



APRIL 2025

WHAT IS SIR?

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

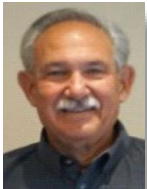
Branch 8 Website:

<https://www.sirbr8.com>

"MAKE NEW FRIENDS FOR LIFE"

Editor: David Glazer

BIG SIR COLUMN



Tom Di Grande

By now, all SIR Branch 8 members should have received, and hopefully opened, an email regarding the results of the recent Ladies Day Luncheon survey.

It was terrific that 78% opened the email, but after opening, only 33% clicked on the survey link, and then 66 of the 71 members completed the survey!

It's difficult to understand how, as a membership organization, we struggle to obtain at least a 65% - 75% response to a short survey. I understand that possibly the members who voted are only those who have been attending the LDL luncheons recently or in the past. They wanted to make their voices heard, and the proposed changes will reflect those results.

The BEC will discuss these changes at the upcoming April meeting, possibly eliminating the June LDL lunch (having instead a normal monthly luncheon, with a speaker) and moving to one "upscale"/"gala" event in December. Our hope is that more members will give this event a chance and sign up to attend with their spouses, partners, or significant others. Give it a try!

Keep in mind, anything can be adjusted, "tweaked," or changed -- just communicate and participate 😊!

Thanks for your continuing support,

Tom

Big Sir Branch 8

LITTLE SIR SEZ



Dan Smith Little SIR

As Little Sir, my basic active function other than backing up the big Sir, is to ensure that this organization is running smoothly. So, when we tore apart the audio-visual arrangement at the luncheon, that's not right and action is required to prevent this happening again. Also, when the laptop's battery died, ending the speaker's slide show, that is an issue that demands a fix. Our speaker, John Mercurio of East Bay Regional Parks, did not let our issues bother him. When the system failed

because of the battery, he shifted into questions and answers, which worked well for the members. Afterwards, we are addressing the issues behind these faults to prevent this happening again. This includes ensuring that those seated in the back of the room can hear the presentation. Yes, we apologized to John, who has been very gracious about this and may even join in with our hikers.

The branch is also dealing with the Ladies Day Luncheon arrangements, which will be discussed by Big Sir, Tom Di Grande. Naturally, Tom has my support on this matter. We hope to make this a better, go-to type of event.

It is, of course, the activities that give this organization purpose. We use our website, <https://www.sirbr8.com/>, and our newsletter, the Hotline (which is accessible within the website), to get the word out. These sources can be easily viewed by members, as well as by visitors who may have an interest in joining us. We want to attract those visitors and give them the opportunity to join us. They may want to join an activity like a hike. We encourage that as an introduction to what we do. Or they may want to hear a certain speaker at a luncheon.

I am aware from having been editor of the Hotline that not all activities receive equal billing. This is really a function of how diligent the Activity Chairman is about updating what is happening. And the updates are a function of how often the activity gets together. Frequency is not an issue. What was an issue, and has been addressed by the Activities Coordinating Committee, is whether the articles describing the activities had become stale, or if updates were being published in the Hotline. Submitting your articles to Hotline@Sirinc3.org provides us with this valuable information, both for the Hotline and the website. Also, if you in your activity do something that is worth taking a picture, we would like for you to share that.

Finally, our speaker in April will be member Roger Lamm, who will be talking about the National Geographic Before Television. I figure that many of us recall families having libraries of National Geographic magazines and that very old articles could become interesting again.

Best,

Dan Smith – Little Sir



End-of-Life Planning Video Access

Last year, Tony de Losada and Phil Trapp organized four sessions to educate SIR Branch 8 members and their families about topics dealing with End-of-Life Planning. These health and lifestyle issues will face all of us later in our lives, and planning for those challenges should begin before we are confronted with difficult and urgent problems.

For the benefit of all, short videos have been created from those two-hour sessions. They capture the essence of the worthwhile information that was presented.

ELP Session 1A – The State of Aging in California

ELP Session 1B – Care Services available in your Home

ELP Session 2 – Navigating Long Term Care

ELP Session 3A – Palliative and Hospice Care

ELP Session 3B – Advanced Care Planning

ELP Session 4A – Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia

ELP Session 4B – Home Care and Assisted Living

To access the videos, you can go to the ELP article on the homepage of our website (Sirbr8.com/ELP). Just click on the link provided to open each video. The videos are approximately 25-35 minutes in length.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Steve Schramm (sschramm01@gmail.com) or Sam Oommen (soommen51@gmail.com).

Mystery Solved

It seems that when the good lord was making the world, he called Man aside and bestowed upon him 20 years of normal sex life. Man was horrified, but the Creator refused to budge.

The Lord called the monkey and gave him 20 years. "But I don't need 20 years", said the monkey. "Ten years is plenty". Man spoke up and said "may I have the other 10 years?" The monkey agreed.

The Lord called on the lion and also gave him 20 years. The lion too, wanted only 10. Again, Man spoke up and said "may I have the other 10 years?" The "of course" said the lion.

Then came the donkey, who was also given 20 years. Like the others, 10 years was plenty. Man again asked for the spare 10 years and he got them.

This explains why Man has 20 years of normal sex life, 10 years of monkeying around, 10 years of lion about it and 10 years of making a jackass of himself.

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♂♀ Activity Open to Spouse and Partners

Next SIR Luncheon:
April 14, 2025
Boundary Oak Golf Course
3800 Valley Vista Rd.
Walnut Creek

Executive Meeting: 9:00am
Social Hour begins: 10:15am
Luncheon starts: 11:30am
Cost \$38 INCREASED
Greeters: Dr. Michael Levine
and Rick Lasky


MENU

Backyard Coleslaw

Tailgate BBQ Ribs
or

Lemon Garlic Tilapia
or

Vegetarian-Roasted Tomato
Penne Pasta

Pineapple Upside Down
Cake



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 11:20 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 \$38.00 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.Ins02@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, even if uncomfortable with the automatic reply, 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.

If you cancel after the deadline or do not show-up, we will follow-up with you to find out what happened. We do not expect members to pay for missed luncheons when there has been a health issue within your family.

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 Tom Di Grande at tomdigrande@comcast.net or call at 925-876-7851 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 Tom Di Grande 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: TBD

PUBLIC RELATIONS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

o you have a marketing background? We are looking for a chairman and assistant chairman to lead this very important activity. We are always needing to get the word out that we are there to support other guys like us and to gain new members. These activities may be coordinated with the other branches that neighbor to us. It helps to think out of the box so as to take advantage of what opportunities may be available. These members will work with and have the support of the BEC as they carry this very important service out. If this is something you would like to explore, please contact Tom DiGrande, tomdigrande@comcast.net, 925-876-7851.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH- SIR GIVING BACK

Join your fellow SIR Branch 8 members in the Community Outreach-SIR Giving Back program and activities. Participate and assist when you can, while supporting our communities. SIR Giving Back gives you that opportunity! The Community Outreach-SIR Giving Back activities are co-ed. Spouses, partners & significant others are encouraged to participate and sign up for any activities. Let's get more of our spouses involved this year!! 🍌 If you have volunteered for an activity previously, please contact us again for the upcoming activity that you would like to participate in.



Tom Di Grande

Our regularly scheduled monthly activity at the Food Bank in March was AWESOME! A lively group of 15 members and 5 spouses sleeved apples 🍏 and potatoes 🍠. These hard-working volunteers sleeved nearly 2 1/2 tons of food - WOW! 🍌 WE DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Upcoming Activities:
Food Bank Sorting Activity
4/4/2025, 9:00 am to noon
Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano
Minimum 15 volunteers needed

Mobile Pantry Distribution
4/17/2025, 1:15 to 2:45 p.m.

Send Hotline comments to Chris Wehling at chriswehling@sbcglobal.net

WIC - 2311 Loveridge Dr., Pittsburg
Minimum 6 volunteers needed

Monthly Food Bank Activity
5/14/2025, Scheduled from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Minimum 20 volunteers needed
Check out the warehouse tour - Scheduled for 12:30 p.m.!

FOR ALL ACTIVITIES- PLEASE:

No open-toe shoes; Masks are optional; Wear your SIR Red Volunteer T-Shirt; Arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled shift starting time 🍌

We will continue to provide Food Barrels 🗑️ for needed donations at our scheduled April luncheon. Great Job in filling the barrels -- Keep it Coming - THANK YOU! Look for the SIR "Greeters" -- the barrels will be nearby. Your contributions are appreciated. 😊

SIR Branch 8 participation in the Community Outreach-SIR Giving Back program demonstrates the heartfelt effort of our volunteers' 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, or Phil Scimonelli, rosescim@aol.com, 661-917-8060

MEMBER RELATIONS COMMITTEE



Rich Knowles

experience.

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

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



DOCTOR'S OFFICE



Dr Sam Oommen

William Adler
Robert Mayo
Allan Tobias
Thomas Pinckart
Meng Horng

The Doctors Resource table will have some new faces in 2025. We have ten retired physicians who have volunteered to serve. Two of them will be at the table during the monthly luncheon. Please stop by during the social hour between 10:30 to 11:30 and they will be happy to answer medical and health related questions.

The following physicians are available on the panel to serve at the Doctors resource table.

Samuel Oommen
Barry Latner
Michael Levine
Henry Kung
Gene Voelkel

Best Regards, **Dr. Sam Oommen, Chairman,**
soommen51@gmail.com, 925-381-3257



LADIES DAY LUNCHEON

Spring Ladies Day Luncheon (subject to change by BEC)

Themes for the Spring Ladies Day Luncheon are being considered. Here are a few suggestions:

- Country Western Theme with a Country Band
- African dancers and singer
- Local Comedian

Please let me know if you have a preference ASAP. Wine and other door prizes will be awarded. Signup sheets will be issued in April for the June 9th 2025 Spring luncheon.

Buck Cheshire, bjcheshire@comcast.net, 925-787-6149
Chair Ladies Day Luncheon with the assistance of Ms. Paula Murphy

OKTOBERFEST



Leo Dominguez



Ron Maciak



Thom Watkins

OKTOBERFEST October 2025

Look forward to another fun Oktoberfest in October 2025. Article to be forthcoming. See January 2025 Hotline for article on Oktoberfest 2024.

Thom Watkins: thomwat831@gmail.com, 925-330-3780
Ron Maciak: ronald41mac@gmail.com, 925-357-8005
Leo Dominguez: leordominguez@gmail.com, 925-949-6454

SUNSHINE REPORT



Sunshine is saddened to inform the membership that Susan Persson, wife of SIR Jan Persson, passed away on March 15th. Susan was 81, and Jan and Susan were married 54 years. They have two children and three grandchildren. With grateful thanks to Hospice, Susan passed peacefully and painlessly.

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 re obituaries and services. In addition, Membership continues to maintain a current obituary file on the web site.

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

BIRTHDAYS



Rich Knowles
Chairman

Membership began sending birthday emails to members during the Covid-19 shut down and has continued daily since. The SIRs below have a birthday this month. Be sure to open your birthday greeting. Note Les Hopkins and David Platter are at least 90!

Manuel Dominguez	Greg Konsavage	Greg Ryan
David Glazer	Mike O'Dorney	Carl Sand
Romano Gnusti	David Platter	Mike Spink
Les Hopkins	Steve Schramm	Vic Unsinn
Victor Jin	Will St Clair	Jerry Ward
George Kapus		

ACTIVITY COORDINATION COMMITTEE



Mike Frey



Ken Main



Chick Lowry



Dennis Mierzwa

ACC March 24 Meeting Notes Summary

Plans are for Dennis Mierzwa and Ken Main to present information about their activities at the next luncheon. Dennis will discuss Cribbage, Bargain Wines, and Wine cellar fillers. Ken will discuss his idea for a new activity called SIR Music Jammers.
+ Ken and Chick still need to send the Emergency Contact Information to their AC's.
+ Since Ron Smith is moving, an Activity Chairman is needed for the Bargain Bites activity. Ken will be heading up this search.
+ Chick to update the Activity List with the new AC for Wine Finders #1 (Ken Stehr).

SIR BIOGRAPHIES: No Biography this month.

What did the hurricane say to the palm tree? Hang on to your nuts!

Come out and enjoy an Oakland Ballers Baseball Game with your fellow Sir's

The Oakland Ballers is a semi pro baseball team that is about to start their second season with a home game at Raimondi Park in Oakland. The Ballers ended its first season in the Pioneer League in second place in a field of twelve teams with a record of 58 wins and 38 losses.

Visit their website at: oaklandballers.com

Branch 171 has several members who are investors in the Ballers and Rich Carmel's son Bryan is Co-Founder and CEO of the team.

The Ballers have extended an offer to the East Bay Sir Branches to enjoy a game at the ball park on Saturday, May 31. First pitch is at 4:30 pm. Sir members and their guests will enjoy a 25% discount on tickets and will be recognized at the game by the public address announcer.

Here's a GREAT opportunity to enjoy a game close-up with family and friends!

The Pioneer League

Since 1939, the Pioneer Baseball League has operated in the Mountain West region as an MLB affiliate league. Beginning in 2021, the Pioneer League became an MLB Partner League with clubs in Montana, Idaho, Utah, and Colorado and has now expanded its geographic reach to California with teams in Oakland and Davis. The Pioneer League is a true player development league, with players having less than 3 years of professional experience. The PBL is focused on innovation and experimental rules, having initiated the shootout style "Knockout Round" to replace extra innings, designated pinch hitters and pinch runners, and other cutting-edge rules and fan enhancements. The PBL has a 96-game slate from mid-May through mid-September. For more information, visit: <https://www.pioneerleague.com/landing/index>

Tickets

Single game tickets go on sale beginning Tuesday March 25
Raimondi Park has only 4000 seats - and all of them are good!

Premium Reserve tickets have seat backs; all others are bleacher seats.

Premium tickets sell out quickly, so buy your tickets asap. If you have a group and wish to sit together, one group member should purchase tickets for their group and collect from the individual members.

Buy tickets: <https://tickets.oaklandballers.com/>

Get a 25% discount by using the Sir Promo Code: MAY31SIR

APRIL ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Activities at SIR Branch 8

Apr 2025 (Pacific Time - Los Angeles)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
1pm - Internet Cribbage	10am - 18 Hole Golf @ 1pm - Internet Cribbage	10:30am - Book Group @ 12:30pm - Car 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Poker 5pm - Dine Out Single	9am - 9 Hole Golf. @ 10am - Bowling @ 11am - LIVE-Domino 5 @ 1pm - Cribbage @ 1pm - Internet Cribbage	8:30am - Pickleball @ 9:30am - Heads-Up 11am - Contract Bridge - 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Poker	8:30am - Open Bocce @ 9am - Community 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Internet Mexican 1pm - Poker	10am - Woodpeckers 1pm - Internet Cribbage
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1pm - Internet Cribbage	10am - 18 Hole Golf 1pm - Internet Cribbage	10am - Easy Hike 1pm - Internet Cribbage 4pm - Podcast	9am - 9 Hole Golf. @ 10am - Bowling @ 1pm - Community 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Pinochle @	8:30am - Pickleball @ 9:30am - Heads-Up 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Recently Read 6pm - Wine Finders 1 6pm - Wine Finders 2	8:30am - Open Bocce @ 10am - Digital 12pm - Chess @ Pleasant 12:30pm - LIVE-Mexican 1pm - Internet Cribbage	1pm - Internet Cribbage
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1pm - Internet Cribbage	9am - BEC meeting @ 10am - 18 Hole Golf 10am - Book Exchange @ 11:30am - SIR Luncheon 1pm - Internet Cribbage	HOTLINE input 1pm - Cribbage @ 1pm - Internet Cribbage	9am - 9 Hole Golf. @ 10am - Bowling @ 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Poker	8:30am - Pickleball @ 9:30am - Heads-Up 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1:15pm - Community 6pm - Dine out 1 @ 6pm - Wine Finders 3	8:30am - Open Bocce @ 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Internet Mexican	HOTLINE input deadline 1pm - Internet Cribbage
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1pm - Internet Cribbage	10am - 18 Hole Golf 1pm - Bridge - Partners @ 1pm - Internet Cribbage	1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Poker @ Rossmoor 1pm - Writing Your Life 4pm - Podcast	9am - 9 Hole Golf. @ 10am - Bowling @ 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Pinochle @ 1:30pm - \$UMS in	8:30am - Fishing @ 8:30am - Pickleball @ 9:30am - Heads-Up 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Poker	8:30am - Open Bocce @ 9am - Community 11:30am - Duplicate 12pm - Chess @ Pleasant 12:30pm - LIVE-Mexican 1pm - Internet Cribbage	1pm - Internet Cribbage
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
1pm - Internet Cribbage	10am - 18 Hole Golf 12pm - Poker 1pm - Internet Cribbage	10am - Hike: Hard 1pm - Internet Cribbage 3pm - Mixer @ Jack's	9am - 9 Hole Golf. @ 10am - Bowling @ 1pm - Internet Cribbage	8:30am - Pickleball @ 9:30am - Heads-Up 11am - Contract Bridge - 1pm - Internet Cribbage	8:30am - Open Bocce @ 1pm - Internet Cribbage 1pm - Internet Mexican 1pm - Poker	10am - Woodpeckers 1pm - Internet Cribbage



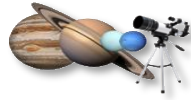
ASTRONOMY



David Bushnell

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.

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



OPERA IN THE THEATERS



David Bushnell
Chairman

We have a real treat in store for us on Saturday April 26: Mozart's "The Nozze di Figaro." It hasn't opened yet so I don't have any reviews of this year's performance; I shall forward them to the activity email list when they appear. I remember a line in a review decades ago: "The Marriage of Figaro justifies all of western civilization." Perhaps that is a little overblown, but I include below an excerpt from a review of the Met's most recent performance of the opera in 2017, which gives you the idea:

"Not only is the music itself complex in how Mozart articulates character, but the dramas themselves are arguably more involved than anything on offer anywhere else. That's why "Le Nozze di Figaro" is arguably the greatest work ever committed to the opera stage. A tragedy and political drama portrayed as a comedy. Especially in today's world, "Le Nozze di Figaro" feels arguably more relevant than ever and the best productions of this work manage to balance these two lines – buoyancy of the comedy without forgetting about the class warfare, infidelity, and sexual abuse taking place."

You can see the live matinee transmission at the Century theaters in Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 26, followed by rebroadcasts on Wednesday, April 30, at 1:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

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



BOCCE BALL - LEAGUE PLAY



Chick Lowry
Chairman

The SIR Bocce team for 2025 season has been submitted, and we await the season schedule from the Concord Bocce Federation. The estimated start will be the week of April 27th, and there may be a delayed start if we are scheduled for a BYE for the 1st game. More to come as the season unfolds.

Chairman: Chick Lowry - Clowry2845@gmail.com
Asst. Chairman: Bob Barnes - Bob_Barnes@msn.com



BOCCE BALL - OPEN PLAY



Martin Hawco
Chairman

Open Play Bocce is expected to start May 2nd, the Friday of first play. If you have a desire to join Open Play, please send me a note and I will add you to the contact list.

Martin Hawco - Activity chairman, not4u2bee@gmail.com, 925-689-4251

BOOK EXCHANGE



Alan Curtis
Chairman

The book exchange has escaped from the back corner of the bar where we've been hidden for the last few meetings. We are now out in the dining area, much more accessible. We have several new titles that have been donated by our fellow SIRS. Stop by and check us out.

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

For March, our group read *Master and Commander*, the first in the series of rousing Napoleonic War sea novels by Patrick O'Brian. Centered on the friendship of English Royal Navy Captain Jack Aubrey and Irish-Catalan physician Stephen Maturin, it provides a well-researched, historically accurate account of the British campaigns in the Mediterranean Sea and the internecine

rivalries within the Navy at that time. While some members enjoyed the book throughout, most felt reading it was somewhat of a slog because of its overly detailed description of ship sails and rigging, obscure allusions, Latin tags, and an endless stream of marvelous-sounding but impenetrable naval jargon. The overall rating was 3.3 out of a possible 5.

Our next book is a work of nonfiction, *The Eastern Front: The History of the Great War 1914-1918*, by Nick Lloyd. The Book Group meets the first Tuesday of each month at 10:30 a.m. at the Concord Round Table Pizza on Treat Boulevard.

If you like to read and have discussions about the books you have read to get different perspectives, you should think about joining our group. If you are interested, please contact our Chairman, Ron Rizzo, at ronbrizzo@gmail.com. The list of the books to be read during the year is on the SIR Branch 8 website, along with the reading list for the prior year.



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. 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 2024–2025 "winter" league started September 6. We have eleven teams of four bowlers each. We are looking for four more bowlers to create the twelfth team. Low average bowlers, spouses, and friends are welcome.

Please contact Dan Weller if you are interested in league 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. You can find tournament schedules, applications and results on the site.

Upcoming SIR Bowling Tournaments:

DATE	LOCATION	COMMENTS
April 21-24	Gold Dust West, Carson City, NV	This has Single, Doubles, and Teams (4 bowlers). We expect at least 100 bowlers.

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

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

CAR ENTHUSIASTS



Chick Lowry
Chairman

Car Enthusiasts visited the Blackhawk Museum's Auto collection on Saturday, March 15th, and enjoyed the best auto show event we have experienced in some time. We started out with the expectation we would be in a tour-it-yourself mode, as the early tour start excluded us from having a scheduled docent guide through the collection. By a stroke of fate, we met a gentleman named Tim passing through the auditorium preparing himself for a tour he would deliver the next day. He was off the clock, but he spent almost two hours sharing back stories and details of the many cars on display. It was outstanding. We spent so much time in the auto collection venue that we will need to return to the museum at a future time to view the additional collection exhibits.

Many of our members had additional schedule commitments and could not continue on to lunch, so my two newest CE members joined me for a BBQ lunch at Hazy BBQ in Alamo, and we got an opportunity to get to know each other better. Overall, the outing was a great success.

The next CE adventure is **Saturday, April 26th -- Sonoma Speed Tour** at Sonoma Raceway. Admission cost is **\$35** per person. We will carpool to save on parking fees (**\$30 per car**) and the number of vehicles required to make the trip. If tickets are purchased in advance, we **save \$10** per entry ticket. More details will be provided to you if you have an interest in joining us. Contact Tom or me for info.

Our plan to visit the **Driving Simulator venue** has been changed to **Tuesday, May 6th**, as the venue location has moved from Concord to San Ramon. Estimated cost per driver is \$45 in addition to no-host lunch costs. Event details are yet to be completed, so if you are interested, please contact Tom or me to be included.

The next CE meeting will be **Tuesday, April 1st, at 1 p.m.** We will meet at Round Table Clubhouse Pizza, 2960 Treat Blvd. Concord (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 Chick or Tom as noted below.

Activity Chair - Chick Lowry - Clowry2845@gmail.com
Assistant Chair - 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 half hour and lunch is at noon, and play is from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Please join us if you have played or wish to learn. Depending on attendance, we play two-, three-, or four-person games. We normally get in five games in the two and half hours we play. Our members prefer to play four-person games, which is two partners with the two winners advancing to the next table. Cribbage is a fun, friendly, fast-paced game. Cribbage is a coed activity, with spouses and partners welcome. In addition, if you are introducing a potential new member to SIR, bring them as a guest to a game you enjoy!

March 2025 RESULTS

Our first March games, March 5th, had a dozen players, which gave us three tables of four-partner play. The winners were

1 st	Peter Shapiro	197points
2 nd	Dennis Mierzwa	197points
3 rd	Dan Smith	174 points
4 th	Don Atwater	149 points

For the third time this quarter, first place was decided by cutting cards. Both Peter Shapiro and Dennis Mierzwa ended the games with 197 points each. A cut of the cards gave Peter first place for the second time this year! High hand this session was held by Terry Mason and Peter Shapiro, each with a hand of 20.

The second session of the month was Tuesday, March 18th, with eleven players giving us two tables of four for partner play and a table of three. The scores were good, in part due to multiple skunks and a double skunk. Our top four finishers were

1 st	Dennis Mierzwa	249 points
2 nd	Dan Smith	205 points
3 rd	Rod Spicer	172 points
4 th	Don Atwater	149 points

No one reported a 20 hand for the March 18th session.
2025 High Score, Don Atwater 312 points
2024 High Score, Bob Beitler 261 points

Chairman, Dennis Mierzwa: dennis.mierzwa@att.net
Assistant Chairman, Dan Smith: dns.lns02@astound.net

BRIDGE RUBBER



Dave
Dawson
Chairman

The contract bridge group has been paused until we can get some new members. Anyone wanting to play bridge should come to the Partners Bridge sessions and contact Dave Dawson, 925-586-4863, dawsonfam03@gmail.com

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. We're playing duplicate bridge on January 24th at 11:30 AM, at Round Table Pizza in Pleasant Hill.

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



Dave
Dawson
Chairman

To all Partners/Contract Bridge players or single bridge players without a partner. Want to play some bridge?

Perhaps it's been a while and you're a little "rusty"? Partner/contract bridge is now combined into one group. If you don't have a partner, show up and we'll attempt to match you with someone. Already have a partner? Bring him or her as well.

We play at the Round Table Pizza Clubhouse on Oak Grove and Treat. Lunch is from 12 to 1, and the games start about 1 pm. We are usually done by 3:30/4:00. We play on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Chairman Dave Dawson just needs to know who is coming (partners: either partner can please respond for both partners). Singles, please let me know if you are bringing someone else. Please everyone let me know you are coming by the Saturday before our game.

Questions: Call Dave Dawson at 925-586-4863. Email at dawsonfam03@gmail.com. Thanks. Remember, if you signup, please show up.

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 from 12:30 to 3:00. We play 3-, 4-, 5- or 6-handed games, so we can accommodate any number of players. Ladies and new players are welcome. We share this activity with Branch 146. Contact Stan Johnson.



On February 26, we had 10 participants. At one table of five, Dennis Mierzwa won, with Art Fabsits a close second. At a second table of five, Jeff Morrow of Branch 146 won the first game, with Jim Barry winning second.

On March 12, we also had 10 participants. At one table of five, Tom Amann won both games. At the other table of five, Jeff Morrow of Branch 146 won the first game, and Charlie Kahsen won the second game.

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

POKER, COME JOIN US FOR POKER!

Ron has resigned to care for his wife. The Branch is looking for someone to carry on this popular activity.

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 TBD



SIR CHESS



Steve Schram
Chairman

SIR Branch 8 Chess Players,

Please join us for Chess at the Pleasant Hill Senior Center in April.

We will continue our Chess events on Fridays, April 11 and 25, at the Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane in Pleasant Hill. We will play in the Game Room from noon to 3:00 p.m.

Our chess activity is scheduled on the second and fourth Fridays of each month. We welcome anyone from beginners to expert players. Please remember to bring your chess sets and any beverages that you will enjoy during this activity. As we continue to play at the PH Senior Center in 2025, we will all have to become members for a modest fee of \$20 per year.

Contact Steve Schramm, Activity Chairman, if you have any questions. sschramm01@gmail.com.



I look forward to playing chess with all of you this month!

Regards, Steve.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY



Meng Horng
Chair Pro-Tem

Our group consists of photography enthusiasts who continue to show interest in learning new digital techniques to improve their photography. With new software advancement and AI concepts, the learning has no limitation. Our goal this year is to grow our membership, meeting in-person with instruction lectures and adding field trips to our schedule. This is a big step forward since the Pandemic isolation.

Any members who are interested in joining the group, please sign-up at the lunch meeting at our Photo display table or call or email us.

We meet at 10:00 a.m. every second Friday of the month, in the meeting room of the Ygnacio Valley Library, at 2661 Oak Grove Rd. (phone 925-938-1481) in Walnut Creek. We have monthly assigned topics and encourage participating members to bring their photo images on a flash drive to the meeting for a fun "Show and Tell" session.

Dr. Meng Horng, Chair: 309-287-5654 mengymc@gmail.com
Dave Davis, Vice Chair: 925-838-1753 dav.davis@comcast.net

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. Let Chairmen Don or Dan know of your interest to join existing games or to start new games.

Mexican Train – Currently, we play Mexican Train on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month. Thanks to Danny Rinaldi, our connection is via Zoom to razzle our competitors while playing on a site reserved just for us. Our last two games were won by Terry Norton and Don Atwater. We also play in person on the 2nd and 4th Fridays, with Terry Mason our most recent winner.

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 the cards and counts the points. Don Atwater was the winner in March, with Greg Ryan & Ray de Wit tying for second place.

Chairman: Don Atwater, 925-673-1669, datwater@pacbell.net
Asst. Chair: Dan Rinaldi, 925-825-0519, dmrinaldi944@astound.net

DOMINOES



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

Dan Rinaldi
Chairman

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 12:30 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.

Dan Rinaldi
Chairman

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: Dan 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



BARGAIN BITES



Ron Smith
Chairman

Hello Bargain Biters!!
By now many of you have received the announcement of our first event in 2025. Bill has arranged for us to dine at the China Palace on N. Main Street in Walnut Creek, on Monday, April 21, and a number of you have already signed up. They can only accommodate around 36 people, so if you haven't signed up and are thinking of going, please SIGN UP NOW.



Remember the motto of Bargain Bites: Good Food! Good Price! Good Friends! And guests are always welcome. This is a great 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. Chair, Bill Barber, 925-222-0095, billhiker4411@gmail.com

DINE IN #1



Our March 15 dinner was hosted by Ron Cassano. The star of the show was grilled pork loin, supported by scalloped potatoes and green bean casserole. We started with appetizers and wine.

Ron Cassano
Chairman

A classic Waldorf salad was a great starter. Of course, we ended with a chocolate cheesecake. Thanks to all our members who made the meal possible. As usual, fellowship and conversation flowed.

Ron Cassano, Head Eater, roncassano@gmail.com

DINE OUT - SINGLE SIRS



Glenn Gilman
Chairman

Buttercup Restaurant, 660 Ygnacio Valley Rd, Walnut Creek, is where we will dine Tuesday April 1st (no, this is not a joke) at 5 p.m. Separate checks, good food, and good conversation await us. Let our host, Bill Barber know if you will be joining us or not. Bill Barber 925-222-0095, billhiker4411@gmail.com.

Last month eleven of us dined at Back Forty Texas BBQ, where most of us enjoyed dinner from their senior menu, as well as having good conversations.

Glenn Gilman, Chairman, 925-798-5155
glennfam@sbcglobal.net
Don Atwater, Asst. Chairman, 925-673-1669
datwater@pacbell.net

JIGSAW PUZZLE EXCHANGE



Carl Moyer
Chairman

Carl Moyer has an activity called Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange. The jigsaw puzzle exchange is at the Luncheon fishing table with Carl Moyer. Bring Puzzles & Take Puzzles.



Contact Carl at carlmarc@astound.net

GOLF - 9 HOLE



Mike Frey
Chairman

The 9-hole Golf Group plays at Diablo Hills Golf Course on Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m.!



Following is a summary of recent play:

March 5, 2025

Nine golfers teed off starting at 9:00 a.m. at Diablo Hills Golf Course on an overcast and pleasant morning for golf. Will St. Clair shot the low round of the day with a score of "44," just nudging out Mike Frey, who shot a "45." Will also won the closest to the pin event, on the 3rd hole with a 7' 10" shot; Will just missed his birdie putt and settled for a par. The group had 8 pars and birdies by Arte Chan, Gary Grice, and Will. Nice round Will!!!! A special thanks to Glenn Gilman for being this month's Starter and providing the pre-tee off "sweets" for us that morning.

February 26, 2025

Nine golfers teed off starting at 9:00 a.m. at Diablo Hills Golf Course on a very nice morning for golf. Rich Knowles and Terry Baldwin shot the low rounds of the day with scores of "45." Terry won the closest to the pin event, on the 3rd hole with a 19' 10" shot; Terry then went on to three-putt for a bogie. Terry!!! The group had 7 pars and no birdies for the round. A special thanks to Terry for a fine job as the Starter for the month.

MIXER



Ray de Wit
Chairman

On a warm spring day with the open patio, 11 of us enjoyed our March get-together and the wonderful weather, great conversations and good eats for all. Our event will be on the usual last Tuesday of the month (**April 29th**) at 3:00 pm at Jack's in Pleasant Hill. It was great to see Norm Cox rejoin the group and we welcome a new member, Lynn Oakleaf to the Mixers.

Everyone is welcome and we 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 are 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 at Port Chicago Highway and Highway 4, on Thursday, April 24th, at 8:30 a.m. Come early.



With the ocean closed for almost everything, our early spring fishing has been limited. Tom Kostik, Mike Corker, Brion Beetz, Phil Scimonelli, and Ken Bellinder got stripers in the Delta, but not many keepers. Carl Moyer, Zbig Mrozek, Dennis Lee, and Gordon Linebaugh caught trout in Contra Loma Reservoir, but not a lot.

Carl Moyer, Chairman, carlmarc@astound.net



Rich Knowles, Ray de Wit, Mike Frey, Rick McGuire

February 19, 2025

Ten golfers teed off starting at 9:00 a.m. at Diablo Hills Golf Course on a very damp morning for golf. Rich Knowles shot the low rounds of the day with scores of "45," just nudging out Gary Grice who shot "46." Ray de Wit won the closest to the pin event, on the 3rd hole with a 7' 5" shot; he then went on to two-putt for a par. The group had 11 pars, and one birdie by Rich Knowles. Nice round, Rich!!



Join us for a round of golf followed by a bite to eat while we rehash the round. Go to the Branch 8 website and, under the Nine Hole Golf link, click on the Signup link. Call or email Mike or Ray with any questions.

Chairman: Mike Frey, mikefrey1784@gmail.com, 925-699-1784
Asst. Chairman: Ray de Wit, raydewit11@gmail.com, 925-948-5962

GOLF - 18 HOLE



David Platter
Chairman

The golf scramble format combines a, b, c, and d players, and then by using their handicaps it makes all golfers equal.



Jeff Martin became a new golf partner. During Jeff's first tournament, he, along with team members Arte Chan, Ray De Wit, and Frank Bosworth, walked away with the coveted first-place prize.

In another true story: keeping in touch with SIR golf buddies can be stressful. During phone contact with Mike Hennessy, he confessed to having health struggles. Suffering from breathing challenges, a swollen face, and uncontrollable coughing even while speaking just a few words, he was in trouble. Then, keeping food down as well as attempting to get a night's sleep was very difficult. With these symptoms, Mike's friends suggested an immediate call for an ambulance and a quick trip to the hospital. Mike rejected all suggestions and said, "I am going to try a different medication."

Next day! Phone calls to him were not answered. Alerted neighbors banged on his front entry, without any response. Since his wife, Sue, was in Ireland on family business, Mike was alone. Then friends began to visualize Mike desperately struggling inside his home, unable to move. Perhaps even unconscious. Maybe near death.

Not one, but three Pleasant Hill police cars arrived and immediately attempted to enter the Hennessy home. Crowds gathered outside. Soon there were whispers about crime, murder, home invasion, and a possible contagious disease. Mike's doors were locked from the inside, suggesting that the only option was to break down the entry or smash a backside window. The fire department with special keys were on the way, and an ambulance had been summoned. Through this hysteria, a voice was heard, "May I help?" It came from a man ascending the front porch stairs. "Here, let me use this key."

"Yes! Just in time," the commander replied. "You must be a trusted neighbor."

Then came a reply from the mystery man. "I have been grocery shopping at Costco. My name is Michael Hennessy. Is there a problem?" One spectator whispered, "Oops!!!!"

David Platter, Chairman, 925-283-9146

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

MODEL TRAINS



Rich Knowles
Chairman

There will be another meeting – time and place to be determined. Activity Coordinator is vacationing for a month, traveling all over the world (in reality, not via model trains).



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

PICKLEBALL ♀♂



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

At its first meeting in March, the Podcast activity discussed a podcast about the Ritchie Boys – these were Americans, many who were recent immigrants from Europe, who learned how to integrate prisoners of war and get useful intelligence. Once the Allies landed in Europe, the Ritchie Boys were the primary source of tactical intelligence. We hear from a few who were still alive at the time (most of whom were about 100 years old and have died since the podcast was recorded). It was very informative.



At our second meeting, we discussed a couple of American Presidents – William McKinley and Teddy Roosevelt. And for a little variety, we listened to a couple of nutrition podcasts – one about pesticides in the fruit and vegetables we eat and a second one about the benefits or issues with drinking coffee. Both of these short ones were interesting and instructive.

Rich Knowles, grichthek@gmail.com, 925-681-9191.

SIRS AT THE GAMES



Steve Schramm
Chairman

It is almost Spring and time for baseball. The pitchers and catchers will report soon for Spring Training in Arizona and Florida. SIR members and guests will be invited to attend a SF Giants baseball game this Summer. Currently, we are reviewing the major league baseball schedule to select a Wednesday or Thursday afternoon game for Giants baseball. Last year, we watched the Giants beat the Atlanta Braves by a score of 6-0. We had excellent seats in the shade along the third base line. A fun afternoon was had by all.

Please watch this Hotline space and the SIR Branch 8 website for updates about this outing. As always, you are encouraged to bring family and guests to the SIRs at the Games events.

Please contact Steve Schramm for more information, sschramm01@gmail.com.

HEADS-UP WALKERS



Dan Weller
Chairman

We walk every Thursday morning at 9:30 a.m. 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/>

3/27/2025: Concord: Newhall Community Park. Meet at the parking lot on Turtle Creek Rd. off Ayers Rd. Some elevation changes to the Viet Nam Memorial. Cafe: Whole Foods, Oak Grove and Ygnacio Valley Roads. Leader: Dan Weller. Difficulty: M

4/3/2025: Martinez: Martinez Regional Shoreline. From 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: Dave Allen. Difficulty: E

4/10/2025: Lafayette: Lafayette/Moraga Trail. Lafayette. 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: Dave Davis. Difficulty: M

4/17/2025: 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 the Railroad Museum parking lot, corner of Prospect & Railroad Aves. Cafe: Lunardi's Market. Leader: Jan Persson. Difficulty: E

4/24/2025: 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 and Ygnacio Valley Roads. Leader: Jim Sowell. Difficulty: E

5/1/2025: Clayton: Clayton Library. Meet at the library parking lot, 6125 Clayton Road. Cafe: Sweet Bakery. Leader: Manuel Dominguez. Difficulty: M

5/8/2025: Concord: Iron Horse, Willows Shopping Center. Meet at the south corner of the Center near the new Lazy Dog Restaurant. Cafe: Panera Bread Cafe. Leader: Phil Trapp. Difficulty: E

CHAIRMAN: Dan Weller, 925-939-5510, dweller@astound.net
ASSISTANT CHAIR: Phil Trapp, 925-963-1819, prtrapp@sbcglobal.net

SIR HIKERS



Carl Ludwig
Chairman

We have two great hikes lined up for the month of April. Detailed information for interested hikers will appear by the end of March on the Hiker's webpage of the Branch 8 website at <https://www.sirbr8.com/hikers/>.

April 8 Easy Hike – Sugarloaf Open Space Loop from Rudgear Park WC – 10:00 a.m.

Hike Description: Sugarloaf is a small gem of open space snuggled into the southern part of Walnut Creek. It is easily accessible from Rudgear Park, about ¼ mile from the Open Space entrance. The hike is a short 2.5-mile loop. But the net elevation gain is at the outer limits for an easy hike, just under 300 feet. We hike up Center Trail to the Ridgetop Trail, stopping frequently during this rigorous uphill climb. We have great vistas of Walnut Creek and Mount Diablo while overlooking green hills. We hike north on Ridgetop, then turn right on the less steep Orchard Trail, descending in a loop to the Open Space entrance. We return to our parked cars by touring some of the sport fields of Rudgear Park.

There are bathroom facilities at the Open Space area and at Rudgear Park, as well as ample parking.

Directions: From Walnut Creek, drive south on 680 to the Livorna Exit. Turn left up the hill to Trotter Way, turning left. Then turn right on Dapplegray Lane, then left on Stewart Ave. The Rudgear Park parking lot is on your right. Physical address is 2261 Dapplegray Lane. Meet in the main parking lot at **10:00 a.m.**

Bring: Water, hats, trekking poles, good boots
Optional Lunch: Round Table Pizza Restaurant, 150 Alamo Plaza Shopping Center, Danville Blvd., Alamo
Hike Leader & Coordinator: Carl Ludwig, 415.350.7372, cludwig171@gmail.com

AllTrails: [Explore Sugarloaf via Rudgear Park | AllTrails](#)

April 29 Hard Hike – Black Diamond Mines Trail loop, Antioch 9:30 a.m.

TRAIL Description: We start at the Black Diamond Mines inner parking lot at the end of Somersville Road. From the parking lot, we go to Nortonville Trail through the Rose Hill Cemetery, where you take a short break looking at the scenery and the oldest and most famous cemetery near here. Continue up and down hill to the old town location of Nortonville. Continue onto Black Diamond Mines Trail loop up the hill, then continue on the paved road to the top. Then we go downhill all the way on the same

Black Diamond Mines Trail (non-paved) until Manhattan Canyon Trail, which will take us back to Nortonville Trail and back to the parking lot. **DISTANCE AND ELEVATION:** 5.6 miles, 1,280 feet.

TO GET THERE: From the East Bay/Walnut Creek Area, take Ygnacio Valley Road past Walnut Creek and Clayton. The Road changes name to Kerker Pass. Keep going over the hill and go right at the 3rd traffic light, to Buchanan Road for about 3 miles. Go right onto Somersville Road all the way to the end of the road. (You will pass John Donlon Blvd. and Black Diamond Mines gate first.) There is a large free parking area to the right. We hike starting at **9:30 a.m.**

GPS LOCATION: 5196 Somersville Road, Antioch. ** Please note, this address is only to the ranger station, continue on the same road for about 1 mile to the end, where the parking lot is.

RESTROOM: At the parking lot.

BRING: good shoes, hat (no shade), water, snacks; hiking poles are recommended.

ALLTRAILS Users: [Explore Black Diamond Mines trail loop | AllTrails](#)

LUNCH OPTION: Smith Landing Seafood Grill (1 Marina Plaza, Antioch). It's about 16 minutes' drive from the parking lot. (Straight out from Somersville Road through Antioch, one left turn on L-Street to Marina and the end.)

Hike Leader: Meng Horng, meng40@hotmail.com, 309.287.5654

Hike Coordinator: Carl Ludwig, cludwig171@gmail.com, 415.350.7372

\$UMS IN RETIREMENT



As usual we will Zoom with SIR Branch 128 (San Ramon) on the 4th Wednesday of every month at 1:30 PM.

Email Dave Sutton to be included or to learn the topic.

Dave Sutton
Co-Chairman

Chair: Tom Henry-Branch
174, tomhenry925@gmail.com

Co-chair: Dave Sutton-Branch 8, davesutn@comcast.net



TRAVELING SIRs

GOOD NEWS !!! Based upon both the SIR Multi-Branch travel questionnaire results and the related member interview input, these travel destinations have been chosen for future SIR Travel.

OAT/Grand Circle just communicated the following discounts and suggested booking dates. If this interests you, please contact OAT/Grand Circle directly. Click on LINK HERE below for contact information and further trips details. These discounts expire this month.

Let me know if you have any questions or comments

Glenn Breslin - SIR146 Travel Chair
glennbreslin@gmail.com or 925-788-6520

Vietnam/Cambodia (Price/Price with Air)

10/19/25 to 11/7/25 (\$3,495 / \$4,695)

- Angor Wat Post-Trip Included available
- [LINK HERE](#)
- Group code is G5-30339

Australia/New Zealand(Price/Price with Air)

1/7/26 to 1/25/26 (\$5,295 / \$7,645)

- Both Melbourne Pre-Trip and Fiji Post-Trip available
- [LINK HERE](#)
- Group code is G6-30339

Japan/Korea (Price/Price with Air)

4/1/26 to 4/16/26 (\$7,495 / \$9,095)

- Hiroshima post-trip available
- [LINK HERE](#)
- Group code is G6-30339

If you are able to book Vietnam/Cambodia by Feb 28th, please use Group Code G5-30339 and pay your \$500 deposit.

- Also convey Discount Code DOBE354 for **\$500 per person** with an immediate discount.

If you are able to book Australia/New Zealand and/or Japan/Korea by Feb 20th, please use Group Code G6-30339 and pay your \$500 deposit.

- You will receive **\$100 per person** discount, within 48 hours of signing up on your invoice.

OAT Grand Circle is saving space, exclusively, for SIRs Travelers until March 9th

- After March 9th, the general public can book these previously saved SIRs slots on the Vietnam/Cambodia, Australia/New Zealand and Japan/Korea trips.

The above was sent to everyone via email on February 14.

BARGAIN WINES



No new report for April.

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

Dennis Mierzwa
Chairman

WINE CELLAR FILLERS



No new report for April.

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, Asst Chair, scottkgraff@gmail.com, 925-552-6097

WINE FINDERS 1



Ron Smith
Chairman

Our first tasting of the year is scheduled to be held at the home of David Glazer and Helen Choi.

David and Helen have chosen *dry* Reisling as the varietal for the tasting. So, get out there and find the winner. This one will be a tough tasting as the wines may be hard to easily distinguish. So, bring a clean palate, appetizer for 6, your winning dry Reisling, and a couple of glasses.

And of course, show up at David and Helen's on Thursday, April 10, at 6:00PM

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, just drop Ron Smith an email (resmith62@aol.com), and he will get back to you.

Ken Stehr, Chair, Wine Finders 1, kcstehr@comcast.net
Rob Laaback, Asst. Chair, Wine Finders 1, rlaabak@yahoo.com

WINE FINDERS 2



Ron Cassano
Chairman

Our next tasting is in April. Pinot Noir is the selection. Welcome to our new member, Tony Klemens.

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

WINE FINDERS 3

No new report for April.

WOODPECKERS

No new report for April.

Thom Watkins, Chair Woodpeckers,
925-330-3780



Lari McEv
Chair



Thom Watkins
Chairman

WRITING YOUR LIFE STORY



Tom Hodgson



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



Chris Wehling
chriswehling@sbcglobal.net

WEB MASTER



Derek Southern
derek.southern@gmail.com

Note: If you like to know the news earlier than everyone else, volunteer to be a hotline editor. Position now open. Need to have good working experience with MSWord. Contact Chris Wehling for more information. Thanks.





STATE SIR HAPPENINGS

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



RESOURCES FOR OUR MEMBERS, FAMILY & FRIENDS

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!

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.**



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(925) 937-8311

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Visitors/Callers

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www.cancersupport.net / 925-933-0107
3276 McNutt Ave., WC



PHOTO
GALLERY



Carl Moyer and Zbig Mrozek were happy with this 4-pound trout.



Gordon Linebaugh and Dennis Lee and some nice trout.