



Luther Burbank Branch 17

Santa Rosa, CA

New Website: [www.sir17.org](http://www.sir17.org)

THE **REDWOOD BARK** NEWSLETTER

For **FEB. 2021**

## All members are invited to attend our next SIR Meeting on Thursday, **February 18, 2021** using Zoom...

A link and password will be made available from BIG Sir George Traverso to you before the meeting.

Directions on how to use Zoom can be found on our SIR17 website, click on the following:

[http://www.sir17.org/uploads/1/2/3/8/123881033/how\\_to\\_join\\_a\\_sir17\\_zoom\\_meeting.docx](http://www.sir17.org/uploads/1/2/3/8/123881033/how_to_join_a_sir17_zoom_meeting.docx)

### February 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting Schedule via Zoom!

**Social Hour:** 11:00 am Please check in about 5 minutes early to be ready to avoid the last minute rush.

**Program:** Michael Barrington, author of historical novel *Let the Peacock Sing*, about the French Resistance during the German occupation in France during WW2

### February 18<sup>th</sup> Lunch Menu

Same as the last 10 months have been,

Fix your own sandwiches--at home!

Beverages: Your choice...

### BIG Sir George Traverso's Message

[geosan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:geosan@sbcglobal.net) 528-6987



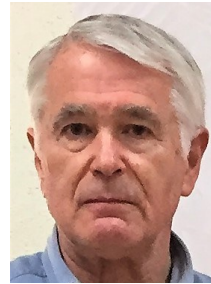
As we move along into the second month of the year I have been thinking about a certain recollection when I was a few years younger. We all lived through the "turbulent sixties." During that time, I was at home going to school and my dad was actively working at our family market where we sold various food specialty products from around the world. Every Monday salespersons (my dad called them "order takers" if focus and responsibility were not in their personality) were scheduled to call on the store for food orders to be delivered during the week. One of my dad's favorite salesmen, Ralph, used to make house calls.

This gentleman represented a popular food company and my father was one of his best clients. He used to come to our house early every Monday morning to have coffee and discuss current events. For me, he was a remarkably interesting fellow. As time went by, we were introduced to his family and we became good friends. In fact, he came to my wedding years later and enjoyed my family's company for many more.

Ralph gave me a great perspective on life. I think we all have moments *(continued on page 2)*

### Little Sir Gordon Boulton's Message

[gboulton@aol.com](mailto:gboulton@aol.com) 584-8063



We all know that February is when we celebrate Valentine's Day, but there are many other special days in February worth celebrating. Here are just a few.

**February 1: No Politics Day.** Who could ask for anything more? Also, **Spunky Old Broads Day.** As I said, at our age, who could ask for anything more? Presumably this is all part of Creative Romance Month and leads us into International Flirting Week beginning on Valentine's Day.

**February 5: National Shower with a Friend Day.** I'm beginning to sense a trend here.

**February 9: National Pizza Day.** The way to a man's heart is through his stomach. Ditto Plum Pudding Day on February 12.

**February 14: Valentine's Day.** Nuff said.

**February 15: Singles Awareness Day.** This is the day when if you didn't receive at least one Valentine's Day card you tell yourself that you really don't care, it was a stupid holiday anyway. Sort of like how Curt Schilling felt when he didn't get voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame, again. Also **Presidents' Day.** *(continued on page 2)*

**SIR Luther Burbank Branch 17 is in Area 10 of Region 3.  
The following is a list of your 2021 Officers and Directors.**

OFFICERS:	EMAIL:	PHONE:	DIRECTORS:
<b>Big Sir:</b> George Traverso . . . . .	<a href="mailto:geosan@sbcglobal.net">geosan@sbcglobal.net</a> . . . . .	707-528-6987	Ken Johnson
<b>Little Sir:</b> Gordon Boulton . . . . .	<a href="mailto:gboulton@aol.com">gboulton@aol.com</a> . . . . .	707-584-8063	Rich de Lambert
<b>Secretary:</b> Kurt Wehrmeister . . . . .	<a href="mailto:kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com">kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com</a>	630-461-2715	Tom Lubas
<b>Asst. Secretary:</b> Jim Gurke . . . . .	<a href="mailto:1jgurke@gmail.com">1jgurke@gmail.com</a> . . . . .	707-303-0989	Chris Nolen
<b>Treasurer:</b> Al Petrie . . . . .	<a href="mailto:alpetrie7@aol.com">alpetrie7@aol.com</a> . . . . .	707-974-9193	Paul Willihnganz
<b>Asst. Treasurer:</b> John Gnam . . . . .	<a href="mailto:musicmed@sonic.net">musicmed@sonic.net</a> . . . . .	707-528-0592	Elias Zegarra
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b> Jim Fenstermaker .	<a href="mailto:sirsbrn17@gmail.com">sirsbrn17@gmail.com</a> . . . . .	707-548-3346	
			<b>WEBMASTERS:</b>
<b>STATE PRESIDENT</b>	<b>AREA 10 GOVERNOR</b>	<b>REGION 3 DIRECTOR</b>	Dennis Mangan
Stu Williams	Robert Reuther	Dennis Pangburn	Jim Fenstermaker

**BIG Sir George Traverso's Message** (continued)

when we have met people or experienced certain events that made a major learning experience in our life's journey. Current problems and challenges force us to rethink and evaluate our opinions on various social positions. These "problems and challenges" present a vast array of issues that touch upon economic and political questions that have recently arisen in our country. I understand here at SIR we do not discuss politics or religion. I can compare some of the events during the "turbulent sixties" to today's threats on our society.

Even though today's issues are somewhat different than the social topic of those 50 years ago, I believe that there is a relationship spanning those years. What I mean in my statement is this: in my view it appears that there is a close similarity in the socio-political climate of the sixties to present day events. The social unrest and the civil rights journey of our minority citizens long ago changed into the Black Lives Matter movement today. The protests arising from the Vietnam War are comparable to the legitimacy of our presence in the Middle East. So, there is always a political theme in comparing the two periods. With that said, let me return to my friend, Ralph.

Ralph, over morning coffee, used to talk about many things....for example, the exorbitant price of his property tax bill, the economics of the federal budget and waste (in his opinion) of tax monies and its outlay.

My dad would respond in agreement or question a point. However, when things got heated in his discourse of reviewing and commenting on the political issues of that day, he stopped and in a comical laugh would say, "let's talk about the weather."

My friend's five-word sentence is an example of cooling down a situation and offering a pause in serious dialogue. I believe that Ralph's technique is like "stop and smell the roses." Maybe what he was saying in so many words, let us appreciate and honor the fact that we can **agree to disagree**. Life is too short for it to be so serious and sometimes so violent. Let us take a break, cool down and find solutions. Does this sound like an attempt to solve today's social dilemma?

**Little Sir Gordon Boulton's Message** (continued)

**February 16: Do a Grouch a Favor Day.** This is me asking you to give me a break if you think this article is lame.

**February 18: National Drink Wine Day.** OK! But don't over-indulge, because coming up...

**February 22: National Margarita Day.**  
I could go on, but I will spare you the pain!

**SIR Branch 17 Newest Honorary Life Members**

**The purpose of the HLM is to recognize exceptional and extraordinary service by a member to SIR. It is not to be treated lightly or awarded merely on the basis of good fellowship. The award will be meaningful if bestowed only to those who, upon careful review and scrutiny, are found to have clearly earned it through faithful and outstanding service to the organization for five years or more.**

**CONGRATULATIONS TO STAN AND FRED!**

We, at Branch 17, are privileged to have **two** distinguished SIR members in our group.

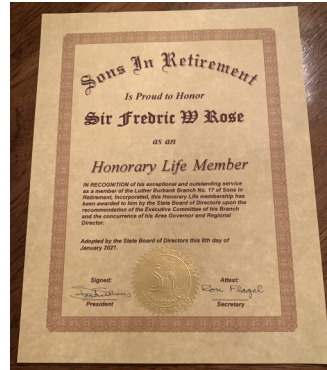
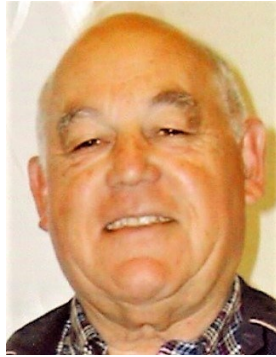
Sir **Stan Borges** and Sir **Fred Rose** have been recognized by State SIRinc as **Honorary Life Members**. Their many years of membership and service and the outstanding participation of these two individuals is a credit not only to them but to our SIR Branch 17. With the absence of live luncheons, I had the opportunity to personally deliver the framed certificates to these honored gentlemen. When Stan and Fred saw me at their front doors with these honors, each brightened as if they won the Readers Digest Prize. We wish Stan and Fred our best wishes and look forward to hearing their sage advice and see their friendly smiles.

**MANY THANKS TO YOU BOTH!**

George Traverso, Big Sir

*(article continued on page 3)*

## HLM Certificates and Recipients



### A message from HLM Sir Fred Rose

On Friday, January 22, Big SIR George Traverso presented me an Honorary Life Member award certificate from SIRinc and SIR Branch 17

I wanted to thank all those involved for this honor. An honor it is, to be in the company of Stan Borges, who has also received this honor, another member whose contributions to SIR Branch 17 over the years dwarf mine in comparison.

A special thanks to Al Odabashian, John Somerville, Bob Gaggero, Jim Lamar with special thoughts of Romie Schneider, Doug Weber, Lou Funk and all others who influenced my efforts at SIR Branch 17!

### Our Future Meetings, via Zoom

The 2021 **regular meetings** for now will be held on our usual dates of the third Thursday, starting at **11:00** am.

**Feb 18<sup>th</sup>** **Mar 18<sup>th</sup>** **Apr 15<sup>th</sup>** **May 20<sup>th</sup>**

The **BEC meetings** will be held on the first Thursday, starting at **10:00** am.

**Feb 4<sup>th</sup>** **Mar 4<sup>th</sup>** **Apr 1<sup>st</sup>** **May 6<sup>th</sup>**

## The Speaker for our February 18<sup>th</sup> Zoom meeting will be

### Michael Barrington

Past Big Sir of Branch 116.

Born in Manchester, England he lived in France and joined a French Order of Missionary priests, spending ten years in West Africa, several of them during a civil war when he was stood up to be shot. On his return to the UK, he spent a year living as a hermit in Northern Ireland, and then taught in Madrid, Spain and Puerto Rico. Now the owner and President of MJB Consultants, he flies all over the world monitoring and evaluating humanitarian projects and has worked in more than 30 countries. He is completely fluent in several languages, an avid golfer and academically considers himself to be over-engineered, having three master's degrees and a PhD.



He has always been a writer and his first published work "The Bishop Wears No Drawers" (2017) is a memoir of his time spent in Africa, during a civil war. His most recent work, "Let the Peacock Sing" (2020) is an historical novel set against the backdrop of the French Resistance during World War II.

Michael lives with his French wife and a Tibetan terrier in Clayton, CA.

*(Article by Gordon Boulton from bio by Michael Barrington)*

### Upcoming Speakers

**March 18:** **Bill Hodges** is a docent on FDR's Presidential Yacht the USS Potomac, berthed in Oakland. His presentation will include a video about the Potomac.

**April 15:** **Ben Stone** is the president of the World Affairs Council of Sonoma County. He'll be telling us about the WAC.

All members are invited to attend all of the meetings. Call Big SIR George Traverso at 707-528-6987 or email to [geosan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:geosan@sbcglobal.net) Directions on how to use Zoom can be found on our SIR17 website at: [http://www.sir17.org/uploads/1/2/3/8/123881033/how\\_to\\_join\\_a\\_sir17\\_zoom\\_meeting.docx](http://www.sir17.org/uploads/1/2/3/8/123881033/how_to_join_a_sir17_zoom_meeting.docx) or click [here](#).

## SIR Branch 17, Member Profile:

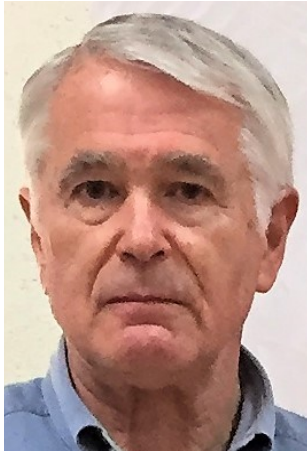
**Gordon Boulton**, Badge #115

Gordon Boulton is a sensible, no-nonsense guy except when he jumps out of airplanes, asks flight attendants for a date, or takes on death-defying downhill skiing. In fact, three words stick out when you drill down: chemistry, rocketry and bombs. He's like an onion. You peel off one story of his life and you enter a new undiscovered area.

Gordon was born in Long Beach CA where his dad was a chemical engineer for Shell Oil during WWII. As life and employment would have it, his family moved around a lot when he was a kid and included time in England. He recalls going to grade school there and learning that misbehavior meant a sharp rap on the knuckles with a ruler. The family returned to Greenwich CT (with a much more disciplined kid) where he went to high school and, admittedly, became a card-carrying geek. During this time, he took advanced placement chemistry, was inspired by the excitement of Sputnik, and gained a deep interest in explosives, rocketry and pyrotechnics (e.g., fireworks.) He avoided team sports after getting smacked in the nose with a baseball but later enjoyed the thrills of downhill skiing, boating, scuba diving, motorcycles and parachuting.

His interests in chemistry and science, along with some gentle nudging by his dad, led him to pursue a five-year BS degree in mechanical engineering from Trinity College, a small liberal arts, all-male school in Hartford CT. At Trinity, he joined the Air Force (AF) ROTC and eventually went into the AF despite having inadequate eyesight to become a pilot. Gordon had his eyes on a much different prize: a fully paid Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree. The AF assigned him to Los Angeles to work as an engineer in the Space Division in the Space and Missile Systems Organization, which was perfect for the geek who loves chemistry, rocketry and things that go BOOM. There he worked on highly classified early warning satellites that could detect missiles coming at us and identify them based on the optical signature of their exhaust fumes. (There's much more to tell you about these projects but I don't have clearance...you'll have to sit down in a quiet corner and talk to Gordon.)

*(continued at top to right)*



## Member Profiles: *(continued)*

Gordon spent a lot of time on airplanes while working on AF projects. On one trip returning to Los Angeles from a meeting in Boston, he met Tammy, a stunning flight attendant, who accused Gordon of stealing a miniature bottle of vodka from her cart. (He got it earlier from a friend in first class.) This led to a conversation in the galley, an invitation out on a date and eventually a marriage proposal. In the years that followed, Gordon and Tammy did a lot of international traveling while she was a flight attendant for American Airlines.

Gordon finally got his MBA from Columbia University in New York City with a major in Operations Management. With degree in hand and experience from his AF assignments, he landed a position at Optical Coating Laboratory Inc. (OCLI) in Santa Rosa in 1972. (Side note: Mary Darcy, Tammy's ex-roommate, married SIR17 member Bill Traverso and they moved to Santa Rosa too!) At OCLI, Gordon got involved in a lot of really interesting projects, including optical coatings for windows of the Space Shuttle, as well as mirrors and glass for government and civilian equipment. (Again, you'll need higher clearance to hear more about this work.)

Gordon has been a member of SIR17 since 2016 and now serves ("I was drafted!") as our 2021 Little Sir. In this position, he leads the effort to get outstanding speakers for our monthly luncheons and is looking to pull in interesting people from anywhere in the world. He adds sage advice to our BEC and editorial guidance for the monthly *BARK* newsletter. We encourage you to learn more about Gordon, for example, by asking about his 33 years as a Little League umpire! BOOM!

*(Article by Dennis Mangan)*

**Congratulations to our *January 2021* winner: Dennis Mangan**

### List of the **February Birthdays**

Jim Fenstermaker	Terry Freeman
Jim Lamar	James MacMillan
Rich Osborne	Robert Tuttle

**We will celebrate all birthdays whenever we are back to our regular meetings again, but when that will be is???**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

## ACTIVITIES:

Since the health department has placed restrictions on gatherings we have been unable to get together for our meetings and most of the following of our activities have been on **HOLD**, until we receive new instructions.

**Bocce, Bowling, Boys' Night Out, Bridge, Camera Club, Couples' Night Out, Free Comedy, Picnic, Poker Fest, Travel Golf, Wine, Beer and Spirits**

All just waiting to restart again soon--hopefully!

### Coffee Time:

This activity is back again, via Zoom on **each** Wednesday at 10:00 am, starting on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Please join Rich and many others for a friendly chat and to share how you survived the Holidays at home. Contact Rich de Lambert for more details at [richdelambert@gmail.com](mailto:richdelambert@gmail.com) or call him at 545-3490.

### GLOBAL FORUM:

(Article by Marvin Mai)



During this new year we continue to Zoom and invite everyone to attend the wonderful learning and sharing discussions on the global issues facing the world. The geopolitical environment of 2021 will be shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic and the new administration's efforts to establish collaborative relationships across the globe. Share your thoughts on what is going to shape the international communities and priorities for going forward. What about the continuing protests in Russia and Hong Kong and India and the pent up resentments and economic hardships because of the pandemic.



If you'd like to be included in the next Zoom meeting on **Friday, Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am** for the Global Forum meeting, then contact Marvin at [maimarvin57@gmail.com](mailto:maimarvin57@gmail.com) or give him a call at 545-2224. He needs to know who is going to attend so he can send you an email with the "link" and any others instructions.

Below is the schedule of dates for SIR Branch 17 Zoom Global Forum discussions slated for every **2 weeks** in 2021. Time: **10:00 AM** Pacific Time.

**Fridays: February 19, March 5 & March 19**

[Return to Page 1](#)

## GOLF:

(Article by Roy Thuestad)

"Play it as it lies" is one of the fundamental dictates of golf.



The other is  
"Wear it if it clashes."

Until next time, Good Golfing,

Roy Thuestad  
707-975-4406

[roymond@comcast.net](mailto:roymond@comcast.net)

## THANK YOU KEITH WOODS!

At the January Zoom luncheon, we enjoyed a very informative talk by Keith Woods. Keith is the CEO of the North Coast Builders Exchange. He reviewed the recent fires that ravaged not only our community but other areas in California. He provided several comparisons as to similarities and differences in specific fire areas (e.g., Fountain Grove vs. Coffee Park). Because of the numerous insurance issues that faced so many fire victims, Keith tutored us on a mini property insurance update for homeowners. A most interesting presentation. Keith, many thanks for a great talk!

George Traverso, Big Sir

## The Poem of the month for **February**

### February Twilight

by Sara Teasdale

I stood beside a hill  
Smooth with new-laid snow,  
A single star looked out  
From the cold evening glow.

There was no other creature  
That saw what I could see--  
I stood and watched the evening star  
As long as it watched me.

## Sunshine Report:

We need your help to tell us before the monthly meeting if any of our members are sick or if some member has died.



All you need to do is call Kurt Wehrmeister, our Secretary at **630-461-2715** or send him an email to: [kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com](mailto:kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com).

*We are sad to inform you that our member*

*Peter McGrath*

*passed away on Dec. 9, 2020.*

*We send our condolences to his family.*

## NON-RESPONSIBILITY DECLARATION

All activities arranged for, or by, or sponsored by, SONS IN RETIREMENT, INC., and its Branches, are for the convenience and pleasure of the members and their guest who desire to participate. SONS IN RETIREMENT, INC., and its Branches do not assume any responsibility for the well being or safety of the participants or their property, in any matters pertaining to said activities.

## SIR HAPPENINGS

### The February 2021 edition of is now available to view online.

This is an informative newsletter produced by SIRinc with articles re-published from many of the SIR Branches throughout the state. There is a lot of new information about branches who are using Zoom for their meetings. Look especially at page, 24 which is a reprint of some articles from our Branch 17. On page 44 is articles from Branch 176. On pages 45 to 52, there are all kinds of consumer hints on various subjects that I am sure you will learn something. Most are reprints from various sources.

To view this free newsletter go to [www.sir17.org](http://www.sir17.org) then click on the "News" tab, now scroll down to near the bottom of the page. Click on the **SIR Happenings Feb-2021** underlined area. This should now open the article in your PDF file program for you to look at. You might be asked to open or save this PDF file. It is best to select "Open." You can always save if you want, for later reading. Read and enjoy!

## Joke of the Month



My daughter was anxious to do some landscaping at her new home, but then she called up sounding very discouraged. "I don't think I will ever get these flowers planted," she moaned. It says to plant in full sun, but is has been cloudy for four days."

*Happy Valentine's Day*

A special Thank You to members Gordon Boulton and others for helping me by spotting all my errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and any other boo-boos I have made before the final edition goes to press and you see it.

Jim, the Editor