



**May  
2026**

**WHAT IS SIR?**

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

**Branch 8 Website:**

<https://www.sirbr8.com>

**"MAKE NEW FRIENDS FOR LIFE"**

**Editor: Steve Moore**

**BIG SIR COLUMN**

The State SIR mandate that we obtain California Photo Release Forms for all pictures used in our website and in the Hotline is dragging out in time. This is because State SIR is still considering its best course of action. That's fine, it can wait. We will wait to read what they state. Then we will do our planning.

Those that attended the April luncheon heard Andy Danver talk about the state of SIR. SIR is nowhere near as large of an organization as it used to be. Maintaining or, better yet, growing membership is on our minds. There is a sense that as we age and become part of the "older" members, we lose connection with the next generation. There is a thought that we need to draw upon our younger members to help bridge the gap. If you are among those who joined us in the past couple of years, and can see value in this, I will appreciate hearing from you. The point is we want our selection of activities work well for our newer members, as it works for our older members. We put value in these activities being fun and real value in the social contact therein.

I hope that those who attended the April 13<sup>th</sup> luncheon, our second buffet service, enjoyed the service. Boundary Oak did incorporate our requests, including having two lines. It felt like the luncheon went well, especially in that it did not drag out. It will be a few months before we do the next buffet. Then we get to decide if we want to do one more in the latter part of the year. That is why we want to listen to you. This is your membership and we want you feel that the membership is worth it.

We are always looking for new ideas. We also want to know if we have an issue. If you have something you want to say, please email me. No promises, but I am usually pretty good at steering this to the right person. As with any suggestion, we will endeavor to do what is best for the branch.

Dan Smith, Big SIR, [dns.lns02@astound.net](mailto:dns.lns02@astound.net), 925-588-6792

**LITTLE SIR SEZ**

. Little SIR spent the month of April at doctors' appointments, physical therapy, and planning for the "Happy Fall Y'all" event.

After seven weeks in the sling, I was finally released from its constraints by the surgeon. The good news is at my last appointment, the surgeon said that I was about a month-and-a-half into my recovery than was normal. He also permitted me to drive again, which was a very welcome prescription to my (Uber-driver) wife.

My belief is that my advanced recovery time is due to my fanatical approach to my physical therapy regimen.

The planning for the "Happy Fall Y'all" event is well underway. We plan to start the roll-out at the May Luncheon; at which the announcement will be made and sign-ups will be accepted.

The speaker for the May Luncheon will be Dan Buckshi, Walnut Creek City Manager; we look forward to hearing all about the happenings in "The Creek."

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



## HOTLINE INDEX

(Click on an activity and you will be taken to that article or website)

ACTIVITY	COED	ACTIVITY	COED
Activities Calendar		Folk Music Jam	
Br 8 Officers, Directors and Committees		Golf-9 Hole	
Activity Coordination Committee		Golf-18 Hole	
Anniversaries		Heads Up Walkers	
Astronomy - Online		Hikers	
SIR Biography		<a href="#">Internet Games</a> ONLINE	
Birthdays		Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange	
Bocce Ball-League		Holiday Gala (was Ladies Day Luncheon)	
Bocce Ball-Open		Happy Fall Y'All (was Octoberfest)	
Books-Exchange		Local Classical Music (was Opera in the theater)	
Books-Group		Luncheon Sign-Up	
Books-Recently Read		Mixer	
Bowling		Model Trains	
Car Enthusiasts		Photo Gallery (on hold)	
Card Games-Contract Bridge		Pickleball	
Card Games-Duplicate Bridge		Podcasts <b>Zoom</b>	
Card Games-Partners Bridge		Second Chance Magazine Exchange	
Card Games-Cribbage		Shared Activities	
Card Games-Pinochle		SIR Science-Online	
Card Games-Poker		SIR Store	
SIR Chess		SIRs at the Games	
Community Outreach-SIR Giving Back		\$ums in Retirement <b>Zoom</b>	
Digital Photography		Sunshine Report	
<a href="#">Dining-Bargain Bites</a>		Traveling SIRs	
Dining-Dine In #1		Wines-Bargain	
Dining-Dine Out Single SIRs		Wines-Cellar Fillers	
Distinguished Service Award (Ed Benson)		Wines-Finders 1	
Doctor's Office		Wines-Finders 2	
Dominoes-Mexican Train		Wines-Finders 3	
End of Life Planning		Woodpeckers	
Film Buffs		Writing Your Life Story	
Fishing			

Activity Open to Spouse and Partners

### Next SIR Luncheon:

Monday May 11, 2026, Boundary Oak Golf Club, 3800 Valley Vista Rd., Walnut Creek  
 Social Hour at 10:30 am, Lunch at 11:30 am.  
 April Menu (Served at table)  
 Chicken Alfredo, Spaghetti and Meatballs, or Spaghetti with Red sauce  
 Desert: XXXXX

**Greeters:** To be determined and present at luncheon

## 2026 Officers, Directors and Committees

Dan Smith	Big Sir
Thom Watkins	Little Sir
Carl Ludwig	Secretary
Peter Jordan	Asst Scrtry
Leo Dominguez	Asst Scrtry
John Vallor	Attendance
Manuel Dominguez	Asst Attdnc
Rich Knowles	Membership
Arte Chan	Asst Mmbrshp
Peter Shapiro	Treasurer
Terry Baldwin	Asst Trsrr
Mike Frey	Director
Terry Mason	Director
Thomas Draeger	Director
Greg Konsavage	Director
Steve Schramm	Recruitment
Ken Main	Activity
Dennis Mierzwa	Activity
Stan Johnson	Orientation
Buddy May	Constant Contact
Dave Perkins	Orientation
Ray de Wit	Nominating
Ron Cassano	Nominating
Dan Weller	Systems
Derek Southern	Website
Steve Monksfield	Website
Chris Wehling	Newsletter

RAMP (4 chairs, 3 currently filled by BEC members)  
Member Relations Committee currently 4 members, chaired by  
Membership Secty

Fred Serena State Pres  
Carl Mason Rep Area 16

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

The monthly activities calendar is accessed from the SIR Branch 8 website at [Calendar | SIR Branch 8](#). If this link does not work for you, please enter <https://www.sirbr8.com/calendar/> into your web browser. When you click the link to the calendar on the website, you will see the entire month. To get more details of an activity on any given day, click on activity and a pop-up will show more details.



**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)

## 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](mailto: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.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH- SIR GIVING BACK 🧑🏻‍🦺

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

The Community Outreach-SIR Branch 8 Giving Back activities are co-ed. Spouses, partners, significant others & guests are encouraged to participate and sign up for any of the activities. 🤗  
We Are Making Progress Here!

Let's get more of the spouses involved in 2026!!  
Have you asked your spouse or partner to join us??

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

The Community Outreach volunteers participated in a regularly scheduled Food Bank activity in the month of April. We had 15 volunteers, 12 members and 3 spouses, working extra hard to sleeve apples 🍏 and "HUGH" carrots 🥕, making "ready for distribution" to the community! 🙌

We did that distribution - what a "blast"!  
SIR Branch 8 members (9) and spouses (2), greeted and distributed food to over 145 families at St Paul's Episcopal Church in Walnut Creek.  
The distribution included, canned fruit & corn, black beans, raisins, cornmeal, cauliflower, sleeves of oranges & apples, blocks of cheese and chicken pieces. A "Rewarding" experience 🤗. Thank You. SIR BRANCH 8 MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

Upcoming Food Bank Activities:

Monthly, Wednesday, 5/13/26, Scheduled from 1 to 3pm, Minimum 20 volunteers needed

Monthly, Wednesday, 6/10/26, Scheduled from 1 to 3 pm, Minimum 20 volunteers needed

DON'T FORGET! We have started volunteering monthly at the: Mobile Pantry Distribution, St Paul's Episcopal Church, Walnut Creek, CA.

This activity is organized and scheduled by the Food Bank, for the 3rd Thursday of each month. 🤗

9am - 11:45am (rain or shine)

5/21/26 ( 4 signed up - so far!)

6/18/26 ( 3 signed up - so far!)

We need a MAXIMUM of 10 volunteers for this activity monthly - SIGN UP EARLY! 🤗. This is really a "FUN" activity - give it a try, you'll like it!

HEY, SIR BRANCH 8 MEMBERS, COMMUNITY OUTREACH-SIR GIVING BACK PARTICIPATION IS DOWN 😞. LET'S "CRANK IT UP"! 😊

ALL ACTIVITIES- PLEASE:

No open toe shoes, Masks are optional, Wear your SIR Red Volunteer T Shirt, Arrive 15 min prior to scheduled shift starting time 🕒

We will continue to provide Food Barrels 🗑️ for needed donations at the monthly membership luncheons.

Here's your opportunity to really help the Food Bank for 2026. 😊 Does your spouse, partner or significant other know about the food barrels at the luncheons? I would bet if you looked in your pantries at home, you could come up with a bag of food for the barrel. Extra cans of beans / tuna / chicken / soup / tomato sauce, jars of peanut butter / jelly, boxes of pasta / cereal / crackers, ETC. Look for the SIR "Greeters", the barrels will be nearby. Your contributions are appreciated. 😊

SIR Branch 8 participation in the Community Outreach-SIR ranch 8 Giving Back program demonstrates the heart felt effort of the 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](mailto:tomdigrande@comcast.net), 925-876-7851, or Phil Scimonelli, [rosescim@aol.com](mailto:rosescim@aol.com), 661-917-8060

## HOLIDAY GALA 🧑🏻🧑🏻



The committee continues their ongoing planning and preparations for making this year's December 14, 2026 Gala a spectacular fun event.

Holiday Gala Contacts: Chair: Buck Cheshire  
Committee Members: Ray Dewitt, Tom DiGrande, Paula Murphy and Thom Watkins

## SUNSHINE REPORT 🌞🧑🏻🧑🏻



The Sunshine Committee regrets to inform the membership of the passing of Ed Myrtle over a year ago on November 2, 2024. We were notified of his passing by his son Rick in April. We would have liked to have known sooner, but we were not informed.

His obituary has been posted online by the Neptune Society. There were no services.  
Ed was the Branch 8 Big Sir in 1999. He was also a Senior Honorary Life Member of the Branch. He joined the Branch in 1993.

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 will continue to mail condolence cards to the families via mail. Membership will report member deaths to the Branch via email and, as it becomes known, information about obituaries and services. In addition, Membership continues to maintain a current obituary file on the website.

Membership Secretary: Rich Knowles, [griethek@gmail.com](mailto:griethek@gmail.com), 925-681-9191

## ANNIVERSARIES

No report submitted for May

## BIRTHDAYS



Membership sends birthday emails to members for their birthday. The Sirs below have a birthday this month. Those highlighted in yellow are 90+.

Be sure to open your birthday greeting.

Dave Allen <b>Bill Barber</b> Jerry Benson Eric Benson Bruce Cousins <b>John Crooks</b>	Dave Dawson <b>Stephen Deness</b> Glenn Gilman Pat Hoy Ed Lichtig Chick Lowry	Ralph Schweinfurth Bob Wheaton Kevin Winkler Leary Wong
--	--	--

## ACTIVITY COORDINATION COMMITTEE

No report submitted for May.

## SIR BIOGRAPHY

NO NEW BIOGRAPHIES FOR THIS MONTH.

## BOCCE BALL-LEAGUE 🏏🧑🏻🧑🏻

The league Bocce season is approaching quickly. The entire Branch 8 Sir Bocce Team has returned for the 2026 season. Bob and Laurie Barnes, Bob and Susan Weiss, Peter Shapiro, Dennis Meirzwa, Ray Pixton, Jim Sowell and Elaine Lowry and myself comprise the Sir Bocce group for another year.

We will begin play on the evening of April 28<sup>th</sup> and attempt to improve play over the season. We are again seeded 8<sup>th</sup> in the 9-team division playing Tuesday nights at Baldwin Park in Concord. Sprints are high with anticipation to make the more experienced teams we will play against bow to our improved play. Some of the folks we play are excellent, lifelong Bocce players. We're going to surprise them this year. Go Team Sir Bocce.

It is unfortunate there are only 10 positions per team currently available for branch 8 members. If an opportunity arises where we can create an additional team. We will alert our Branch members. While you wait for the opportunity, there is Open Play Bocce available at 8:30 AM Friday mornings throughout the Bocce season. Play is located at Newhall Park in Concord each week. No knowledge of the game nor equipment is required. We will teach you. No need to call ahead, just show up. Play lasts about 2 hours. Come have some Bocce fun.

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

## BOOK GROUP

For April we read the Wide Wide Sea: Imperial Ambition, First Contact, and the Fateful Final Voyage of Captain James Cook by Hampton Sides. The book explores the third and final voyage of Captain Cook, ending with his death in Hawaii. The author explores the complexities of Cook's legacy, contrasting his reputation as a humane explorer with conflicts that led to his fatal

encounter with the native Hawaiians. He also provides details of the challenges and imperial ambitions of 18th-century exploration and the brutality of 18th-century seafaring, at the same time writing in a very readable way and with a sense of adventure. The group gave the book an overall rating of 4.4 out of five, one of our highest scores ever.

Our next book is a work of fiction—The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman. The Book Group meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 10:30 AM at the Concord Round Table Pizza on Treat Boulevard.

If you like to read and have good discussions about 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). The list of books to be read during the year is on the SIR website, along with the list of books from the prior year.

## BOWLING

The Summer league starts May 13. This league has three-bowler teams and will be done August 26. There are some bowlers availability. 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
May 12 -13	Sacramento	Only SIR Members
June 22 – 23	Dublin	Local City – come and look

Chair: Dan Weller, 925-935-5510, [dweller@astound.net](mailto:dweller@astound.net)  
Ass't Chair: Rob Norris, 925-788-6958, [robert.norris@natca.net](mailto:robert.norris@natca.net)

## CAR ENTHUSIASTS

Car Enthusiasts held their annual Poker run on Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> running between the rain drops. Somehow, we managed to get it completed between noon and 5 PM when the skies opened and dumped a boatload of rain.

This year's route used local parks and restaurants for checkpoint locations. The 10 cars and 26 members, spouses, and partners drove a route through Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek stopping at 8 different locations to answer an automotive themed question to obtain a playing card for their poker hand. Following the card draw, they were given a clue to find the next location. At the 7<sup>th</sup> stop, we were told where the last Checkpoint restaurant was located. They would answer the last question and draw their eighth card. They used the best 5 cards as their end of run hand.

Due to the potential bad weather, the usual "start of run" quiz was delivered at the last Check Point location. Eight questions depicting various hood ornaments, concept cars, an old steam powered popcorn wagon (that we viewed at a past trip to the gold country) and some tail lights from the 1950's had everyone guessing from the multiple-choice answers. The quiz award for the most correct answers was 20% of the poker pot. Greg Konsavage had 7 out of 8 correct for the win.

The poker hands were all over the place and Greg thought he had the winner for the remainder of the pot with a Full House. However, the checkpoint operators also had an opportunity to play poker even though they could not drive the route. A blind draw 8 card hand was provided for each of the four operators. Jim Nelson (one of our Br146 CE members) opened his envelope to find four 7's amongst his 8 cards and claimed the rest of the pot.

A big thank you goes to members Peter Shapiro, Ken Stehr, Jim Nelson, and me for braving the weather and to man the Checkpoint locations. The event doesn't run without us.

We concluded the event with a great dinner at the WC Buttercup restaurant. We didn't quite get out the door before it started to rain hard, but sprits were not dampened due to it. You might want to consider joining in the fun next year, Happy Motoring...

The next CE outing is a **Rally Drive on Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>**. It should be another wonderful afternoon drive through the back roads of the area with lunch following the drive. **Tom Hodgson** is the **coordinator**. Let him know if you plan to join us.

The next CE meeting will be **Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, at 1 PM**. We will meet 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 Chick or Tom as noted below.

Activity Chair: Chick Lowry - [Clowry2845@gmail.com](mailto:Clowry2845@gmail.com)  
Assistant Chair: Tom Hodgson - [tomehodgson1945@gmail.com](mailto:tomehodgson1945@gmail.com)

## CRIBBAGE

The Cribbage Activity meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. We play at Rocco's Pizzeria at 2909 Ygnacio Valley Rd in Walnut Creek. The social time and lunch will commence at 11:30 a.m., followed by play from 12:30 PM until 3:00 PM. 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 three 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 welcomed. In addition, if you are introducing potential new members to Sir, bring them as a guest to a game you enjoy!

### April 2026 RESULTS

Attendance for the first games of April was fourteen players giving us three tables of four plus a table of two. All games went smoothly which allowed us to finish well ahead of 330PM. As always winners move to the next table. Jerry Ward celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday with us!

The below individuals are recognized as winners for the first April session.

1 <sup>st</sup>	Don Atwater	211 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Jerry Ward	194 points
*	Bob Beitler	165 points
*	Dan Smith	165 points

\*Tied for third place, no reported high hand/crib (high hand/crib 20+)

Our second session of the month was Tuesday April 21<sup>st</sup>. The unusual length of time between our two cribbage sessions, 20 days, lead to a smaller turnout with only 12 players. However, that

led to very quick games, and we finished a half hour earlier than normal.

Listed below are the winners from the second session.

1 <sup>st</sup>	Greg Ryan	215 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Dennis Mierzwa	178 points
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Eric Moss	162 points

High hand/crib for the day went to Greg Ryan and Rod Spicer, each with a hand of 24

2026 High score, Steve Monksfield 251 points

2025 High Score, Don Atwater 327 points

### Next Games May 1st-same time same place!

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

Assistant Chairmen, Dan Smith: [dns.ins02@astound.net](mailto:dns.ins02@astound.net)

---

## PINOCHLE

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 11:30 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 with training as requested. We share this activity between Branch 146 and Branch 8. Contact Stan Johnson, chairman.

On March 25, we had a record 15 players and played three tables. At one table of five, Cleo Bolen of branch 145 won both games over Jerry Ward, Steve Monksfield, Stan Johnson, and Will Stratton (146). At another table of five, Alex Bordens (146) won both games over Terry Mason, Dennis Mierzwa, Butch Dellio, and Tom Amann (146). At the final table of five, Jim Barry (146) won one game while Pete McNeill (146) won the other over Jeff Morrow (146), Bob Weiss, and Roy Hodgkinson (146).

On April 7, we had 10 players, so played two 5-man tables. At one table, Butch Dellio won the first game and Stan Johnson won the second game over Dennis Mierzwa, Terry Mason, and Jerry Ward. At the other table, Jeff Morrow (146) won a game and Roy Hodgkinson (146) won another over Jim Barry (146), Will Stratton (146), and Alex Bordens (146).

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

---

## DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Digital Photography meets every second Friday at 10 a.m. at the Ygnacio Valley Library.

The next meeting will be on Friday, May 8, 2026, with topic of "Lights in Photography." If you are interested in joining our group, please contact Meng Horng, 309-287-5654, or send an email to [meng40@hotmail.com](mailto:meng40@hotmail.com).

---

## BARGAIN BITES

Bargain Bites will be at the Outback Steakhouse on Tuesday May 26, 2026. Ron and I hope to see you there.  
Ken Main & Ron Maciak

The Bargain Bites event at China Palace was a great success on March 16. A large group of 37 shared a fine family style dinner

which included soup, egg rolls, prawns, chicken, pork, beef, broccoli and rice. A great value meal topped off with fortune cookies. Looking forward to your participation at the next dinner at Outback Steakhouse.

Chair: Ron Maciak

---

## DINE IN #1

It was Spanish Night. Paella was the star. Good friends and conversation. Keeping the team, dessert was Mona Dominguez's Basque cake. A great night. Anyone want to start a Dine In? Will help get you started. Contact Ron Cassano.

In May we will be hosted by Stephen Deness. Always look forward to his prime rib roast.

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

---

## DINE OUT - SINGLE SIRs

Rich Knowles has selected Del Cielo Brewing Company 701 Escobar, Martinez for our Tuesday May 5<sup>th</sup> dinner. Rich says "it is a place where each person goes up to the counter and orders their food (and drink) and pays for it. Large place with several large tables. And I don't think it will be too busy at m.at 5 pm on May 5<sup>th</sup>, aka Cinco de Mayo. Let Rich know if ou will be joining us for dinner on Tuesday May 5. Host: Rich Knowles, 681-19191, [grichhhiitek@gmail.com](mailto:grichhhiitek@gmail.com)

Last month, we dined outside in good weather at Peony Gardens in Walnut Creek.

Chair: Glenn Gilman, 925-798-5155, [glennfam@sbcglobal.net](mailto:glennfam@sbcglobal.net)  
Asst Chair: Don Atwater, 925-673-1669, [datwater@pacbell.net](mailto:datwater@pacbell.net)

---

## FILM BUFFS

In April the group watched "Is This Thing On?", a comedy/drama about a man recently separated from his wife and wondering if divorce is coming who tries his hand at stand-up comedy to work through his feelings. The film stars Will Arnett, Laura Dern, and Bradley Cooper and was directed by Cooper. The attending members all liked the film, particularly the script, acting, and humor.

Chair: Ron Rizzo, [ronbrizzo@gmail.com](mailto:ronbrizzo@gmail.com)

---

## FISHING - AREA 16

SIR members and guests are welcome, and indeed encouraged, to participate in fishing trips as well as attend the monthly meetings. Contacts are Pedro Contreras, 925-837-4847; 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, May 28<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am. Come early.



Matt Richards, Dennis Lee, Carl Moyer, Gordon Linebaugh, and Bob Lively caught some quality trout at San Pablo Reservoir. The rainbow and lightning trout were between 2 and 6 pounds, and delicious. Geno Calhau, Bob Lively, Brion Beetz, Carl Moyer, Dennis Lee, and Nick Jabuka got out upon the ocean blue for

rockfish and ling cod. Tom Kostik and Dave Paulson landed some stripers in the delta. And many of us fished in the bay for stripers and halibut. Many stripers a few halibut. Doug Dukes and Brion Beetz harvested butts in the 20-pound class. And last and not least Carl Moyer and Matt Richards tried for salmon from Moss Landing in the early season. Six hours not a bite. The early salmon bite was not!!

Chair: Carl Moyer, [carlmarc@astound.net](mailto:carlmarc@astound.net)

---

## GOLF - 9 HOLE

The 9-hole Golf Group plays at Diablo Hills Golf Course on Weds. @ 9:00 AM. Following is a summary of recent play:

April 15th, 2026

Only 4 golfers teed off starting at 9:00 AM at Diablo Hills Golf Course on a nice morning for golf. The greens were aeriated earlier in the week so they were sanded and as such, two putt max rule was in effect. Robin Lamont shot the low round of the day with a score of "47". No one also won the event of the day (closest to the hole on the 4th hole) so the "pot" carries over to next week's event. The group had only 3 Pars and no birdies.

April 8th, 2026

9 golfers teed off starting at 9:00 AM at Diablo Hills Golf Course on an nice morning for golf. Pat Dodson shot the low round of the day with a nice score of "39". Pat also won the event of the day (closest to the hole on the 3rd hole) with a 10' 5" shot; Pat then went on to 2 putt for a par. The group had 16 Pars and no birdies. Way to go Pat !!

April 1st, 2026

The early morning rain kept a number of golfers in bed. Only 6 golfers teed off starting at 9:00 AM at Diablo Hills Golf Course on an overcast morning for golf. Rich Knowles shot the low round of the day with a nice score of "39"; second consecutive week with that score. Robin won the event of the day (closest to the hole on the 4th hole) with a 29' 8" shot; Robin then went on to 4 putt for a double bogey.....Robin !!! The group had 17 Pars and one Birdie by Mike Frey. Way to go Rich, Robin and Mike !!

March 25th, 2026

9 golfers teed off starting at 9:00 AM at Diablo Hills Golf Course on a very nice morning for golf. Rich Knowles shot the low round of the day with a nice score of "39"; just nudging out Mike Frey and Ray de Wit who both posted scores of "40". Ken Castleman won the event of the day (closest to the hole on the 3rd hole) with a 17' shot; nudging out Mike who had a 17" 10" shot. Ken then went on to 2 putt for a par. The group had 19 Pars and three Birdies; one each by Arte Chan, Mike Frey and Rich Knowles. Way to go Rich, Ken, Arte and Mike !!

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 9 Hole Golf link, click on the Signup link. Call or email Mike or Ray with any questions.

Chair: Mike Frey, [mike\\_frey44@comcast.net](mailto:mike_frey44@comcast.net), 925-699-1784  
Asst. Chair: Ray de Wit, [raydewit11@gmail.com](mailto:raydewit11@gmail.com), 925-948-5962

---

## GOLF - 18 HOLE

Pat Hoy took honors with 82 gross score and a 69 low net at the Diablo Creek during an April tournament. Rich Knowles also marked a net 69 at Franklin Canyon play. Golf is good.

Rain was not the only reason the Bosworth Tournament was moved from April 20 to April 27th. We wanted to avoid problems

that occur after last minute dropouts. When weather is about to change, it forces a revamping of all the foursome teams. When 'rain' is mentioned, we face five to twelve player's cancellations. Though Buddy's computer is capable of recalculating so many changes, the result often is confusing to players.. must sign new player, new times, etc.. best to push tournament off a week and we did.

Tuesday, June 16, 2026, our Branch has been challenged by The Discovery Bay Sir Branch. They want to have another round of two-man vs two-man contest using a match play format (same rules as last year.) The Elkhorn Golf Course was selected, which, is located in Stockton. This golf club is only an hour and eight minutes from Walnut Creek. A shotgun-start at 9:00 o'clock is when all will start on Tuesday June 16, 2026. There will be a special rate of \$50 each golfer including a cart. Treasurer Dave Green, 588 2nd Avenue, San Francisco, CA, 94118 will collect and pay our half of the bill on the day of the contest.

As of now there will be 20 players from each Branch for a total 40 players split into two-man teams.. If interested, join the group. The commitment sheet is located on our Hotline's golf sign-up page. Scroll down to the bottom part of the page and add your name...It will be fun.

Chair: David Platter

### **SIR State Golf 2026 Season Update**

Our 2026 SIR State Golf season is off to a fantastic start. We welcomed nearly 100 golfers in Napa, competing at Chardonnay (Scramble) and Eagle Vines (4-man, 2 best ball). With over \$3,500 in prizes being paid out, the energy and competition have been outstanding.

We have two more upcoming spring tournaments in the North Bay area: Fairfield (May 20–21) at Paradise Valley and Rancho Solano. This event was extremely popular last year, so be sure to get your entry in soon—the deadline is May 9. The format will again be 4-man / 2 best ball, with both Team and Individual prizes awarded. The final Spring tournament will take place at Blue Rock Springs in Vallejo on June 24–25, featuring both the East and West courses in the same 4-man, 2 best ball format.

For more information and entry forms, please visit the State SIR website ([www.sirgolf.org](http://www.sirgolf.org)). You'll also find the full second-half schedule posted there, including:

- Team Scramble at Hiddenbrooke
- Two-day Sacramento event in September at Lincoln Hills and Turkey Creek
- State Individual Championships at Teal Bend on Thursday, October 1
- The season finale: Monterey tournament at BlackHorse and Bayonet courses at Fort Ord on November 10–11

Don't miss these great opportunities to play excellent courses, enjoy camaraderie, and build lasting connections. We look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming events.

P.S. The State Golf Committee is looking for additional volunteers to help run these events. If you're interested, please contact Ben Gikis, SIR State Golf Chairman, at [gikisben@yahoo.com](mailto:gikisben@yahoo.com) or 408-802-0794.

---

## 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/>

**4/30/2026: Lafayette: Lafayette Reservoir.** WARNING!! THIS IS OUR MOST DIFFICULT WALK WITH MANY FAIRLY STEEP HILLS. PLEASE SKIP THIS WALK IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS DOING OUR FLAT WALKS. Entrance on Mt. Diablo Blvd., about 1 mile west of Happy Valley Rd. Meet at the EAST (far left) end of metered parking lot. Bring 8 quarters or use a VISA or Master Card. Cafe: Peet's Coffee. Leader: Phil Trapp. Difficulty: H

**5/7/2026: Concord: C.C.C. Regional Trail, Via Montanas.** Take Treat Blvd east. Go 3/4 mile past Oak Grove and turn left on San Miguel. Turn right on Via Montanas. Turn left into the Parking Lot just past the bridge over the canal. Cafe: Peet's Coffee. Leader: Rich Burke. Difficulty: E

**5/14/2026: Walnut Creek: C.C. Canal Heather Farm.** Meet at the Heather Farm parking lot at the far North end of San Carlos Dr. Cafe: Sweet Affair Bakery. Leader: Rob Laaback. Difficulty: E

**5/21/2026: Concord: Newhall Community Park.** Meet at parking lot on Turtle Creek Rd. off Ayers Rd. Some elevation changes to the Viet Nam Memorial. Cafe: Whole Foods - Oak Grove / Ygnacio Valley Road. Leader: Ron Woods. Difficulty: M

**5/28/2026: Martinez: Martinez Regional Shoreline.** On I-680 N, take Exit 56, the last offramp to Martinez. Turn left on Marina Vista. Turn right on Ferry St. And cross the RR tracks. Meet at the first parking lot on the left. Cafe: Starbucks Martinez. Leader: Steve Hilberg. Difficulty: E

**6/4/2026: 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: Dan Crowley. Difficulty: M

Chair: Dan Weller, 925-939-5510, [dweller@astound.net](mailto:dweller@astound.net)  
Ass't Chair: Phil Trapp, 925-963-1819, [prtrapp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:prtrapp@sbcglobal.net)  
Ass't Chair: Jim Sowell, 925-457-7746, [sowell4jim@aol.com](mailto:sowell4jim@aol.com)

---

## HIKERS

We have two hikes lined up for the month of May. The easy hike is in a favorite Tilden Park location while the hard hike is at a venue not visited by our group for several years, Huckleberry Regional Preserve. Detailed information for interested hikers will appear by the end of April on the Hiker's webpage of the Branch 8 website at <https://www.sirbr8.com/hikers/>.

**May 12, 2026, Easy Hike - Tilden Regional Park, Wildcat Gorge Trail – 10:00 a.m.**

**Hike Description:** This is a 3-mile out and back hike with 300 feet of elevation gain. The hike starts at 10:00 am at the Island picnic area near the Brazil Building. We go briefly down a small hill past the Island picnic tables to begin at the Selby trail. At the Lake Anza spillway, we cut over to the Wildcat Gorge trail, which is mostly wooded and cool. We head down to the Lone Oak area of Tilden Nature Area, stop for a break before turning around and heading back to Lake Anza. There is one short steeper spot at the lake spillway that may require poles for some easy hikers. We end back at the Island picnic area.

**Bring:** Hiking boots, trekking poles, water

**Directions to trailhead:** Take Highway 24 past Orinda exiting at Fish Ranch Road just before the Caldecott tunnels. Go up Fish

Ranch and turn right onto Grizzly Peak Boulevard. In 1.4 miles, just past the Steam Trains complex, turn right onto South Park Drive. In another 1.4 miles angle left at the Botanic Gardens. In ¼ miles, the trailhead is at the Island picnic area just past the Brazil building. There is plenty of parking at Island Picnic area along with restrooms.

**Carpool:** Self-arrange.

**Optional Lunch:** Europa Hofbrau, 62 Moraga Way, in downtown Orinda.

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

**May 26, 2026, Hard Hike – Sibley, Eastport and Huckleberry Regional Reserve – 10:00 a.m. start.**

**Hike Description – 4.3 miles and 900 feet elevation gain,** Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve has been extended by the addition of Eastport Regional Preserve. The East Bay Regional Park District completed its largest-ever creek restoration project in early 2024, bringing over half a mile of once-buried streams back to life. The creeks run through acres long fought for and added to Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve. We will walk along the Alder Creek Nature Trail which will provide a fine view of the restoration work. Here is a little more explanation of the project:

[The McCosker Property Is A Landscape Transformed - Bay Nature](#)

The walk across the top (Lava Rock Trail) from "old Sibley" provides great views over Moraga and is pretty open but eventually downhill. The attached map does not show the connection between Sibley Volcanic and the extension into Eastport but it does exist! Huckleberry is heavily wooded (as is the Pacific Pea trail). Here is our route:

<https://www.alltrails.com/explore/custom-routes/custom-route-606d6e8?u=i&sh=ya1sgh>

**Directions to Trailhead –** From Walnut Creek, take Highway 24 west to Fish Ranch Road (last exit before the tunnel). Turn right onto Fish Ranch Road and head uphill. At the 4-way stop turn left onto Grizzly Peak Road. Follow Grizzly Peak Road to the junction with Skyline Boulevard and turn left. The entrance to Sibley Volcanic Preserve will be on your left. We will meet in front of the restroom building.

Restrooms can be found at the Sibley parking lot and on our route at the end of the Alder Creek Nature Trail in Eastport as well as at the Huckleberry trail head.

**What to Bring –** Water, appropriate footwear, trekking poles, jacket/rainwear – the section on Pacific Crest Trail and through Huckleberry is heavily shaded and can be damp.

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

**Hike Leader:** Mike Spionk, [mikespink@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mikespink@sbcglobal.net), 317-459 9878.

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

---

## INTERNET GAMES

Currently, we have two active games; Cribbage and Mexican Train. We welcome other SIR member to join us. We are also interested in offering other internet games. Please let chairmen Don and/or Danny know of your interest.

Mexican Train is played on the first and third Fridays. Our April matches were exciting, with Don Atwater and Stan Johnson being the winners. Stan started the most recent game being in front for the first few rounds, then fell to last place for several rounds before returning to first place in the last round. These are challenging games we have. New members are encouraged to join us.

Cribbage is played tournament style, with each player playing each other in two-man games. Dan Weller won his last game to win the tournament. Greg Ryan was one game behind Dan and Don Atwater, just one game behind Greg. Close matches were the norm again this month.

Highest score for one hand this year is 24. Stan Johnson had two 24-point hands in the same game. Might they have been consecutive? Dealer, shuffle those cards!

Chairman Don Atwater, 925-673-1669, [datwater@pacbell.net](mailto:datwater@pacbell.net)  
Asst. Chair: Dan Rinaldi, 925-825-0519, [danrinaldi944@gmail.com](mailto:danrinaldi944@gmail.com)

---

## LOCAL CLASSICAL MUSIC

May brings us the only opera by Tchaikovsky that is frequently performed, Eugene Onegin. It is a fine opera in the Russian style, emphasizing heartfelt melodies, based on a story by the Russian author Alexander Pushkin. It opens in New York on April 20, after which we should have some newspaper reviews. The Saturday matinee arrives here in our local Century theaters at on May 2, with follow-up taped performances on Wednesday, May 6.

The Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra, a 55-member local group, is presenting a spring concert of compositions by Faure and Bizet at two venues: Sunday, April 26, at the California Theater in Pittsburg, and on Sunday, May 3 at 4:00 p.m., at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Orinda. Tickets are available online on their website: [contracostachamberorchestra.org](http://contracostachamberorchestra.org). Seniors are a bargain at \$20.

For a choral treat, you can listen to the spring concert of the 100-voice Blackhawk Chorus ([BlackhawkChorus.com/events](http://BlackhawkChorus.com/events)) on May 2 at 7:00pm at Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church or on May 3 at the California High School Performing Arts Center in San Ramon. Tickets \$40.

On a less serious note, we can listen to the San Ramon Valley Chorale ([svrchorale@gmail.com](mailto:svrchorale@gmail.com)) spring concert "Songs of Love and Loss" on May 2 and May 3 at 4:00pm in the San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church in Alamo.

Chair: David Bushnell, [dhushn@swbell.net](mailto:dhushn@swbell.net)

---

## MIXER

A great group of 20 showed up for our March event. It was great to see some new faces, including Pat Dotson and his wife Linda for the first time. I'm looking forward to bigger crowds as the year progresses. Please remember that everyone, including wives or significant others, is welcome and we hope to see some new faces and smiles at the Mixers.

Our May event is on Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, at Jack's in Pleasant Hill.

Our June Mixer will be on Tuesday, June 30<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m.

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.

---

## MODEL TRAINS

This is a heads up of something coming. Not yet final, but would you be interested in a session or two that teach some of the

basics of model railroading? An example of an important basic is how do you create scenery. Looks like we will be able to entice someone who knows how to come and give us some basics. About this and maybe other basic things one needs to get started. If interested let me know and when we have a time and place I will let you know.

Chair: Rich Knowles

---

## PODCASTS

The podcast activity is jumping into different and interesting areas. Join us to make sure you don't miss out!

During our last meeting we discussed podcasts by our Branch 8 member Eric Moss about "Confessions of an Unconscious Capitalist". Not clear on what that means – sorry but you missed that podcast. You can still listen to it, just let me know and I can provide a link.

Next we will be discussing "Dark Matter". What is it, or maybe better to say why is it. We have two podcasts to listen to and then we will discuss at our next meeting.

Chair: Rich Knowles

---

## SIRS AT THE GAMES

It is Springtime! Time for Giants baseball in San Francisco and our Branch 8 outing to see the Giants.

Our SIR group has tickets for the **SF Giants versus the Milwaukee Brewers on Wednesday afternoon, July 29, at 12:45 p.m.** Last year, the Brewers had the best regular season record in the MLB.

In July, we have great seats along the third base side in Section 222, very close to home plate. The ticket price is \$75 per person. Last year, we had a mighty group of 20, so let's top that number in 2026.

Please send an email to Steve Schramm, [sschramm01@gmail.com](mailto:sschramm01@gmail.com), to get on the list for the SF Giants game this Summer. As always, both members and their guests are welcome to join us at the game.

---

## WINE FINDERS 1



Our last meeting was held on April 9th at the lovely poolside venue of David Glazer and Helen Choi. David had his pizza oven fired up and the shared appetizers were tasty and plentiful. A wonderful apple pie a la mode topped off the non-liquid portion of the evening.

The varietal selected to be evaluated by the discerning palates of our devoted members was Malbec. This ruby-red, low-tannin and fragrant wine is very pleasant to drink and pairs well with hearty dishes. Of the selections offered by our members, only one was California grown. The rest of the entrees were all Argentinian. In keeping with our charter, the wines should cost no more than \$20.00. In this case, however, the California wine was a more expensive ringer from a Livermore Valley winery and available from their wine club. Following are the rankings of the top three Malbec wine according to our tasters.

1. 2024 Malbec, Alomos, Argentina. \$11.95 Safeway
2. 2018 Malbec Reserve, Concannon, Livermore. \$30.00 Wine Club
3. 2023 Malbec, Silverland, Argentina. \$5.99 Grocery Outlet

Our next gathering is scheduled to be held on June 11, 2026.

Chair: Ken Stehr, 925-899-8531

---

## WINE FINDERS 2

We had a Riesling wine tasting hosted at Ron Maciak's. As usual the food was great and the conversation was enthusiastic. The competition was very close. The winner was the 2023 Ste Michelle selected by Ron Cassano. Close second, 2023 Knaperstein by Manuel Dominguez. Third place was a tie with 2023 Dr. Heidermanns (Ron Maciak) and 2024 Emma Reichert (Donna Benson). The Rieslings were all very drinkable. Hopefully we can hold the next tasting at the Meiers beautiful garden venue in June.

Ron Cassano, Head Wino

---

## WINE FINDERS 3

At 2PM on Thursday, April 16 seven members of Wine finders III and their wives convened on Kathy and Larry McEwen's patio to sample Old Vine Zins. The hosts provided a palate cleanser of Fly By Sauvignon Blanc, available for \$12 at Bev Mo. The clear Zin winner was Jim Sowell's '23 Cline, available at Trader Joe's for \$10. Second place went to Ron & Amy Rizzo's '21 Windstorm, available for \$7 at Grocery Outlet. A selection of goodies featured Jim Sowell's Caprese Salad, Amy Rizzo's special Chinese noodles, and Mardi Lockwara's signature meatballs. Dessert consisted of cheesecake garnished with strawberries and hot fudge. Although the turnout was small, spirited conversations reigned, and things didn't break up until the wind came up around 7 PM.

Chair: Larry McEwen, 925-939-3216, [elmwoodeux@comcast.net](mailto:elmwoodeux@comcast.net)

---

## WOODPECKERS

The WOODPECKERS did not meet in April.

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

---

## 2026 Hotline Editors

Chris Wehling	Hotline Coordinator/Editor
David Glazer	Editor
Steve Moore	Editor

**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.**

---

You know why AI will not replace the TSA agents at airports? It is because people want the human touch.... Of the agents back of hand on our crotch.