



A non-profit club for retired men devoted to the promotion of independence and dignity

Luther Burbank Branch 17

Santa Rosa, CA

Website: <https://www.sir17.org>



The **REDWOOD BARK** Newsletter For **FEB.** 2022

All members are invited to attend our next SIR In-Person Luncheon/Meeting on Thursday, February 17, 2022, at The Epicenter, 3215 Coffey Lane, Santa Rosa.

If you told the Phone Committee **"YES"** you plan to attend but find later that you will be unable to attend, you need to contact **Al Petrie** at 707-974-9193 or email alpetrie7@aol.com by 5:00 pm **Saturday, February 12**, to help keep our count more accurate. Also of importance is, if you are bringing a guest or if you originally said **"NO"** but changed your mind and decided to go after all, in either case, then please contact **Al Petrie** per the above!

February 17 Lunch/Meeting Schedule

Social Hour: 11 am **Lunch/Meeting:** 12 noon

Program: Chris Philbrick will share his experience and photos about his trip to the annual motorcycle pilgrimage to Sturgis, South Dakota.

Announcements: All indoor activities are in the process of accessing the situations. The chairmen will be contacting you.

February 17 Lunch Menu. for \$25.00

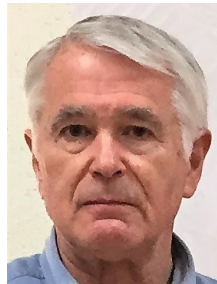
Caesar salad

Beef stroganoff and noodles, and
Seasoned vegetables,

Bread and butter, fresh baked cookies,
Water, lemonade, coffee or tea is included.
Other drinks available to purchase at the bar.

BIG Sir Gordon Boulton's Message

gboulton@aol.com 707-584-8063



Greetings Branch 17 members! I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that the food at the January luncheon was, in my opinion, the best we have had to date: a nice fresh salad, BBQ chicken with fried onion strings, fresh vegetables and crispy French fries. In fact, it was so good I could have had seconds! The bad news is I could have had seconds. Or thirds. Because of the 22 members who told the Phone Committee they were coming to the luncheon **nine** failed to show up or notify Al Petrie, as **The Bark** instructs us to do. Even though we have a contractual minimum of 25 with Epicenter, they told us the Monday before the luncheon they would only charge us

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Little Sir Gary Bondi's Message

gbondi@sonic.net 707-539-2445



I'm trying hard, every day, to look beyond the daily bad news, and to find some balance. When I pick up the paper or turn on the news each day I/we are inundated with bad news! Covid, crime, Political discourse, vaxers/anti-vaxers, corruption, world tensions, natural disasters, etc. Occasionally, if I look hard enough, I will find, way on the back pages of the paper, a little feel-good story. On the broadcast news, anything fairly good is in the very last segment of the program. Day after day, it's pretty much the same thing, but with a slightly different twist. Not that I want to hide my head in the sand, but I think we need some balance.

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SIR Branch 17 is Looking for NEW Members

Check Out Our Revised Website at: <https://www.sir17.org>

with new information and forms available.

Contact Potential Members Today and Invite Them to the Next Meeting!

SIR Luther Burbank Branch 17 is in Area 10 of Region 3.
The following is a list of your **2022** Officers and Directors.

OFFICERS:	EMAIL:	PHONE:	DIRECTORS:
Big Sir: Gordon Boultonbee	gboultonbee@aol.com	707-584-8063	Bill Grafeld
Little Sir: Gary Bondi	gbondi@sonic.net	707-539-2445	Ken Johnson
Secretary: Terry Freeman	terryfreeman32@yahoo.com ..	707-235-7066	Tom Johnson
Asst. Secretary: Steven Saulsbury ..	stevensaulsbury@comcast.net .	707-328-4627	Tom Lubas
Treasurer: Al Petrie	alpetrie7@aol.com	707-974-9193	Neil Wheeler
Asst. Treasurer: John Gnam	musicmed@sonic.net	707-528-0592	Elias Zegarra
Newsletter Editor: Jim Fenstermaker .	sirsbrn17@gmail.com	707-548-3346	WEBMASTERS:
			Dennis Mangan
			Neil Wheeler
			Jim Fenstermaker
STATE PRESIDENT Richard Kindle	AREA 10 GOVERNOR Robert Nadell	REGION 3 DIRECTOR Dennis Pangburn	

BIG Sir Gordon Boultonbee's Message *(continued)*

for the 23 projected headcount we gave them (22 members and one guest).

It has long been the policy that if you are a no-show, you will be charged the \$25 for your lunch, although each situation is considered on a case-by-case basis, as we realize there can be extenuating circumstances. However, near the end of 2021 the BEC decided to not charge no-shows if Epicenter did not charge us. (This is very different from Legends' policy and practice.) When only 14 showed up (13 members and the guest speaker) for the luncheon, Epicenter once again went above and beyond their contractual obligations and said they would only charge us for the actual number of attendees, despite the wasted food. However, we felt that nine no-shows were too many to expect them to absorb so the officers present at the luncheon felt morally obligated to pay Epicenter for the nine no-shows, nearly \$225. It is disappointing that we were not able to rely on the sense of responsibility of our mature membership in January. Sadly, we will have to reconsider reimplementing the former policy at our next BEC meeting.

In other downer news, three of our members: Frank Bastoni, Dino Boito and Carlo Bottini have resigned for health reasons.

Still more bad news, good news: the bad news is that Rich de Lambert has resigned as a BEC director and Recruitment Chair due to pressing family commitments. Rest assured, he remains an active member. The good news is that Neil Wheeler

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BIG Sir Gordon Boultonbee's Message *(continued)*

has been appointed to replace Rich as a BEC director for the remainder of the 2022 term. And Neil has agreed to serve as Recruiting Chair on an interim basis while the Nominating Committee searches for a replacement. Neil is already our Publicity and Image chair.

On a final positive note, we have two prospective new members whose applications have been approved by the BEC and one whose application is being processed.

Little Sir Gary Bondi's Message *(continued)*

With that in mind I am reminded of where we live and the beauty surrounding us. So, the other day my wife and I took a drive out to the coast. We walked on the beach, sat on a log and watched the waves crashing on shore, watched the fishing boats bringing in their catch and enjoyed the fresh sea air. It was a simple thing, but it takes your mind off the bad stuff for a while. There are also so many parks, open spaces, scenic areas we can enjoy. If you are able, take a walk through one of these, or take a drive through the backroads of our county. There is so much to see and enjoy. It's good for the soul and our physical and mental health.

I also thought doing some random acts of kindness would be a feel-good thing. The other day, while I was having coffee in a Starbucks, some police officers came in. I bought gift cards, gave them to them and thanked them for what they do.

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Little Sir Gary Bondi's Message (continued)

It was only a few dollars, but the feedback was worth a million and the feel-good was priceless. On another occasion, while I was having lunch in a local restaurant, I paid for the lunch a young couple was having at the next table. Again, a small gesture, but a huge feel-good. It was well worth the few dollars just to see the smiles, and surprise, for such an unexpected thing and hopefully a feel-good thing for them. Often just an unexpected "thank you" brings a smile. I know all of us can think of a simple thing or gesture that will put a smile on someone's face and on ours too! Let's all make it a feel-good day for someone and ourselves!

February 17, 2022 Guest Speaker

Chris Philbrick will be our speaker. Chris has ridden motorcycles for many years and on his bucket list was a trip to the annual motorcycle pilgrimage to Sturgis, South Dakota. This annual gathering draws about 300,000 cyclists to the city with a population of around 6,000. He will share his experience and photos of his journey along the way and his stay in Sturgis. You will not want to miss this one.

(Article by Gary Bondi)

Upcoming Speakers

March 17, 2022 Jill Ravitch, current Sonoma County District Attorney will attend our meeting. We are aware of her recent recall election. I am not sure if she will speak to that, but she will definitely give us an overview of crime in our area and what is happening in the DA's office.

April 21, 2022 TBD

(Article by Gary Bondi)

Recap of Meeting on January 20, 2022

If you were unable to attend our Jan. luncheon, you missed a really interesting presentation from our speaker, Chris Smith. He had many stories of well known local individuals and some funny encounters with people during his many years as a writer for the Press Democrat. Very entertaining program!

(Article by Gary Bondi)

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Volunteers Needed

We need a member or members who regularly attend our luncheon meetings to volunteer to be our **interim official photographer** to take digital photos of noteworthy happenings, such as our guest speaker presentation, induction of new members, presentations of certificates of appreciation and so forth, while BARK editor Jim Fenstermaker continues to recuperate from his November surgery. The volunteer would then email the photos to Jim for inclusion in the BARK newsletter.

As briefly mentioned elsewhere in the BARK we are looking for a new **activity chair for the poker group**.

If you are interested in either of these opportunities to volunteer please contact Big Sir Gordon Boulton.

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, at **630-461-2715** or send him an email to: kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com.

Mark Your Calendar!!!

SIR Branches 17 & 176 PICNIC

Event Center at Windsor Golf Course
has been reserved for:

Thursday, June 16th, 2022

Price??? TBD

Tickets will go on sale during the
April 21st Lunch meeting.

Want to volunteer???

Contact Ted Scapeccia

707-529-0063

tescape4@gmail.com

SIR Branch 17, Member Profiles:

Gary Bondi, Badge #48

Who better than Gary Bondi to lead our Wine Beer and Spirits Club? Might even say WB&S are always in his blood, even when he's not consuming it. After high school and serving in Army Reserves, Gary got a job with a wholesale liquor distributor where his dad worked. Gary quickly learned the business of wine and liquor sales, and began selling to restaurants all over Sonoma and Marin Counties. When his dad bought a wholesale beer and liquor distributor company in Santa Rosa, Gary moved his young family here where he has been for nearly 70 years. Gary ended up running the company when his dad, a former Navy WWII pilot, began flying equipment and workers all over the world for oil companies. Eventually Gary sold the beer distribution company and went to work for his uncle in a commercial insurance company, which he bought, merged with other insurance agencies, and finally sold.



Gary continued to work until about nine years ago when a medical oddity clobbered him. About three weeks following a flu shot, Gary started to feel tired and weak. He and his wife Dee headed out for a vacation in Palm Desert, and while there, Gary went to the emergency room with severe pains and unable to walk. He fell in the parking lot and was immediately admitted into the hospital with a diagnosis of Guillain-Barré (Ghee-YAN Bah-RAY) syndrome (GBS). GBS is a rare, autoimmune disorder in which Gary's own immune system attacked his nerves, causing muscle weakness and paralysis. GBS can cause symptoms that last for a few weeks to several years. Most people recover fully, but some have permanent nerve damage. Gary was paralyzed from waist down, and like a stroke, had facial droop. He was in the hospital for three months and rehabilitated for a year.

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Member Profiles:

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Following his bout with GBS, in 2015, he concluded, "It's time to retire!" This gave him an opportunity to reflect on his life, his wonderful marriage to Dee, and their two children. Gary has enjoyed this part of California his whole life. He did however spend brief periods when he was a young boy in places like: 1) Ely, Nevada, (kindergarten) best known as being a town on US Route 50, considered to be "The Loneliest Road in America" by Life magazine; 2) New Orleans (1st grade), where he befriended black kids for the first time; and 3) Miami, Indiana (2nd grade), where his dad worked at the former Bunker Hill Naval Air Station, (renamed Grissom Air Reserve Base in honor of Indiana-born astronaut Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom) and the training site of thousands of military pilots, including baseball hall of famer, Ted Williams. In Miami, Gary's family lived in a rural house with no indoor plumbing, no hot water, handle pumps, and an outhouse in a community of Mennonites. On Friday nights he remembers going to the local lumber yard by the railroad tracks where a man drove up in a horse and buggy, set up a sheet and projector, and showed movies. Gary was learning just how diverse the world is...and how strange these people seemed!

Gary's circle of friends continued to grow stronger when he joined SIR17 in 2016 and reunited with friends such as Fred Rose, Frank Bastoni, Bob Vidalin, Bob Zeni, Ted Scapeccia, Al Petrie, George and Bill Traverso, and Bill Grafeld. As this year's Little Sir, Gary is eager to produce an outstanding speaker program with diverse topics. This month's presentation about motorcycle trips is a good example! His avid interest in WWII and Korean War history, along with a passion for 50's music likely will influence some of his selection of speakers. As the weather and pandemic situation improves, we can expect to see Gary returning to golf courses and bocci courts, and leading us again to local wineries. As we concluded this Profile interview, Gary said something many of us would agree with, "It's been an amazing life...I wasn't aware of all I've done." So true!

(Article by Dennis Mangan)

SIR Branch 17 Starts YouTube Channel

Did you miss the last Branch 17 luncheon, but really wanted to hear former Press Democrat columnist Chris Smith's talk? All is not lost!

You may have read on Facebook or in an email from Big Sir Gordon Boulton that the talk Chris Smith's gave was video recorded and uploaded to YouTube. Now you can see it on our new YouTube channel at: <https://youtu.be/FCHY5zqKzaw> complete with Closed Captioning (CC). Not that Chris Smith needs help with being humorous, but the CC transcript is produced by artificial intelligence, which can, at times, be inaccurate and quite humorous on its own.

While you are watching Chris's talk, you might take the opportunity to Subscribe to our channel. That way you will receive notifications when future videos are posted. Our plan is to video record future luncheon speakers and some activities, and then add them to our channel. This is one way to keep our members informed while reaching out to potential new members. There is also a link to the Branch 17 YouTube channel on our website.

Over the past 10 years, one-on-one recruiting hasn't been enough to keep membership numbers from declining. Research by SIR State's marketing consultant shows that the public knows about groups such as Rotary, Lions, and Elks, but SIR is largely unknown. We need to be known if we're going to continue attracting new members and social media may be able to help.

While many of us have avoided social media, Facebook, YouTube, and others are valuable (and free) tools for communicating with the public, and particularly younger generations. We want to attract men in their 50s and 60s to SIR. These are the future members that will energize and keep our branch alive.

Give our YouTube channel a try! (Article by Neil Wheeler)

At our January 2022 meeting Barry Bialkoski was the free lunch winner!

List of the February Birthdays



Jim Fenstermaker Terry Freeman
Jim Lamar James MacMillan
Rich Osborne

Joke of the Month



Now that I am older
here is what I have discovered.

My wild oats are now mostly enjoyed
with prunes and All-Bran.

The world only beats a path to your
door when you are in the bathroom.

If God had wanted me to touch my
toes, he'd have put them on my knees.

When I am finally holding all the right
cards, everyone wants to play chess.

Poem for February I'm Not Just February

by Annette Wynne

I'm not just February
With winds that blow
All day, and piled-up snow;
I'm Washington and Lincoln, too,
Who kept our country's flag for you!
I'm Valentine of airy grace—
With golden hearts and hearts of lace
And pretty cards that people send,
Quite as a secret, to a friend.
Though I am short of days and small,
I'm quite a big month, after all!

Activities:

Most indoors activities are now at the discretion of the activities chairs, and subject to all safety and health codes. Some activities have been canceled while others have gone back to using Zoom.

To attend any in-person event you must have had your vaccinations, a copy of your card along with a signed waiver filed with Big SIR Gordon Boulton.

Bocce:

(Article by Chuck Stark)



We are blessed by the rains but will **not** have any bocce outings until the spring. Our meeting in the fall to gather information on your preferences regarding locations, times, and lunch was with a minimum of attendance.

So, in March I will try a handout with a short questionnaire at our regular monthly meeting and then report the consensus to you in the April edition of the **BARK** newsletter. Hopefully, we can start our outings then, although I will be gone during May and June!

Boys' Night Out:

(Article by Don Malvestiti)



February 9 was the date to join us at **The Bear Republic Brewery**, 5000 Roberts Lake Road, Rohnert Park. Due to new health officer restrictions on meetings again as a group, along with other uncertainties, this date has been **CANCELED** for now.

Hopefully, it can be rescheduled for **March 6**. Watch for the March issue of the **BARK** for further updates.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Don Malvestiti at

malvestitidon485@gmail.com or call him at

707-539-0677, leave a message if no answer.

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

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Bridge:

(Article by James Park)



Bridge has always been an important activity with many of our members not only within our own branch but with participation of members from other branches in our area. Bridge activities are still going to hold off until March 2022 to see how things have settled down.

If you have any questions contact James Park at jcpark38@sbcglobal.net or call him at **707-578-4255**

Camera Club:

(Article by Rich Osborne)



I'm not sure what to do with our Camera Club!

I am **not** going to schedule a meeting until this virus situation has calmed down and I can assess our interest in our Camera Club again.

I need some feedback. Please contact me with your comments and questions before we make a decision of what to do next.

email to: richosborne@outlook.com

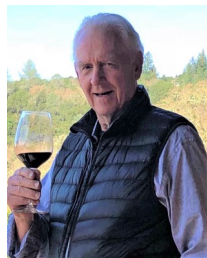
or call **303-304-9262**.

Thanks for your input, Rich Osborne



*Roses are Red and Violets are Blue,
Sugar is Sweet and so are You!*

Couples' Night Out: (Article by Fred Rose)



We were planning to start with **La Gare Restaurant**, on Thursday, February 24, but that is **NOT** going to happen. That is Restaurant Week in Sonoma County and there are **NO** available reservations, plus with the latest surge of the virus, this may not be practical just yet.

We will try to **reschedule** for Thursday, **MARCH 24** and see what happens by then.

I would like to know how many couples would be willing to eat outside in their new heated enclosure? Please contact me regarding this and your concerns.

Fred Rose: fredicrose@comcast.net

or call 707-548-5797



GOLF:

Since December of 2021 we've ceased conducting the 17/76 Monday competitions due to the wetness of the Bennett Valley course. On Monday, January 31, we will resume play in the familiar format of past competitions.

Latest information is that all the holes, but 1, 9 and 16, will play under a 90° rule for power carts. It's likely that hole 1 will continue to play as a par 4; holes 9 and 16 as par 3's. So no excuses, come out and play a round while we're enjoying these beautiful winter days.

Your Golf Committee

PS On a separate note, I recently received an update from the Bennett Valley Golf Club related to new management beginning July, 2022. If all true, it appears the city is committed to keeping BV a viable, publicly owned golf course.

NGF, the consultant hired to advise the City, believes they have what they need to figure out costs to improve irrigation and drainage. Improving irrigation and drainage are key to securing a new permanent operator.

NGF believes a temporary operator needs to be secured to keep the course up and running after July 1st. There are currently several candidates interested in acting as a temporary operator.

Long term course improvement planning is next on the agenda. The City of Santa Rosa, NGF, and SBVGC (Bennett Valley Golf Club) are all on the same page committed to enhancing the viability of the Bennett Valley Golf Course.

Jim Gurke 707-303-0989

1jgurke@gmail.com



GLOBAL FORUM: (Article by Marvin Mai)



Our next Global Forum meeting will be on Fridays, February 11 & 25, at 10:00 am **but only by Zoom**.

We will go back to having **two** Zoom meetings per month until this surge is over and when health restrictions go back to allowing in-person meetings.

As we remember the many trials and tribulations of 2021, we will try to visualize and predict where we think the challenges, problems, and/or successes await our global community.

If you wish to join these meetings or if you have questions, please contact Marvin at maimarvin57@gmail.com or give him a call at 707-545-2224, he will then give you the link to join the meeting.

Below are the tentative dates for our upcoming discussions, for the Fridays of each month.

Fridays: Feb. 11 Feb. 25 Mar. 11



POKER FEST:

The poker group is still in a holding pattern and the activity is looking for a new chair. If you would like to volunteer please contact Big Sir Gordon Boulton.

Even if you're not a Weather Nut you might find this interesting!

Top 10 cities with Least weather variety Based on temperature variation, precipitation, wind, severe weather	Top 10 Tornado prone cities Ranked by tornadoes per 1,000 miles
1. San Francisco, California	1. Oklahoma City , Oklahoma
2. San Diego , California	2. Tulsa , Oklahoma
3. Los Angeles , California	3. Dallas - Ft. Worth , Texas
4. Santa Barbara , California	4. Wichita , Kansas
5. Eureka , California	5. Springfield , Missouri
6. Long Beach , California	6. Kansas City , Kansas / Missouri
7. Honolulu , Hawaii	7. Ft. Smith , Arkansas
8. Santa Maria , California	8. Little Rock , Arkansas
9. San Luis Obispo , California	9. Jackson , Mississippi
10. Kahului , Hawaii	10. Birmingham , Alabama

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.



We cordially invite you to a truly timely program:
Migration and the Upending of the Western Political Order
with scholar, lecturer and writer Mark Randol

Thousands of children at risk at our southern border. Africans chancing everything in the Mediterranean. A refugee camp burned down in Greece. Haitians camping in squalor in Texas.

Is modern migration the last best hope for thousands, or an impossible world scourge? A moral imperative for wealthy countries, or an intolerable burden? Worst of all, a threat for the world order? For answers, we turn in February to international scholar, lecturer, and author Mark Randol, to speak on Migration and the Upending of the Western Political Order. If in spite of our best humanitarian impulses no country can accommodate all the people who want in, what are we to do? And what are the implications for democracy here and abroad?

You won't want to miss this very timely program!

Date: Thursday, February 17, 2022 **Time:** 4:00 PM **Venue:** via Zoom

It's **Free:** As a member you will receive priority enrollment. Reserve now!

Just click this link below to register:

[Click for Zoom Registration](#)

Please contact Global Forum Chair, Marvin Mai, for more details or if you have any questions,
maimarvin57@gmail.com or 707-545-2224