



Big Sir's Notes

Walt Busenius

We started off 2016 on a high note with over 210 Members and guests attending January's luncheon at the Concord Hilton Hotel. This was the first of four consecutive luncheons to be held at the Concord Hilton through April 2016. At the luncheon, two new members joined our branch: **Howard Charlop** sponsored by **Harvey Oxman** and **David Hicks** sponsored by **Jerry Kaplan**. In addition, I am pleased to report that six new guests attended the luncheon.

There were five smiling faces donning colorful hats who greeted you as you entered January's luncheon at the Hilton Hotel. The photo of these Sirs looks like they were having fun greeting fellow Sirs. We look forward to seeing what kind of ideas and schemes this year's Greeters Committee, chaired by **Dick DeVoe et al**, create for us during the year. Along these same lines, if you see a Sir with a yellowish colored name tag; please do your best to welcome him to our branch because that Sir is a recent member.

Last month, I stated in this column that we are adaptable, and we immediately were given the chance to prove it. Due to a scheduling conflict at the Hilton, February's luncheon date was changed to February 22nd. Even though we announced the change in an e-mail blast and at January's meeting, it is being mentioned here one more time. We hope this date change will not affect your ability to attend February's luncheon.

We are currently without a travel chairman. If you are interested in travel and either would consider being the committee chair or becoming a member of the travel committee, please contact me to find out what would be involved.

Finally, if you know someone who might be interested in joining our branch, don't let our temporary move to the Hilton deter you. Please feel free to bring your guest to any of the luncheons at the Hilton this year. Don't forget that sponsors of guests who become new members are entered into a semi-annual drawing for a

Luncheon – Monday, February 22nd
At the Concord Hilton Hotel

Guest Speaker: **Joe Canciamilla**,
Contra Costa County Clerk-
Recorder and Registrar of Voters.

Gathering time – 11:00 am
Starting time – 11:45 am

Bringing a guest or can't attend?
Email: nolunchbranch146@gmail.com
Telephone message: (925) 979-5146
By noon Monday, February 15th



Photo by Bill Schultz

January's Greeters L-R: **Charlie Abrams, Larry Gray, Steve Ybarra, Malcolm Harrison, and George Mon** stand poised to greet fellow Sirs arriving at the Hilton Hotel

free lunch. There is an excellent incentive to bring a guest.

As you know, until we return to the Boundary Oak Clubhouse in May 2016 for the Ladies Day Luncheon, our meeting dates at the Concord Hilton are:
Monday, February 22th, Monday, March 21th
Monday, April 18th



Little Sir's Corner

Alan Elnick

I hope you all enjoyed our January speaker Commissioner Greg Lim from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. That service performs with little fanfare and has historically helped to provide a great amount of economic stability, often

in disruptive times.

Remember that our February meeting is now scheduled for Monday, February 22nd, 2016, also at the Concord Hilton. We needed to make a slight adjustment in accordance to our contract with the Hilton to accommodate them in the event of event conflicts. They promise us it should not happen again in the balance of our time there.

This year we are already in the midst of general election fever where we will be electing a new president and an abundance of offices at all levels of government. In our own county there will likely be a host of county, city, special district, school board, House of Representatives, U. S. Senate races, and propositions that will provide us a daunting ballot. Managing this, among a host of other responsibilities is our county clerk recorder/ registrar of voters, Joseph Canciamilla ("hard workin' Joe"). He has served us on the county Board of Supervisors and in the State Legislature. Maybe you know this, but at one time, Joe was the youngest ever elected official in the United States. He is an entertaining and informative speaker, so I hope you will all get to enjoy his talk on the role of the Clerk Recorder and what is going on with elections.

I look forward to seeing you all there, another month closer to the Equinox, and balmy weather.

Photo by Richard Hockenbrock



Recent new member, **Henry Thatcher** who joined in October 2015, was the December birthday boy prize winner



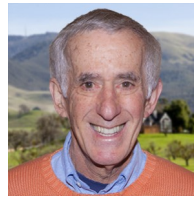
Membership Ben Gleason

Branch 146 Statistics

After publication of the December SIR Call we lost four more members in 2015 leaving us with a total of 279 active members at year-end. So far this year we have lost two more active members and inducted two new members leaving us with the same total of 279 active members. In addition, we have lost three inactive members including **Robert Wheaton**, a Senior Sir who passed away in December.

Status Changes

New Member Additions in February 2016



Howard Charlop



David Hicks

Active Members Resigned: **Marty Brady, Tom Flosi, Howie King, Mike Farrar, David Morris, and Pete Boss** who is transferring to Branch 8.

Active Member Deceased: **Harry Tutton**

Inactive Members Resigned: **Frank McNamee and Robert Van Luchene**

Inactive Member Deceased: **Robert Wheaton**

Photo by Richard Hockenbrock



January 2016 birthday boy winner was Past Big Sir & Charter Member (**Kap**) **Kaprielian** who became a SIR member in 1988



Couples Dining Out

Bruce Borgman

The Couples Dining Out group got off to a rousing start in 2016 on January 18th with our largest attendance yet – 71 - and with a wonderful dinner. We had selected Wence’s Restaurant in Pleasant Hill –

a family owned place, which prides itself on fresh California cuisine, artfully presented. The restaurant was recently recognized as one of the best overall restaurants in the area in Community Focus magazine. The menu did not disappoint – we started with a generous salad, yummy enchilada chicken soup, and then the entrees! We had a choice of chicken artichoke, king salmon filet, a rib eye steak with roasted garlic, or a vegetarian pasta dish. Then, dessert and coffee – all for just \$42.

Many of our diners said it was one of our best Couples Dining Out event – we had a wonderful time chatting, and enjoying the meal. It will be hard to top this one in March. We have not decided on a restaurant yet – but it will likely be an ethnic one – maybe Japanese, or Thai. Because of conflicts on the usual Monday evening – we will likely have the dinner on Tuesday, March 15th – beware the Ides of March! We will let you know in plenty of time. We always encourage our new members to join us for an evening where you and your spouse can get to know others in the branch.



Hilton Hotel—Lunch Menu

22 February 2016

Entrees

Lemon Grilled Chicken

Or

Pan Seared Salmon.



Photo by Richard Hockenbrock

SIR members and guest gather at Wence’s Restaurant culminating in the largest attendance yet at a Couples Dining Out Event



Photo by Richard Hockenbrock

Barbara Stedman, Barbara Thatcher, and Renie Pope engage in conversation before the Couples Dining Out Event

SIR Call Newsletter Group

Editor	Richard Hockenbrock
Assistant Editor	Jeff Baily
Proofreaders	Jeff Baily, Cal Tucker
Internet Posting	Jonathan Korfhage, & Pat Lucia
	Ron Plachy



Photo by Carl Tilchen

Acoustic Musicians Carl Tilchen

You are invited to the next meeting of The Acoustic Musicians Group (*please note the new address & directions*) in February at a date to TBD. The date will be sent to you in a separate communications. The new address is 654 Francisco Ct, Walnut Creek, CA. Heading North follow I-680 N to Treat Blvd in Walnut Creek. Take the Treat Blvd. exit #48 from I-680 N and turn right heading east to Bancroft Rd, turn right onto Bancroft Rd, go 0.4 miles and turn right on to Lacarso Circle, go 180 feet then turn right again onto La Corso Drive, go 0.2 miles and make a left onto Via Appia, go 430 feet and turn left onto Francisco Ct. Park at end of Francisco Ct. by the pool or on Via Appia. Don't park on Francisco. Two cars can park in driveway. 654 Francisco is the 2nd house from corner on left. If you are lost call (925) 864-2641.

At the meeting we will provide details of each song to make it easy to enjoy our music so bring paper and a pen. Our Acoustic Musicians Group welcomes all guitar, banjo, mandolin, bass etc. The objective is to enjoy our music. All levels of musical skill are welcome. Spouses & singers are also encouraged. Please bring your instrument and any songs you enjoy.

I am a singer / songwriter with an active musical career. I have facilitated many musical groups, & I will be glad to lead this group. **Alan Elnick** & I welcome your suggestions to make our group comfortable and fun for all.

SIR Happenings Newsletter

SIR Happenings is the statewide SIR newsletter. Click on the link in the SIR 146 webpage to read the current issue. You may enjoy reading about the activities of other branches.



Sunshine

John Pearl

Let us keep the following Sirs in our thoughts and prayers during February. We look forward to their continued healing and return to good health.

Ken Richter Roy Luoma

I am sorry to report the death of long-time **Sir Harry Tutton** on December 31st. Please include his family in your thoughts and prayers. Please try to contact a sick Sir to offer support and encouragement during his illness. A friendly call is usually welcome. Cards and letters are always appreciated. Also, please take a minute to sign the get-well cards that are on the sign-in tables at our monthly meetings.

If you are aware of an ill Sir, please let me know by e-mail or phone so that our SIR membership can be advised.

John Pearl, Sunshine Chair
mcpearl@astound.net
925-934-6920



Photo by Richard Hockenbrock

Couples Dining Out participants (L-R): **Julia Holland, Bill & Patti Klein, and Colin Holland** arriving at Wence's Restaurant

The roundest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.



Luncheon Chairman

Max Hinkle

January Attendance:

By my count there were 213 meals served at our January luncheon, two less than our guaranteed number. There were 205 active members in attendance including the two new members inducted at this luncheon. That number equals 73.5% of our membership, a bit above our average monthly attendance figure. Member attendance at our luncheons held at the Hilton last year averaged only 67.7%. There were 18 unexcused absentees (“no shows”), representing 6.6% of our membership. This was substantially better than the 10% figure historically used in calculating our meal guarantee but in line with what we have experienced over the last half dozen luncheons. We requested a menu split of 55% fish and 45 per cent chicken. It appears, however, that a 50-50 split would have been more in accord with the diners preferences.

Bad Fish Entree: All members of whom I have made inquiry have told me that the fish entree served at the January luncheon was bad. There were some complaints about the service as well. I was caught by surprise by this as the response was almost universally favorable with respect to the luncheons held at the Concord Hilton last year. Rest assured that there will be discussions about these issues with the appropriate members of the Concord Hilton staff before the next luncheon date.

February Luncheon: Please note on your calendars that our next regular monthly meeting will be held on MONDAY FEBRUARY 22, 2016 at the CONCORD HILTON in Concord. The price of the luncheon is \$26. There will be the usual no-host bar. The assembly will be called to order at 11:45 am. Please allow enough time to check in and make payment. The preferred form of payment is a check made payable to “SIR 146” delivered when you check in on luncheon day. REMEMBER, WE ASSUME YOU ARE COMING AND YOU WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE LUNCH COUNT SUBMITTED TO THE HILTON UNLESS YOU TIMELY NOTIFY US THAT YOU ARE NOT.

New Opt Out Deadline for February Luncheon: Please remember that your deadline to opt out of the February luncheon is NOON ON MONDAY FEBRUARY 15th. We will e-blast a reminder of this earlier deadline a day or two in advance of it. Nevertheless, you would do well to mark it on your calendar right now. If you

are unable to attend, please send an e-mail message to “nolunchbranch146@gmail.com” before that deadline (“no show deadline”). Please provide your badge number in that message. If you do not have convenient access to a computer please call **(925) 979-5146** before the no show deadline and follow the prompts given there. A non attending member who without good cause fails to meet this deadline is required by our rules to reimburse the Branch for the liability we will incur for his meal, in this case \$26. We appreciate the “Advance Payers” who timely notify us that they cannot attend a luncheon. This courtesy results in an economic benefit to our Branch. Congratulations Advance Payers on your 100% compliance with this request with respect to the January luncheon!

Confirmation of No Show Notices: My intention is to confirm the receipt of each “no show” notice via the same mode in which it was received. If you have not received such confirmation within a day or two after communicating your notice please call me at 925.408.6004. This is important because there have been times when emails, for a variety of reasons, were not displayed or not timely displayed in the “no lunch” Inbox.

Bringing a Guest or a Visitor: If you intend to bring a Guest or a Visitor please so advise via an e-mail to “nolunchbranch146@gmail.com” on or before the no show deadline. If you do not have convenient access to a computer please call the phone number stated above and follow the prompts given there. Please remember to spell the full name of your guest or visitor during that call. If your guest decides to come after the deadline don't let that stop you. So advise in the same way. We will always accommodate a guest, timely advised or not.

Special Requests: If your guest desires a vegetarian meal or a special diet or if, for medical reasons, he cannot eat lunch please so advise before the no show deadline in the manner as described above.

New Members, Guests and Sponsors: There will be a luncheon table or tables with places reserved for new members and their sponsors as well as for guests and their sponsors. New members along with their sponsors will be asked to join our Membership Chair immediately following the luncheon for a brief orientation session in a room to be announced at the luncheon.



SongSirs

Bruce Borgman

The SongSirs have continued to practice a repertoire of "City songs" that include 'New York, New York'; 'Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania', 'My Kind of Town (Chicago)', 'Mention my Name in Sheboygan', 'Sioux City Sue' and, of course 'San Francisco'. We have been asked to perform for the VIP group at Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church on May 4 – and will likely add a few songs to commemorate Mother's Day, which is near that date.

We are very pleased that **Steve Dinning** is now accompanying our practices and performances, and as **Steve** is hitting his stride, we are considering evolving our repertoire to include more popular songs from the 60's and 70's – and encourage any of you who like to sing to attend one of our rehearsals and join us as we look around for new songs to add to our repertoire. We practice every first and third Wednesday at Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church at 1:30pm.

The SongSirs are particularly sorrowful with the passing of **Harry Tutton**, since **Harry** was one of the charter members of our singing group, and one of its most enthusiastic supporters. For years **Harry** would write a humorous and eloquent narration to accompany our songs at the various places we sang – we will sorely miss his contribution and friendship.



SIR 146 Hiking

Rich Ahlf

On February 19th we will be hiking Round Valley Regional Preserve. This hike will be an easy 5 mile out and back along the Marsh Creek which should be running real good. There is a small amount of hills which should be no problem. I like to do this hike this time of the year because in the summer it's too hot. We will be having our lunch at the halfway point. Notice the date change as I will be out of town during the second Friday.

Directions: Round Valley is about 12 miles past Clayton on Marsh Creek road (past Morgan Territory Rd.). Anybody wishing to carpool can meet at the Clayton Library parking lot at 9:30am. Meet at the Round Valley parking lot at 10:00am.

Rain Cancels

Spouses always welcome
Friday February 19, 2016
Hike starts at 10:00am
Rich Ahlf
Cell 925-550-4967

On February 26th we will be hiking Round Valley Regional Preserve. This hike is a moderate three-creek, 5 mile tour through rolling hills of oak woods and grassland. There will be about an 800 ft. elevation gain and on a scale from 1 to 10, I would say it's a 7 or 8 (my Sir rating).

Round Valley is protected habitat for the San Joaquin kit fox, and golden-eagle sightings are frequent. The wildlife-viewing is exceptional throughout this hike. I like to do this hike this time of the year because in the summer it's too hot and Marsh Creek will have plenty of water in it. We will be having our lunch at the highest point about half way through our hike, which will include a beautiful view toward the Delta and beyond. Directions are above.

Rain Cancels

Spouses always welcome
Friday Feb 26, 2016
Hike Starts at 10:00am
Rich Ahlf
Cell 925-550-4967



Photo by Bill Schultz

Steve Dinning with **Jim Bogue** looking on, begins playing as the SongSirs sing at the January 22nd SIR luncheon



Fishing Report

Paul Dubow

Most of us no doubt have welcomed the rain that has arrived this winter. But rain is often accompanied by wind and wind impairs fishing. As a consequence, this will be the shortest report that

I have written since I became branch fishing coordinator.

We only managed three fishing trips since the last report and the participants were skunked on two of them. The only successful anglers were **Gordon Linebaugh** and **Carl Moyer**, who picked up some nice trout at Shadow Cliffs Reservoir. **Carl** was unsuccessful on a solo trip to Shadow Cliffs and **Carl** and **Terry Miller** had a similar result fishing for sturgeon in the Delta.

However, we are undeterred. We live in a fisherman's paradise and we have lots of trips planned for the local lakes, the Delta, and the ocean plus out of the area trips to Lake Almanor and Lake Davis for rainbow trout, Pyramid Lake for cutthroat trout, the American River for shad, and the Sacramento River for salmon.

Our next meeting is at 8:30 am on February 25 at the Legend Sports Bar and Grill at the Diablo Creek Golf Course, 4050 Port Chicago Highway, Concord. Come early and join us for breakfast at 7:30 am. Those of you who are not members of the fishing group are welcome to join us, whether you have fishing experience or not, and you can sign up for some of the outings at the meeting. I am commencing my two-year term as Big Fish and, for further information, you can contact me at 415-495-6308.

A very elderly gentleman, (mid nineties) very well dressed, hair well groomed, great looking suit, flower in his lapel smelling slightly of a good after shave, presenting a well looked-after image, walks into an upscale cocktail lounge. Seated at the bar is an elderly looking lady, in her mid-eighties.

The gentleman walks over, sits alongside of her, orders a drink, takes a sip, turns to her and says, "So tell me, do I come here often?"



Book Group

Chuck Campbell

The Book Group did not meet in January. Our next meeting is Monday February 22nd at the Greenery Restaurant. We are reading "Thomas Jefferson and the Tripoli Pirates".



Photography Group

Richard Hockenbrock

We have an exciting meeting planned for February 26th at 9 am. **Bruce Borgman** is lined up to show his African pictures that he took on his recent safari. In addition to his pictures, we will discuss his choice of camera which he purchased specifically

for this trip, the Canon SX60 DSLR. Come see why this camera was a good choice.

Next up will be **Roy Hodgkinson** who recently purchased a state of the art mirrorless Sony A6000. He has been taking lots of pictures which he will show us as well as talk about the camera's features.

Have you been thinking about converting your old 8mm movies that you took back in the 50s or 60s? Or are you like me who has boxes of 35mm slides that are gathering dust? If you answered yes to either of these questions, come see the results **Jerry Kaplan** and I have achieved getting our old film and slides converted at Costco into modern-day DVDs. We have both been pleasantly surprised in the work of Costco's YES Video processing. We'll both be giving short demonstrations of the results and explain the culling process of going through perhaps a thousand slides to find the ones you want to keep.

Next Meeting

Where : Thurman G. Casey Ygnacio Valley Library
2661 Oak Grove Road
WalnutCreek,CA94598

When: February 26th, 9 am



Mexican Train Dominoes Group 1

Jerry Kaplan

The first game night of the new year was hosted by Sir **Jim Stedman** and his wife **Barbara** at their welcoming Walnut Creek home on a rainy Friday, January 15th. All the regular players were present, filling all three tables of six players each. The evening's top prize went to **Carmen Schiavone**, wife of Sir **Rob Melrose**, who averaged just under 12 points in all the games she played. Second and third place went to Sir **Richard Hockenbrock** and **Sue Oranje**, wife of Sir **Corrie**, who averaged 20.0 and 21.4, respectively, quite a distance above the average score that **Carmen** achieved.

Even though everyone in the original group of 18 people played in January, we are always looking for a few more substitutes to play on the Friday night following the SIR luncheon. Single Sirs are most welcome. Typically, during the year, there is room for another two to four people to join the fun. The game is easy to learn. Call **Jerry** at 930-7076 or send an email if interested.



Mexican Train Dominoes Group 4 (El Quattro)

Jim Pope

On Friday night January 15th we had El Quattro Mexican Train Domino group meet at the home of **Renie** and **Jim Pope**. We had 6 couples in attendance, **Jonathan & Barbara Korfhage**, **Dick & Leslie Firth**, **Ron Lewis & Fran Matthews**, **Bill Weinberg & Yvonne**, **Barbara & Henry Thatcher**, and **Renie & Jim Pope**. The night was dominated by the women players as **Yvonne** and **Renie** won at their tables. The refreshments were again provided by several of the women; they included home made cookies, lemon cake, etc.

Our next El Quattro Mexican Train Dominos get together will be on February 26th to accommodate member conflicts. The 4th Friday rather than the regular 3rd Friday. Viva La Dominos



Mexican Train Dominoes Group 2 (DOS)

Dick Woodman

2016 started in great style with our first game night at **Phyllis** and **Jim Meehan's**. They were well prepared with a great setup and many goodies for all to enjoy.

After distributing the winnings from our last game of 2015 and the July-November 2015 pot we launched into our game for the evening. By the time we were finished we were amazed at the speed of one table as they finished ten games in our regular playing time. The other two tables completed eight games which is more usual. **Phyllis Meehan** cleaned house by winning first place, **Chuck Denney** won second place and **Anne Plachy** won third place. Congratulations to all three winners!

Our February game night will be at **Bernice** and **Bill Cammerer's** home on the 26th. The results of that game will miss being posted in the March SIR Call and will be reported in the April newsletter.



Mexican Train Dominoes New Group 5 (Cinco)

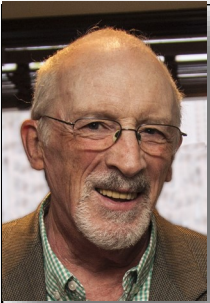
Jim Burk

The inaugural meeting of MTD Cinco occurred on January 21st when **Joan** and **Dave Pierce** hosted four courageous congenial couples.

A learning experience, it was, but Yoda wasn't here to help. So it was sink or swim, and we were all coaches and mentors during the play. We agreed not to play for fame or money, at least the first night, but one person who had never played before averaged only 10 pts/game and several were around 20 pts or less. Spirits were still high at the end. This just illustrates what nice people belong to SIR 146. The next chance to hone skills will be February 18th at the **Burks**.

(Written by Dave Pierce)

**Energizer Bunny arrested,
charged with battery**



Mexican Train Dominoes

Group 3 (TRES)

Jeff Baily

2015

Wow! 18 people showed up for Mexican Train Dominoes on New Years Eve at **Jeff & Alicia Baily's** home for the MTD Tres's final game of the year. Singer Kenny Rogers sang "You've got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em, know when to walk away, know when to run." I think he should have added "If a player, asks "how do you play this game?", you'd better walk away or run".

Newbie, **Sally Shafer** knitted her way through the evening as she created a sweater for some lucky grandchild maybe! And in the meantime through 6 sets, she won 3, with a running total of 2 points and closed with a total of 49 points to finish in first place with a games average of 8.5 just ahead of **Dick Richmond** with 11.3 points and **Charlie Abrams** with 13.6.

At the mid time break at precisely midnight New York time we all hooted and hollered and wished each other a Happy New Year and somewhere out of that din emerged the dulcet tones of Auld Lang Syne led by our SongSir **Lynn Shafer**.

Through 2015, we played 450 sets of MTD in five months and everyone is excited to do it again through 2016. A big Thank You to **Jeff** and **Alicia** who surprised us with a 9:00 o'clock New Years celebration of champagne, party hats and horns.

Written by Steve Siljestrom

Photo by Steve Siljestrom



The Mexican train dominoes group number three celebrating the arrival of 2016 at midnight New York time at **Jeff and Alicia Baily's** home.

2016

On January 22nd, 15 of us were welcomed at the home of **Dick and Judy Richmond** on a chilly and rainy Friday night. The first game results indicated that **Mike Varner, Lynn Shafer** and **Linda Brown** might be headed for the winners' circle, each going out at their tables. **Linda** kept a blistering pace by going out 5 times out of 7 games to take first grand prize for the evening with an average points-in-hand of 10.6. **Lynn Shafer** came in a close second with a 14.6 edging out **Judy Richmond** who took an easy 3rd place with 3 outs and a 15.4 point average.

Thanks to hosts **Judy** and **Dick** who provided the munchies and a fabulous dessert spread.

Our next game night is scheduled for Friday, February 26th.

Travel Opportunities

Short Trips

February 19th, 2016: SIR Day at the Races. If you enjoy the ponies, join your fellow Sirs at Golden Gate Field. Doors open at 11:00 am and try to be there by 11:15 am. Cost is \$33 per person and includes: admission, reserved parking, daily race program, buffet lunch, tax and tips. Make checks payable to SIR Branch #146 and send to **Bob Spellman**, 3524 Perada Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94598
CHECKS MUST BE RECEIVED PRIOR TO FEBRUARY 10, 2016, AND TICKETS WILL BE AVAILABLE ONLY AT THE WILL CALL BOOTH AT GOLDEN GATE FIELDS ON RACE DAY.

Longer Trips

March 25 – April 10, 2016: Big Band Voyage Across The Atlantic Ocean. A 16 day all inclusive cruise across the Atlantic Ocean on the Crystal Symphony. Relish the blissful luxury of days at sea and highlighted by visits to Bermuda, the Azores, Barcelona (Spain), Bandol (France) and Monte Carlo. Cruise cost from \$3,665 pp.. Contact **Bob Spellman**, (Br 146) (925) 934-8428 or email <bobnjo@astound.net>.

March 13-17, 2016: Spring Training, Phoenix, Arizona.**Cancelled**

May 3–5, 2016: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. A once in a lifetime opportunity to view the Vatican Splendors exhibit and tour the Reagan Library with lunch under the wing of Air Force One. Also on this trip will be a guided tour of the Mission at Santa Barbara. Included in the trip is roundtrip motor coach transportation, 2-night stay at the Pepper Tree (Santa Barbara), 6 hosted meals along the way and driver gratuity. Cost \$591 pp, double occupancy. 30 travelers are required for this trip. Contact **Bob Spellman**, (Br 146) (925) 934-8428 or email <bobnjo@astound.net>

September 13–27, 2016: Essence of the Elbe - Prague to Berlin. This trip begins with 2 nights in Prague , then 7 nights aboard the M/S Allegro in an outside cabin and finally 3 nights in Berlin. Included are 29 meals with wine and beer served aboard the Allegro at

lunch and dinner. There will be 10 exclusive tours with personal headsets and Discovery Series events. Cost starts at \$3,595 pp plus air. Contact **Bob Spellman**, (Br 146) (925) 934-8428 or email <bobnjo@astound.net>



No sleeping in for these early morning golfers who posed for this picture at the Boundary Oak first tee on January 26th (L to R): **Loren DeLaurenti, Terry Marchione, Frank Rockwell, Fred Reich, Joe Fuchs, Paul Masta, Steve Dinning, Ed Marlovits, Roger (Boundary Oak Starter), and David Steinberg**

I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.



Pictured clockwise L-R: **Bruce Borgman, Richard Hockenbrock, Susan Kaplan, Sig Kalteis, Terry Marchione, and Rob Melrose**



Couples Duplicate Bridge 1

Lo McCarley

Eight couples had a great time playing duplicate bridge on January 20th at **Lo and Sue McCarley's** home. As for the bridge results, it was a close race as **Lynn and Dasha Freeman** came in first with 35 points. **George Zunich** and **Susi Cherry** came second with 34.5 points. In third place with 34 points were **Bob and Janet Yolland**. In fourth place were **Jim Brown** and **Adrienne Morrison** with 31 points. **Bill and Margaret Rees** will host the next couples duplicate bridge on February 17th.



Men's Duplicate Bridge Group 1

Doug Eisner

On January 14th **Carl Johnson** hosted 4 tables of bridge for the Duplicate Bridge Group 1. This session continued the recent trend in which the leaders at the lunch break wilted from the pressure in the afternoon and fell out of final contention for the money. To wit: **Carl Johnson** got off to a great start and ended the morning in first place with 17.5 pts, followed by a second place tie between **Max Hinkle** and **George Zunich** at 16.0 pts. **Jim Jackson** claimed 4th place with 15.0 pts. Unfortunately for **Carl, Max, and George**, only **Jim** continued his hot streak and, in fact, finished the day in first place with 48.0 pts. Far back in second position was **Bill Schultz** at 45.5 pts. **John Boyan's** 42.5 pts were good enough for 3rd place while **Fred Bolton** captured 4th place with 40.5 pt.



Couples Duplicate Bridge 2

Terry Marchione

Our January game was hosted by **Dick and Christy DeVoe**. We welcomed **Larry and Linda Brown** who were sitting in for the **Richters**. **Dave and Joan Pierce** who scored 23.5 points (It's getting to be a habit with these **Pierces**) took first place. **Dick and Christy** have been boning up (with their Bridge for Dummies book on plain display.) It must have helped since they managed to eke out 2nd place (22 points) over the **Marchiones** and **Browns** who tied for 3rd with 21.5 points. Our next game will be on Feb 9 at the **Freeman's**



Dave Pierce, Lo McCarley and Fred Kovar supervise Jim Jackson and Doug Eisner as they do the scoring for Duplicate Bridge 1 hosted by Carl Johnson Jan 14th, 2016.



Party Bridge Fred Bolton

We played three tables of bridge on January 4th at the home of **Bob Yolland**. First place went to **Bill Rees** with 5730 points, second to **Bob Yolland** with 4650 and third to **Jim Jackson** with 4320. Our next game will be at the home of **Doug Eisner** on February 1st.

Walking Group

John Lewis



Every Friday at 9:30 am at various locales.

Call **John** for current walk.

Rain cancels any walk.

Ladies Welcome

Tel: (925) 825-3561



A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.



Men's Duplicate Bridge 3 Sid Landman

The Duplicate Bridge 3 Group met for 3 tables of bridge hosted at Brad Hatcher's home. **Steve Dawkins** easily won 1st place with 33.0 points, after coming in 1st for both the 1st AND 2nd halves. Wow! His 17.5 1st half score was one of the highest ever. Congratulations, **Steve!** **Bill Schultz** was 2nd with 30.5 pts., and **Charlie Abrams** slid into 3rd with 28.5 pts. **Tony Greco** was alone in 4th with 25.5 pts. Good job, guys!

- **Most Two's-** **Steve** and **Bill** both earned the most two's (9), followed closely by **Charlie** with 8.
- **Least Zero's-** **Steve** only had 1 zero, to go along with his 9 two's. No wonder he had such a high overall score.
- **Comeback Kid-** **Tony** had a huge 8.5 pt. difference, doubling his 1st half score in the 2nd half and actually winning the 2nd half (8.5 pts. first half vs. 17.0 second half)- confirming once again that:
"IT'S NEVER OVER 'TIL IT'S OVER!"

Written by Dick DeVoe

Photo by Bill Schultz



Duplicate Bridge 3 participants **Harvey Oxman, Bill Schultz, Charlie Abrams, Brad Hatcher** and **Dick DeVoe** admire the "eats" provided by host **Brad** at he January match.

A Doctor was addressing a large audience in Tampa. "The material we put into our stomachs is enough to have killed most of us sitting here, years ago. Red meat is awful. Soft drinks corrode your stomach lining. Chinese food is loaded with MSG. High fat diets can be disastrous, and none of us realizes the long-term harm caused by the germs in our drinking water. But there is one thing that is the most dangerous of all and we all have, or will, eat it. Can anyone here tell me what food it is that causes the most grief and suffering for years after eating it?"

After several seconds of quiet, a 75-year-old man in the front row raised his hand, and softly said, "Wedding Cake."



Couples Party Bridge

Dave Pierce

Wait 'til next year, many of us said in 2015, and here it is: next year. **John** and **Linda Boyan** hosted the kickoff event, and the cards were very kind to **Doug** and **Patti Eisner** (3rd, 3080), **Dick** and **Christy DeVoe** (2nd, 3240), and **Joan** and **Dave Pierce** (1st, 3410, despite **Dave's** overbidding). The other three couples are hoping to hold the Valentine's Day Massacre in February. **Linda** served her granddaughter's delicious bread pudding recipe for dessert; thank you, **Mary Kate** (and Go Ducks).



Jack Harrington, Al Zamolo, John Alexander, and Sal Costanza at the January 22nd luncheon



Poker Group 1

Dan O'Sullivan

Happy New Year. Poker group #1 met at the home of **Pete McNeill**. The New Year started off with good food and drinks, it was also a good start for **Don Del Bene** and **Bill Cammerer**. As always there were some small winners and losers, again a good time was had by all.



Poker Group 5

Bill Roberts

*Poker Group 5 meets the Wednesday prior to the SIR luncheon. **Bill Roberts** is the permanent host for our event. The regular players going forward are **Bill Roberts, Bob Spellman, Charlie Koeber, Terry Marchione, Doug Eisner, Ken Richter** and **Frank Rockwell**. Subs are sometimes needed due to travel and the like. Play begins at 4 pm and ends around 8 pm with time out for dinner.*



Poker Group 2

Al Zamolo

*Poker Group 2 meets on the fourth Monday of the month at various member's homes. Contact **Al Zamolo** if you would like to be on the list as a substitute.*



Old Money Poker Group 6

Al Twyford

Poker group #6 met on January 13th at **Brad Hatcher's** home in Walnut Creek for an afternoon of fun poker. **Brad** provided the usual snacks and plenty of good red wine.



Poker Club 4

Chuck Bobinecz

Poker #4 met January 18th, which is the third Monday in January, so as not to conflict with the temporary change in the SIR luncheon schedule.

Our next meeting is February 29th. As usual we will send out IRS form 1099 R to the winners for 2015. Sir **Frank Rockwell** is the host for the February session.

Players were **Al Twyford, Frank Lucas, Harvey Oxman, Norm Baietti, Bob Larson**, and host **Brad Hatcher**. **Rich Ahlf** and **Sid Landman** were not available. **Al** was the big loser; -\$10. **Brad & Norm** were the big winners at +\$6 each. **Harvey** was +\$5; **Bob** +\$1. Big topic of conversation was **Brad & Al's** new celebrity neighbor, **Stef Curry**, Golden State Warriors. He bought a \$3.2 million home a half a block off Rudgear Dr on Sugarloaf Ct, near the I-680 Freeway. Next month we are scheduled to play February 10th at **Norm's** house in WC.



Cooking Lunch and Wine

Bob Rockwell

The LAW cooking group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at a different member's home with one member responsible for preparing the menu for the rest of the group.

We gather at 11 am for good conversation, appetizers and wine followed by lunch.



Book Nook

Hank James

February is an even month, therefore Book Nook will not be open for the February meeting.

Update your reading lists to prepare for March when the Book

Nook will be open.



GOLF

Ed Marlovits

Golf is one of our most popular activities with over 100 registered golfers. We are fortunate to have a large assortment of venues and formats. We play Tuesdays at Boundary Oak. Players are randomly paired and starting tee times are emailed to each player. In addition to regular stroke play, we have many Tuesday tournaments specifically set up for our players. In the summer we also have "away golf" at nearby courses and State SIR Golf offers numerous other fun events at interesting courses.

Since we have so much going on, we publish a weekly golf email (GEM) outlining upcoming events and results from past events. All of our golfers receive GEMs. If you would like to be included in the distribution, please email us at sir146golf@gmail.com.



Nine Hole Golf Group

Verner Laursen

The SIR 146 golf group tees off at 9:30 am at the Diablo Hills Golf Course on most Thursdays. The exceptions are the 2nd Thursday when we normally go to the SIR luncheon.

If you are interested let me know and I will put you on my list. On Monday I will send out an email asking who is coming for golf, who is walking and who plans to stay for lunch? On Wednesday I will send out an email setting forth the pairings for Thursday morning. Thursday morning there may be adjustments based on who did or did not show up. Most of the time the lunch is better than our golf game.

vlaursen@astound.net

Photo by Bill Schultz



Colin Holland and Paul Fama brave the cold and rain at Boundary Oak on Tuesday January 7th, 2016



Photo by Bill Schultz

New member **David Hicks** gets direction on how to improve his score by effectively utilizing the eraser on his pencil by Sirs **George Mon** and **Jim Solomon**



Cooking II

Bob Yolland

January 11th Cooking II had their first event of the year at **Steve Dawkins'** home. This month **Steve Ybarra** was a guest. The excellent lunch started out with several cheeses, thick cut salami, sliced baguette, crackers, and a variety of olives. For lunch **Steve** served a delicious home made clam chowder followed by a great shrimp Louie. For dessert he served orange sherbet and sugar cookies. The group discussed our future events and decided to have our wives included for lunch or dinner in April. **Bruce Borgman** volunteered to set up the event. We also plan to bottle red wine in 2016 at a date to be determined later. As with all of our sessions it was filled with great conversation and good wine.



Table Pool

Bill Weinberg

We meet every Monday at 11:30 am at Masse's, 2721 North Main in Walnut Creek. No advance notice is necessary. Just show up and play. Cost is \$5 for as long as you want to play. This is a special rate that Masses gives SIR members. You can also play at other times during the day for the same \$5. Just tell them you are a member of SIR. We play mostly two man teams of eight ball, or a unique three-player game, called "Crazy Eights", depending on the number of participants. We usually play about 2 hours but not everyone stays for the final curtain. All Sirs in Area 2 are welcome.

I wish to thank **Bill Cammerer, John Lewis** and the other Sirs who over the years were responsible for printing, folding, and mailing the SIR CALL to us. Their contribution in this regard was important to our branch but has come to an end because we now can use our website as the medium to publish the SIR CALL for all of us to be informed of branch activities, events, and affairs. *Note of appreciation from Big Sir **Walt Busenius***



Webmaster

Ron Plachy

Have you looked at your web site www.sir146.com lately? This is the 1st in a series of monthly information bulletins about the SIR 146 website.

When you get to the Home page you'll see a series of icons representing each activity the branch offers. It looks like this:

Activities

Click an Icon for more Information

 Acoustic Musicians	 Bocce Ball	 Book Group
 Book Corner	 Bowling	 Bridge
 Cooking	 Cribbage	 Dining Out
 Dominoes	 Fishing	 Golf

Simply click on an icon you're interested in to see what it's all about. You'll find contact information; a brief description of what the activity is all about; and usually how to join.

And on another topic of emails, you should receive at least two emails per month from branch146comm@icloud.com. One is the notice of the monthly newsletter being available, the other is the notice of the date to cancel out of the luncheon. If you have not been receiving at least these emails please email Branch Communications at the above address so we may diagnose the problem and solve it.

Area Two Events

Mac User Group (MUG)

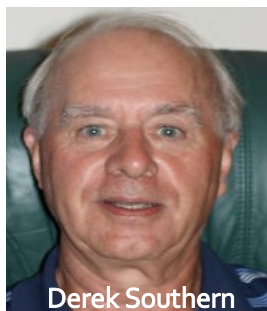


Max Burchett



Vern Laursen

Computers and Technology



Derek Southern

PCs



Neil Schmidt

The Mac Users Group (MUG) has changed its meeting time from 10 am until noon to noon until 2 pm. You will need to change your lunch schedule. This change is required because our earlier time at the Thurman Casey Library has been taken.

Max Burchett and Verner Laursen are the leaders and we are available to help Mac, iPhone and iPad users with their questions. Please note that Mac users do not have problems. We do have suggestions on software and where to get the best deals on Mac related products. We will also demonstrate various software products.

If you have or may have an interest, please contact us and we will put you on our mailing list. If you are on the list, you will receive an email from time to time about items that are of interest to Mac Users.

The Area 2 Computer and Technology Group announces that our next meeting will be at the Walnut Creek Elks Lodge on Thursday February 18th, 2016 at 9:30 am. Sirs from all branches and their guests are welcome and invited to attend.

In February, we will have a "show and tell" presentation about 'gadgets' such as the Amazon Echo, a new Firestick, and Chromebook computers, presented by **Dean Steichen** and **Phil Goff**. In addition, we invite members to bring any new techie gadgets acquired over the holidays and demo their new devices. Maybe someone will show off an Apple Watch or keep-fit device!

We look forward to seeing you 9:15 am, February 18th, 2015, at the Walnut Creek Elks Lodge, 1475 Creekside Drive. We ask for a donation of \$5 to cover the cost of the hall rental, coffee and cookies -- but some months are free, so come and see if our February meeting is another one of those! All SIR members and their guests (spouses included!) are welcome to attend. See you there.

Area 2 \$ums Investment Group

The next meeting of the Area 2 \$ums Investment Group will be on Wednesday February 24th, 2016, at 8:00 a.m. at the Legends restaurant at the Diablo Creek Golf Course, 4050 Port Chicago Highway, Concord.

Our guest speaker in February will be Joan M. Grimes JD. Ms. Grimes is an estate planning attorney and will talk about the newest addition to the estate planning process: Portability. The estate tax credits of each spouse are preserved without a complicated AB trust or the publicity of Probate. Come and learn about this development in estate law.

The Legends restaurant opens at 7:00 a.m., so come early, bring a guest, and have a leisurely breakfast with your colleagues prior to the meeting.

Chairmen: Tom Henry

An elderly gentleman had serious hearing problems for a number of years. He went to the doctor and the doctor was able to have him fitted for a set of hearing aids that allowed the gentleman to hear 100%. The elderly gentleman went back in a month to the doctor and the doctor said, "Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again." The gentleman replied, "Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!"