these former members be removed from their mailing list.

Dan Weller shared an excel report called "Branch & Activity Roles on One Report.xlsx". This helpful report can be generated, as needed, by Dan or Membership for BEC awards and recognition purposes. The ACC agreed to keep the AC names current in AMS, as an integral part of this report.

Mike Frey updated us on the progress of the AC restructuring project. Mike Frey and Peter Shapiro will make a proposal to Rich/Tom (and BEC) requesting approval to proceed with the project. Additional team members will be requested as needed. The team believes that Standardizing the Activity information on our website will be an effective Marketing tool for potential new members.

## FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

### Activities at SIR Branch 8

Today		March 2024	Print	Week	Month	Agenda
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
25 10am 18 Hole Golf 12pm Poker	26 10am Hike: Hard 1pm Poker 1pm Writing Your 3pm Mixer 4pm Podcast	27 9am 9 Hole Golf. 10am Bowling 1pm Pinochle 1:30pm \$UMS in R	28 8:30am Pickleball 9:30am Heads-Up	29 8:30am Open Bocce 1pm Poker 1pm Internet Mex	Mar 1 10am Woodpecker	2
3	4 10am 18 Hole Golf	5 10:30am Book Group 12:30pm Car Enthusiasts 1pm Poker 5pm Dine Out Sin	6 9am 9 Hole Golf. 10am Bowling 11am LIVE-Dominion 1pm Cribbage 1pm Cribbage Tournament	7 8:30am Pickleball 9:30am Heads-Up 11am Bridge - Rules	8 8:30am Open Bocce 9am Duplicate Bridge 1pm LIVE-Mexican	9
10 9am BEC meeting 10am Book Exchange 11:30am SIR Luncheon	11 10am 18 Hole Golf 10am Easy Hike 4pm Podcast	12 10am 18 Hole Golf 10am Easy Hike 4pm Podcast	13 9am 9 Hole Golf. 10am Bowling 1pm Community Cribbage 1pm Pinochle	14 8:30am Pickleball 9:15am Mixed League 9:30am Heads-Up 1pm Recently Read 6pm Dine In 1	15 <b>HOTLINE input</b> 8:30am Open Bocce 10am Digital Photography 1pm Internet Mexican 6pm Dine In #1	16
17 10am 18 Hole Golf 1pm Bridge - Part	18 <b>HOTLINE input</b> 1pm Cribbage	19 9am 9 Hole Golf. 10am Bowling 1pm Poker	20 8:30am Pickleball 9:30am Heads-Up 6pm Dine out 1 6pm Wine Finders	21 8:30am Open Bocce 11:30am BRIDGE - Rules 1pm LIVE-Mexican	22	23
24 10am 18 Hole Golf 12pm Poker	25 10am Hike: Hard 1pm Poker 1pm Writing Your 3pm Mixer 4pm Podcast 6pm Bargain bites	26 9am 9 Hole Golf. 10am Bowling 1pm Pinochle 1:30pm \$UMS in R	27 8:30am Pickleball 8:30am Fishing 9:30am Heads-Up 1pm Poker	28 8:30am Open Bocce	29	30
31 10am 18 Hole Golf 1pm Poker	Apr 1 10:30am Book Group 12:30pm Car Enthusiasts 1pm Poker 5pm Dine Out Sin	2 10am Bowling 11am LIVE-Dominion 1pm Cribbage 1pm Cribbage Tournament	3 8:30am Pickleball 9:30am Heads-Up 11am Bridge - Rules	4 8:30am Open Bocce 1pm Poker 1pm Internet Mexican	5	6

Events shown in time zone: Pacific Time - Los Angeles



## ASTRONOMY ONLINE



**David Bushnell**  
Chairman

David Bushnell, Chairman and Editor, [dbushn@swbell.net](mailto: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](mailto: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

Two great traditional operas arriving in March - no more of the tuneless modern stuff this season:

La Forza del Destino by Giuseppe Verdi on March 9 and Romeo et Juliette by Charles Gounod on March 23. Forza is very long opera so the live



Saturday matinee will arrive here at 9:00am instead of the customary 9:55am, so the Met can change sets for the evening show. Romeo will begin at 9:55am. Both will be repeated as "encore" taped copies on the following Wednesdays at 1:00pm and 6:30pm. Neither opera seems to have opened yet so I have no reviews for you at this time, but you will be able to find them on Google closer to the show date.

The operas are shown in the Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill Century Theaters.

David Bushnell, Activity Chairman, [dbushn@swbell.net](mailto:dbushn@swbell.net), 925-838-3914

## BOCCE BALL - LEAGUE PLAY



**Chick Lowry**  
Chairman

League play Bocce Ball is returning for season 2024. We have all 10 players returning this year so there are no current openings in the Branch 8 "Sir Bocce team." I had received no requests from our general membership to play, so we will need to wait for the 2025 season to attempt starting an additional team. Let me know if you have an interest and I will contact you when an opening is available.

Your 2024 League Players are:

Chick and Elaine Lowry, Bob and Laurie Barnes, Bob and Susan Weiss, Dennis Mierzwa, Peter Shapiro, Ray Pixton and Jim Sowell.

We did very well last year with more than half of the team being first time players. Experience will increase this year and I will keep Branch 8 member informed as to our progress.

Maybe next year we can increase the number of Branch 8 players and create an additional team.

Chairman: Chick Lowry, [Clowry2845@gmail.com](mailto:Clowry2845@gmail.com)  
Asst. Chair: Bob Barnes [Bob\\_Barnes@msn.com](mailto:Bob_Barnes@msn.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](mailto: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!

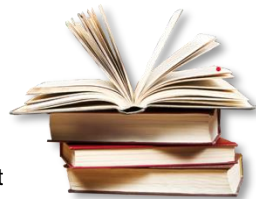
Chairman: Alan Curtis, [alancurtis@sbcbglobal.net](mailto:alancurtis@sbcbglobal.net)  
Assistant Chairman: Ron Rizzo, [ronbrizzo@gmail.com](mailto:ronbrizzo@gmail.com)  
Assistant Chairman: Rob Laaback, [rlaabak@yahoo.com](mailto:rlaabak@yahoo.com)  
Assistant Chairman: Tom Keehn, [tom242g@gmail.com](mailto:tom242g@gmail.com)

## BOOK GROUP



**Ron Rizzo**  
Chairman

Our book for February was "Benjamin Franklin" by Walter Isaacson. It was very well written with detailed information that clearly shows Franklin as being almost, if not equally, as important to the success of the American Revolution and the development of the United States as George Washington. It also describes the



tremendous impact Franklin had outside of politics—the first lending library, the first fire brigade, the first practical demonstration of electricity, the invention of the lighting rod (which dramatically reduced the number of fires and deaths from lightning), the first proof of the Gulf Stream, the set-up first non-religious college in America (which became the University of Pennsylvania), and so much more. The group's overall rating was 4.5 out of a possible 5. This was our first book not to have anyone rating it lower than 4.

Our next book is a work of fiction—"Cat's Cradle" by Kurt Vonnegut—which will be discussed at our meeting on Tuesday, March 5.

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](mailto:ronbrizzo@gmail.com).

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

Ron

## 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 are interested, contact our Chairman, Ron Rizzo, at

[ronbrizzo@gmail.com](mailto:ronbrizzo@gmail.com). We meet on Zoom at 1:00 PM the 2nd Thursday of each month.

The books recommended by members from 2021 through 2023 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 2024 will be added to the website within a month of each meeting.

## BOWLING



**Dan Weller**  
Chairman



### 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.

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

To access the SIR State bowling information, open the state bowling web site at [SIRBowling.org](http://SIRBowling.org). You can find tournament schedules, applications, and results on the site.

### Upcoming SIR Bowling Tournaments:

DATE	LOCATION	COMMENTS
March 5	Citrus Heights / Fireside Lanes	
March 19 – 20	Concord / Clayton Valley Bowl	Local. Come and watch SIRs from other branches

**ACTIVITY CHAIRMAN:** Dan Weller, 925-935-5510, [dweller@astound.net](mailto:dweller@astound.net)

**ASSISTANT CHAIRMAN:** Rob Norris, 925-788-6958, [robert.norris@natca.net](mailto:robert.norris@natca.net)

## CAR ENTHUSIASTS



**Chick Lowry**  
Chairman



Eleven Car Enthusiasts and guests visited the California Highway Patrol Academy in West Sacramento, CA on Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. We were a bit unsure of the weather, but the clouds parted and clear skies followed us through the drive to Sacramento and the rain held off until we neared home on the return trip.

The tour was exceptional and the campus is beautiful. Cadets spend 26 weeks training and learning how to be a CHP Officer. We were greeted in the lobby by Officer Dancey who turned out to be an outstanding tour guide escorting the group through the Museum and beautiful Campus.

We began tour with an exchange of who we were and why we came to tour the Academy, a lively discussion. Our guide followed with a review and history of a 1969 Dodge Polara on display on the lobby. A period perfect vehicle restored and presented to the Academy by a true Car Enthusiast who was not ever a patrolman, just a CHP enthusiast. We moved into the Academy Museum and were treated to an excellent summation of the extensive displays by our guide. We spent so much time in the museum asking questions as Officer Dancey delivered the history of the patrol from its creation in the 1800's to present day operations, that we gobbled up tour time and had to cut short some of the other areas the guide had intended to show us. I think we will need to visit this location again and see more of the car collection and training program.

We visited the quad to see the fountain memorial to fallen officers and heard about several of the men who gave the ultimate sacrifice in an attempt to keep California citizens safe and protected. There were many names presented on brass tags around the fountain. It was amazing how detailed our guide was in telling their stories.

The tour needed to terminate as the cafeteria that was to serve us lunch was nearing close time. We were treated to a cafeteria style lunch, Salad Bar, choice of Ribs, Chicken, or Chili, fruit salad, drink choice and Ice Cream Dessert, all for just \$7 a person. Obviously, our tax dollars at work, but excellent. We started at 9:30 AM in Walnut Creek and were home by about 2:45 PM, thoroughly delighted. An excellent outing.

More exciting CE adventures are planned over the course of 2024. Come join us in the fun.

The next CE meeting will be **Tuesday, March 5th, 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 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](mailto:Clowry2845@gmail.com)

Assistant Chairs: Tom Mohrman - [mustangtpm@gmail.com](mailto:mustangtpm@gmail.com)

Bill Koski - [billkos36@comcast.net](mailto:billkos36@comcast.net)

Tom Hodgson - [tomehodgson1945@gmail.com](mailto: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. At times Rocco's will schedule other groups in the Banquet Room where we normally play. In those cases, we are moved to the space on the bar side in the back party room. When you attend ask at the front desk and 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.

### February 2024 RESULTS

Our first session was on February 7th, the first Wednesday of the month and we had twelve players. We were able to play three tables of four each. The winning scores follow:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Jerry Ward	173 points
2nd	Steve Greytak	165 points
3rd	Bob Beitler	156 points
4th	Stan Johnson	151 points

Stan Johnson had a 24-point hand

On the third Tuesday, February 20th we mustered ten players. We had two tables of four players and one table of two players. Two player games began at 30 on the board to help ensure games at each table end about the same time. Our winners were

1 <sup>st</sup>	Dave Dawson	151 points
2nd	Jerry Ward	143 points
3rd	Stan Johnson	137 points
4th	Dan Smith	128 points

Terry Mason had two 24-point hands

For 2024- Don Atwater has high score of 203 points.

2023 High score held by both Don Atwater and Dennis Mierzwa with 219.

Chairmen, Dennis Mierzwa: [dennis.mierzwa@att.net](mailto:dennis.mierzwa@att.net)

Assistant Chairmen, Dan Smith: [dns.lns02@astound.net](mailto:dns.lns02@astound.net)

## BRIDGE RUBBER



**Rod Spicer**  
Chairman

It was so good to play three tables for a change. We need more players to come back. The top players this month were: **Ron Rizzo** (3060), **Rod Spicer** (3040) and **Dave Bushnell** (2730). The scores ran from 990 to 3060 and the median score was about 2000.

All are invited to our Coed game. 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, 925-935-5306, [marod61@att.net](mailto: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](mailto:budgrisanti@gmail.com)

## PARTNERS BRIDGE



**George Schulze**  
Chairman

Combining friends, food, cards, and friendly competition make for a nice afternoon of Partner's Bridge. 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](mailto: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](mailto:r-draper@pacbell.net).



## DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY



**Meng Horng**  
Chair Pro-Tem

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. which routinely showing during our monthly SIR Luncheon. First, we would like to have members to select 4-5 photos and then send to Meng Horng at [mengymc@gmail.com](mailto: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.

Meng Horng, Chair: 309 287-5654 [meng40@hotmail.com](mailto:meng40@hotmail.com)  
Dave Davis, Vice Chair: 925-838-1753 [dav.davis@comcast.net](mailto:dav.davis@comcast.net)

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## SIR SCIENCE



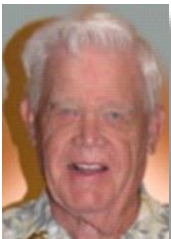
**David Bushnell**  
Chairman

If you would like to get daily emails about science, please respond to me at [dbushn@swbell.net](mailto: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](mailto:dbushn@swbell.net), 925-838-3914

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## INTERNET GAMES



**Don Atwater**  
Chairman

Internet Games is an activity you can enjoy wherever you have an internet connection. Contact Chairman Don to join an existing game or start a new one.

**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. Terry Norton & Danny Rinaldi were winners of our most recent games.

**Cribbage** - 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 Ray de Wit is our winner with 13 wins and Stan Johnson, Greg Ryan and Don Atwater close behind.

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](mailto:datwater@pacbell.net)  
Asst. Chairman, Dan Rinaldi  
925-825-0519, [danrinaldi944@gmail.com](mailto:danrinaldi944@gmail.com)

## DOMINOES



**Dan Rinaldi**  
Chairman

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

**Co-Chairman:** Alan Schulze 925-876-7537 [a\\_schulze@sbcglobal.net](mailto:a_schulze@sbcglobal.net)



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## 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

[danrinaldi944@gmail.com](mailto:danrinaldi944@gmail.com)

Asst. Chairman: Terry Norton, 925-798-6023, [nortont@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nortont@sbcglobal.net)

Asst. Chairman: Stan Johnson, 925-938-7016, [stan.johnson88@gmail.com](mailto:stan.johnson88@gmail.com)



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## DINING OUT

### BARGAIN BITES



**Ron Smith**  
Chairman

### HELLO BARGAIN BITERS!!

By the time you read this we will have feasted at on Monday, Feb. 26 at The Spaghetti Factory in Concord. Everyone really enjoyed it last year so we decided to return. Good idea!!

After several last minute dropouts we had two couples interested in taking some of the spots and still ended up with 47

people ready to devour Spaghetti, Lasagna or Chicken Fettuccini. All served with a starter salad and wrapped up with Spumoni ice cream.

It was a full room and the wine and conversation were flowing. It was a busy, bustling place and everyone seemed to be enjoying the evening.

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](mailto: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](mailto:resmith62@aol.com)  
Asst. Chairman: Bill Barber, 925-222-0095, [billhiker4411@gmail.com](mailto:billhiker4411@gmail.com)

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## DINE IN #1



**Ron Cassano**  
Chairman

Our next dinner will be on March 16, hosted by Stephen & Carmen Deness. They set an elegant table. It is always a nice gathering.

Ron Cassano, Head Eater  
[roncassano@gmail.com](mailto:roncassano@gmail.com)

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## DINE OUT - SINGLE SIRS



**Glenn Gilman**  
Chairman

Tuesday, March 5th at 5:00 p.m. we dine at one of our favorite restaurants, The Old Spaghetti Factory in Concord located at 1955 Mt. Diablo St, across from Todos Santo Plaza. We arrange for separate checks and have good friendly and interesting conversations. Ray de Wit is our host, so please let him know whether you will be attending or not.

Ray de Wit - [raydewit11@gmail.com](mailto:raydewit11@gmail.com) or 925-433-2951

Last month 12 of us enjoyed Mexican cuisine at La Pinata Restaurant in Concord

Chairman, Glenn Gilman, 925-798-5155  
[glenngfam@sbcglobal.net](mailto:glenngfam@sbcglobal.net)

Asst. Chairman, Don Atwater, 925-673-1669  
[datwater@pacbell.net](mailto:datwater@pacbell.net)

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## 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](mailto:carlmarc@astound.net)



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## MIXER



**Ray de Wit**  
Chairman

Beautiful weather and a hankerin' to get out, resulted in 14 of us enjoying a late January get-together to kick off 2024. It was lively conversation, catching up on how everyone fared during the Holidays and getting back into the swing of Mixers. Our February Mixers will have occurred on Tuesday, the 27<sup>th</sup>, but that will be before publication of the March Hotline. So, hopefully we'll have a huge crowd for our March get-together on Tuesday (always the last Tuesday of every month), March 26<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 at Jack's.

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](mailto:raydewit11@gmail.com)) or Alan Curtis ([alancurtis@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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.

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## 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 Phil Scimonelli 661-917-8060 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, March 28th at 8:30am. Come early.

Nobody knows!! Confusion, indecision, and bewilderment rule the day. Will we have a salmon season? Nobody knows. When will rockfish season start and what will the limits be? Nobody knows. Will they change the size limit of halibut in the bay? Nobody knows. Will the party boats be able to survive? Nobody knows. Our usual winter trout bite has been slowed by wind and rain, but Gordon Linebaugh, Carl Moyer, and Bob Lively are catching a few. And that my friends is the end of this woebegone fishing report.

Come join us! **Carl Moyer**, Chairman, [carlmarc@astound.net](mailto: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 17th thru Feb 07th, 2024

Play events for these dates were cancelled due to rainy days and unplayable course conditions ☹️.

Mike Frey  
Chairman

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

Mike Frey, Chair: [mfrey1784@gmail.com](mailto:mfrey1784@gmail.com) 925-699-1784

## GOLF - 18 HOLE



So far this year has not been great time weather-wise for playing golf. Although a few "die-hards" have made the best of the conditions. As of this date there have been a total of four outings that were played. Play was successful on January 9 with **Buck Cheshire** posting a low net score. On January 22 at Boundary Oak **Peter Jordan** was low net. Peter posted a low net score again on January 29 at Boundary Oak. **Dennis Reschke**



shot a net score of 68 on February 13 at Diablo Creek. Dennis was the first to break 70. Who will be next? March 18 is our first of 9 18-Hole Tournaments, being a scramble, always a favorite among our golfers. Four-man teams consisting of A, B, C and D players will all move their ball to the best shot until one ball is holed out. Our schedule of tournaments for the year is equally interesting. April 22 is our Match Play Within Each Group. May 20 is a Four Club Tournament. June 20 is another Four-Man Scramble. July 22 is a Two Man Alternate Shot. August 19 is our Bingo, Bango, Bongo (you have to be there in order to fully enjoy it) September 16, 23 and 30 is our Club Championship. October 21 is another Four-Man Scramble. And to round out the year November 25 is a Four-Man Shamble and Turkey Shoot.

**Spring Fling in Napa:** This is a 2-day event sponsored by Branch 35, 149 and SIR State Golf on April 24 and 25. Full information can be found on the last page of the Hotline.

**Correspondence:** Bill Koski, [billkos36@comcast.net](mailto:billkos36@comcast.net) 925-672-7650

**Membership/Handicap/Data:** Buddy May, [fytrpylut@comcast.net](mailto:fytrpylut@comcast.net) 925-833-6098

## GOLF - 9 HOLE MIXED LEAGUE

This Activity has been cancelled as of Feb. 14th, 2024.

Send Hotline comments to Dan Smith at [dns.lns02@astound.net](mailto:dns.lns02@astound.net)

However, this once very popular Activity can be resurrected, especially as Spring approaches. This is an opportunity for our new members to jump in, get involved, and have fun along the way. The Branch is here to support you. If interested, contact Mike Frey [mfrey1784@gmail.com](mailto:mfrey1784@gmail.com). The goals of the activity have been as follows:

SIR Mixed League Golf is open to all SIR members, spouses/partners, and their guests. We encourage all interested members to contact our chairperson for any additional information you might need. It is not necessary to have a handicap to play with our group. We play for FUN.

Our games are of the 9-hole variety and played on the 2nd Thursday of each month usually at Diablo Hills Golf Course at 9:00 am or 10:00 am depending on time of year. We also try to have at least one event during the year where we travel to an area away from our home base staying overnight and playing one round of golf on arrival and one more round the next day. This fun filled venue usually includes an arrival party, informal dinner, and lunch the next day before heading home. Towards the end of year, we typically have a "celebration" dinner at a local venue.

The usual golf format is individual play; however, we vary the format occasionally with games such as Scrambles and Best Ball.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:grichthek@gmail.com), or call (925) 681-9191.



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](mailto:mustangtpm@gmail.com) OR  
Co-Chair: Tony de Losada: [tonydelosada@gmail.com](mailto:tonydelosada@gmail.com)

## HEADS-UP WALKERS

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/>

**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 left 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

**3/14/2024: Danville: Railroad Museum Iron Horse.** Exit I-680 at Diablo Rd., west to Hartz Ave., left to Prospect Ave., right to Railroad Ave Meet in Railroad Museum parking lot, corner of Prospect & Railroad Ave. Cafe: Lunardi's Market. Leader: Jim Sowell. Difficulty: E

**3/21/2024: Walnut Creek: YV canal Walnut Ave.** Take Ygnacio Valley Rd. Turn South on Walnut Ave (do not turn on Walnut Boulevard). Go 0.4 miles past the second traffic light (Wiget) and turn left on Naranja Drive. Park there and walk back to Walnut Ave. The trail starts a few feet from Naranja. Cafe: Whole Foods - Oak Grove / Ygnacio Valley Road. Leader: Manuel Dominguez. Difficulty: E

**3/28/2024: Clayton: Clayton Library.** Meet at the library parking lot, 6125 Clayton Road. Cafe: Sweet Bakery. Leader: Phil Trapp. Difficulty: M

**4/4/2024: Concord: Iron Horse, Willows Shopping Center.** Willows Shopping Center, meet at the south corner near the new Lazy Dog Restaurant. Cafe: Panera Bread Cafe. Leader: Rich Burke. Difficulty: E

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

## SIRS AT THE GAMES



**Steve Schramm**  
Chairman

No new report for March.

## 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

Send Hotline comments to Dan Smith at [dns.lns02@astound.net](mailto:dns.lns02@astound.net)

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## SIR HIKERS



**Carl Ludwig**  
Chairman

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

**March 12, 2024 Easy Hike – Urban Parks San Francisco** – see special start times instructions

**Hike Description** – This is a 3.2-mile hike with 56 feet of elevation gain, all on paved walkways. Imagine a one-mile wooded park in downtown San Francisco and a thirty-foot waterfall in the Financial District. Yes, these wonders and more are yours to gaze upon in this all-paved tour, just minutes from the Embarcadero BART Station in San Francisco. We will ride in the same BART car (see special start time instructions below) from the East Bay, exiting at the Embarcadero Station. Our first stop is the Salesforce [elevated] Park which spans three blocks in downtown SF. We take the Salesforce tram up to the park level for a circular traverse of the park, stopping at restrooms as needed. We then descend to street level and head west, ducking through the "Wild Thing" alley park, emerging at Yerba Buena Gardens to view the myriad of water treatments that dot this area. We then cross Market Street to feast at Schroeder's, a venerable SF German restaurant featuring Brats and Beer. The return BART station is then close by for our return to the East Bay.

Bring: Clipper Card!

Special Start Time Information Everyone should take the BART train that arrives at Embarcadero at 9:59. Below is a partial BART schedule of trains going to SF from the East Bay. Using the row highlighted in yellow, find your BART station and drop down to the time you should leave your station. For instance, from the Walnut Creek station, catch the 9:24 train. Enter the last car on the train. The hike leader, Carl Ludwig, will catch the 9:33 train in Orinda. See you on board!

BAY PT	N CON	CONCD	PHILL	W CRK	LAFAY	ORNDA
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8:55 AM	9:01 AM	9:05 AM	9:10 AM	9:12 AM	9:17 AM	9:22 AM
9:06 AM	9:12 AM	9:16 AM	9:21 AM	9:24 AM	9:28 AM	9:33 AM
9:15 AM	9:21 AM	9:25 AM	9:30 AM	9:32 AM	9:37 AM	9:42 AM

Hike Leader – Carl Ludwig, [cludwig171@gmail.com](mailto:cludwig171@gmail.com), 415-350-7372

Hike Coordinator – Phil Trapp, [ptrapp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ptrapp@sbcglobal.net), 925-963-1819

**March 26 2024 Hard Hike – Shell Ridge via Hanna Grove Trail Loop, 10:00 a.m.**

**Hike Description** – This is a moderate/hard hike of approximately 4.25 miles, and it includes 870 feet of elevation gain. Starting at the Hannah Grove Trail (which is a private road at that point), we continue past Borges Ranch to the Briones-Mt. Diablo Trail, heading west, which we then take to the Ginder Gap Trail. We return on the Sulphur Creek and Costanoan trails, back to Hannah Grove. Shell Ridge in the early springtime is a riot of fresh green colors.

Directions to Hike - From 680, take the Ygnacio Valley Rd. exit and head east. Turn right on Walnut Avenue (NOT Walnut Blvd., which you'll pass by earlier). When you come to the traffic circle, take the first exit onto Castle Rock Road. Go past Northgate High School and then turn right on Comistas Drive. Continue west on Comistas past Hannah Lane (aka Hanna Grove Trail) and find a place to park on the street. Note: Parking on school days is restricted to areas west of Comistas Ct. (on the left) and 2910 Comistas Dr. (on the right). After parking on Comistas, we will meet at the head of Hannah Lane where it meets Comistas Dr. and we will walk together uphill to the Hannah Grove Trailhead.

Optional Lunch: Burger Lounge, 2920 Ygnacio Valley Road, Walnut Creek, in the Orchards Shopping Center, at the corner of Ygnacio Valley and Oak Grove roads.

Hike Leader: David Glazer, 415-847-5046, [dbglazer@comcast.net](mailto:dbglazer@comcast.net)

Coordinator: Carl Ludwig, 4155-350-7372, [cludwig171@gmail.com](mailto:cludwig171@gmail.com)

## \$UMS IN RETIREMENT



**Dave Sutton**  
Co-Chairman

On the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday, March 27 at 1:30 PM, we will have an outside financial advisor speaking by Zoom. As time permits, he will discuss how to choose an advisor, using an advisor vs. selecting your own investments, and various types of income investments such as annuities vs. bonds and CD's.

Email Dave Sutton to be included.

Chair: Tom Henry, Branch 174, [tomhenry925@gmail.com](mailto:tomhenry925@gmail.com)  
Co-chair: Dave Sutton, Branch 8, [davesutn@comcast.net](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:dennis.mierzwa@att.net)  
Assistant Chairman: Bill Koski, [billkos36@comcast.net](mailto:billkos36@comcast.net)

## WINE CELLAR FILLERS



No new report submitted for MARCH.

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](mailto:sowell4jim@aol.com), 925-457-7746 (cell)  
**Scott Graff, Ass't Chair,** [scottkgraff@gmail.com](mailto:scottkgraff@gmail.com), 925-552-6097

## WINE FINDERS 1



**Ron Smith**  
Chairman

Our first tasting of the year was held at Rob and Gay Laabacks lovely home and Gay had beautiful Valentine decorations every where. Not to mention wonderful chocolates and other candies. When you add to that the usual array of great appetizers brought by the members, it was really a Valentines Feast.



Rob and Gaye had chosen Zinfandel for the wine to be tasted and we had some big ones. After sipping, eating, and then repeating, we voted and it was decided that the winner was the 2021 Rodney Strong Old Vine Zin, (Bill Barber /Chloe) followed closely by Bogle Old Vine Zin (Ron and Judy Smith) and 1000 Stories Zin (the Laabacks).

If you don't belong to Wine Finders 1,2 or 3, but are interested in learning more about our tastings, or starting a new group, etc., Just drop Ron Smith or Tony de Losada, an email and one of us will get back to you.

**Ron Smith, Chair,** [resmith62@aol.com](mailto:resmith62@aol.com), 925-314-3066  
**Tony de Losada, Asst. Chair,** [tonydelosada@gmail.com](mailto:tonydelosada@gmail.com)

## WINE FINDERS 2



**Ron Cassano**  
Chairman

The February tasting featured Spanish Red Wine. The competition was very close. All the wines were very good. The first place was the Dominguez 2020 San Gregorio LaArgonesa, Second was Cassano 2019 Finca Resaloso. A close third was Benson 2018 Atance Valencia. As usual the food was terrific and the fellowship was great. Looking forward to our next gathering in April.

Ron Cassano, Head Wino,  
[roncassano@gmail.com](mailto:roncassano@gmail.com)  
925-944-1238

## WINE FINDERS 3



**Larry McEwen**  
Chairman

On Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, thirteen members of Winefinders III gathered at 4PM at Jim Sowell's home in Alamo. Also attending and helping out was Jim's daughter, Lisa Gartland, who also happened to be his next door neighbor. The wines we sampled were Pinot Noirs with prices ranging from \$8 to \$28. Jim brought out bottles of Pinot Grigio to placate thirsty guests until the tasting was set up. The clear winner was a '22 Meomi brought by Gene Paschal that cost \$19 from Safeway. Distant second places were shared by Larry & Kathy McEwen's \$10 Caretaker from Trader Joe's, and a Dutton Goldfield provided by Pete and Dale Jordan and available for \$28 at the winery. As usual, a copious supply of goodies.

ranging from shrimp to meatballs to spicy noodles helped us absorb the alcohol. The evening was brought to a close with a yummy cherry cheesecake provided by the host.

Our next meeting will take place on the afternoon of April 18th at the McEwen's where we will be judging Cabernet Sauvignons.

**Chairman Larry McEwen:** [elmwoodeux@comcast.net](mailto:elmwoodeux@comcast.net)

## WOODPECKERS



**Thom Watkins**  
Chairman

Two projects were completed at the February meeting. One, although minor in construction, was critical to finishing off a remodel of Roger Lamm's kitchen cabinets. It consisted of re-sizing cabinet separation panels.

The other project was installing an addition to the workshop's dust collection system. Specifically, adding a cyclone dust separator. See the Photo Gallery.

A good bit of time was spent figuring out how to add it to the system creating the smallest footprint, as space is a premium in the shop. After much discussion, the great Woodpecker minds were able to come to a consensus plan. There were modifications along the way plus the guys worked substantial overtime, but at the end, it was a beautiful job (see photos).

For homework, the guys have to come up with their ideas on rearranging the shop to accommodate the new CNC machine.

For the afterwork meal, we feasted on grilled brats and macaroni salad.

As is the norm, a good time was had by all.

Thom Watkins  
Chair, Woodpeckers  
925-330-3780

## 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.

Send Hotline comments to Dan Smith at [dns.lns02@astound.net](mailto:dns.lns02@astound.net)

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](mailto:Tomehodgson1945@gmail.com) or call 925-818-1533 for more information or to join the group



## HOTLINE E-MAIL ADDRESS:

[Hotline@sirinc3.org](mailto: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



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## 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](http://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](http://www.cancersupport.net) / (925) 933-0107,  
3276 McNutt Ave, WC., 94597





Carl Moyer and Gordon Linebaugh caught these trout at San Pablo Reservoir



Woodpeckers building their dust collection system



They got it done



Tilden South Park Drive – any newts?



Our intrepid hikers on the Lafayette Reservoir Rim Trail



# SIR Biographies

## New Member Bob Eve



Bob Eve

I am a native Northern Californian, born and reared in Sacramento. I moved to the Berkeley in 1977 to go to Cal where I joined the Phi Kappa Tau Fraternity and studied at the Undergraduate Business School, focusing on operations research.

Upon graduation I moved to Santa Clara to work in planning and production control at Intel where I stayed three years and met Mary, my wife to be (and since). In 1982 we moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts for two years where I studied information systems and gained my MS from MIT in 1984.

After MIT, we returned to the Bay Area, where I worked as consultant for Ernst & Young for five years, before joining Oracle to help start their Applications business in 1989.

By then Mary and I had bought a home in Fremont. We lived in Fremont until 2022 when we moved to Alamo. We have two daughters (SF and Oakland) and have recently added two sons-in-law, two grand-kids, and have one

more on his way.

Enough of the geography lesson!

My professional career spanned over forty years, all in technology companies, across a variety of operational and executive roles. While I still do a little advisory work for B2B software firms, I retired from full time work in 2021 to explore other areas of life.

Beyond spending time with family including my 96-year old dad and 92-year old mother, we have core sets of friends from Cal and Intel, whose 40+ year friendships continue to bring joy. For hobbies, I love to hike and walk, follow local sports, and like many I am starting to take up pickleball.

By joining SIRS, I am looking forward to making many new friends and enjoying a wide range of fun activities.

## New Member John Ryan



John Ryan

Hello, my name is John Ryan I was born in Tipperary, Ireland, my parents moved us to Liverpool in England where I grew up in an area near Penny Lane (yes, I know all the places they sing about) I attended Old Swan Technical college where I studied telecommunications. I worked for GEC in England before moving to the US in 1980.

I worked for some small telephone companies, then moved to Charles Schwab where I supported there voice network. This position enabled me to travel throughout the US I spent some time in New York, Dallas, and Florida just to mention a few.

I worked for Safeway for a while before moving to AT&T. I was there for 21 years working mainly on voice response systems. I retired in 2020.

I have been married to my wife Teri for 27 years I have two step daughters and three grand-children.

I enjoy traveling and visiting my family in Australia. I swim on a regular basis; I play guitar and enjoy bike riding. I have also been active in the theater being in several musicals.

I have plans to visit Australia and England in this coming year.

## New Member Will St Clair



Will St Clair

I was born in Missouri on April 14, 1945 and remained a Missouri resident until December 19, 2023. Nevertheless, I have many California connections: Claremont Men's College (Los Angeles) BA English literature 1967; marriage in 1970 to Barbara O'Gorman (Ygnacio Valley H.S., Pitzer College).

Barbara and I met on a civil rights summer trip (Mississippi, 1966). She was a teacher and since I was self-employed during much of my career. We were able to volunteer for 12 summers on brother-in-law Tom O'Gorman's Trinity River Farm near Willow Creek, CA.

We did not have children. Barbara died of Merkel Cell Carcinoma in April, 2018. I now share a home with Eileen Ayala in Concord.

My professional work was in social services: initially in child abuse and neglect investigation for two rural Missouri counties. I wrote the grant for and administered the first public health department in Stone County, Missouri.

After receiving an MSW (University of Missouri, 1987) I worked as consultant to and grant writer for small non-profits and local governments. I also served as CEO of two different non-profit social service organizations.

After retirement I volunteered for the VITA (tax return assistance) program.

As an amateur I have performed as the elder Mark Twain, irregularly, since 1976 – usually as a fund raiser for community groups. I recently discarded the “aging” make up from my kit.

I took up golf at age 75 and I do like it despite an earlier misconception that it was only good for keeping people out of the rivers that I wished to fly fish. I have fly fished extensively in the American west. I would like to catch more trout and Steelhead on a dry fly. I would like to lower my golf handicap. I also enjoy reading, poker and bridge. My partner and I hope to travel to Portugal and Paris during the coming year.

We know that connections are an important part of life. I have a new “extended family” that I have actually known; but not well, for many years. I look forward to finding new friends in the SIR organization.

### **New Member Bob Weede**



**Bob Weede**

My name is Bob Weede. My wife, Diana Mayo Weede and I were both raised in Walnut Creek, met, married, and started a family here. Diana was a registered nurse and worked at John Muir early in her career. I spent time in public accounting after college (UC Davis, '79), but a career change led us to the Pacific Northwest in 1996 where I worked for Microsoft, mostly in the Finance Division.

I also taught part-time for a few years at the University of Washington. We came back to Walnut Creek in September 2023 where we are close to family, including Dr. Robert and Alice Mayo, Diana's parents. For the first time in 27 years, I was able to ride my bike outdoors in mild and dry December weather!

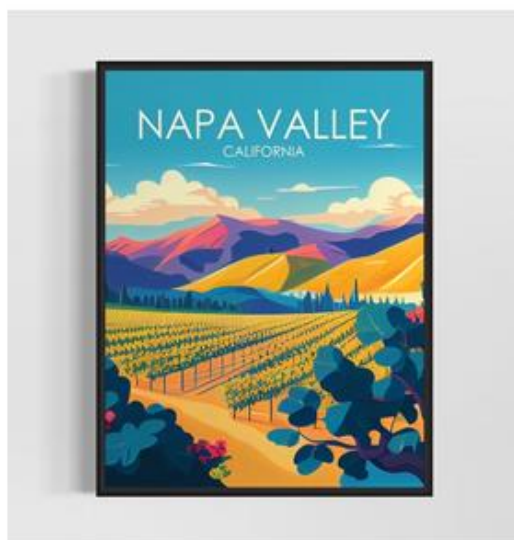
We have two daughters and a son. Both girls work for technology companies and the youngest is engaged to be married this coming August. Our oldest daughter loves to travel, something we've always enjoyed as a family. Our son flies jets in the Marine Corps. He is on an extended deployment in the Middle East; we pray for his safe return and are hoping for a family reunion sometime this Spring...

We are looking forward to grandchildren someday but in the meantime, Diana is very busy with horseback riding, and I am excited to explore activities and make friends at SIR. I am hoping to test my golf swing soon, spend time giving back to the community, renew my fishing license, write some music, and spend more time outdoors.

# State SIR Golf Presents

## In Concert with Branches 35 & 149

### A 2 Day Golf Event



## 2024 Spring Fling in Napa

**Wednesday, April 24** at Chardonney Golf Club, a Four Man, 2-Best Ball Tournament with consecutive tee times.

**Thursday, April 25** at Eagle Vines Vineyard & Golf Club, a Four Man Scramble with a Shotgun Start.

Ladies Welcome. Cash Prizes will be awarded for top teams and Closest-to-Pin. Entries can be for one or both days. Further details and Entry Forms will be posted later on SIR State Golf Website at <https://www.sirgolf.org>. For more information contact **Ben Gikis** (408) 802-0794, [gikisben@yahoo.com](mailto:gikisben@yahoo.com).

**Reserve the Dates Today!**

[Click for 2024 Spring Fling Entry Form](#)