



A non-profit club of Social Activities for men devoted to the promotion of independence and dignity.

Luther Burbank Branch 17

Santa Rosa, CA

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



THE REDWOOD BARK NEWSLETTER

For May 2020

Meetings are at LEGENDS in the Bennett Valley Golf Course, 3328 Yulupa Ave., Santa Rosa.

**ALL CANCELED UNTIL FUTHER NOTICE!**  
**No need to call anyone. Keep checking the website for updates!**

**May 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting Schedule !**

Board Meeting: 10:00 am on Zoom program

Social Hour: 11:00 am CANCELED

Lunch: 12:00 noon CANCELED

Speaker: CANCELED

Adjourn by: 1:30 pm CANCELED

Please place your badge into the collection buckets when leaving through the side door to the parking lot.

**May 21<sup>st</sup> Lunch Menu CANCELED!**

**Fix your own sandwiches--at home!**

**Beverages:** Regular or decaf coffee, iced tea or water.  
Beer, wine and mixed drinks, and free sodas are available at the bar.

**BIG Sir George Traverso's Message**

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



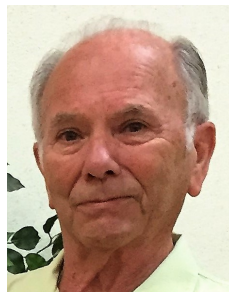
Friendship is the foundation to happiness. I think that I speak for most of us at SIR regarding my thoughts about this topic. This is the value of SIR participation and mutual interaction that leads to lasting friendships and vice versa. When we, at our level of maturity, can cherish this "gift" to its maximum, I believe that our character--physical and mental--is invigorated through friendship.

To comprehend this topic with a fundamental understanding, the wise Aristotle identified this harmony in three levels: **A)** friendships of utility, **B)** friendships of pleasure and **C)** friendships of the good. In definition **A)** we exercise our relationships for a common merit or value. For example, I like to talk to my neighbors regularly because they will, most likely, watch my house when I am on a vacation. In the second level **B)** friendships exist between people whose company is enjoyed. A perfect example of this type of friendship in the pre coronavirus days is when we meet a friend for coffee at a favorite spot. The third variety **C)** finds its center in mutual respect and admiration of individuals. This style, in my opinion, is the most basic

*(continued on page 2)*

**Little Sir Gary Bondi's Message**

[gbondi@sonic.net](mailto:gbondi@sonic.net) 539-2445



Greetings from afar my fellow SIR members. I trust you all have been able to avoid the nasty virus and you are all in good health. We are most definitely doing our part for social distancing! We are shut down again for our May meeting and activities are still on hold. It does appear, however, we may be able to resume some outdoor activities in the near future. We have missed out on some interesting programs over the last few meetings. The Potomac Foundation in March, Chris Smith in April and our very own Paul Willihnganz for this May. We will, however, have the good fortune to hear from them when we resume our meetings. I thought I would also take this opportunity to remind us of some notable days in the month of May. Here are a few with significant meaning, some clearly relevant to this time in our lives:

**May 1: May Day.** Throughout history it has had many meanings, however, in 1958, President Dwight Eisenhower declared it to be Law Day celebrating the place of law in creation of the U.S. Extremely relevant in today's society!

*(continued on page 2)*

**SIR Luther Burbank Branch 17 is in Area 10 of Region 3.  
The following is a list of your 2020 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	Gordon Boultonbee
<b>Little Sir:</b> Gary Bondi . . . . .	<a href="mailto:gbondi@sonic.net">gbondi@sonic.net</a> . . . . .	707-539-2445	Rich de Lambert
<b>Secretary:</b> Kurt Wehrmeister . . . . .	<a href="mailto:kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com">kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com</a>	630-461-2715	Ken Johnson
<b>Asset. Secretary:</b> Jim Gurke . . . . .	<a href="mailto:1jgurke@gmail.com">1jgurke@gmail.com</a> . . . . .	707-303-0989	Chris Nolen
<b>Treasurer:</b> Glenn Seime . . . . .	<a href="mailto:gseime@sbcglobal.net">gseime@sbcglobal.net</a> . . . . .	707-537-5360	Paul Willihnganz
<b>Asset. Treasurer:</b> Al Petrie . . . . .	<a href="mailto:alpetrie7@aol.com">alpetrie7@aol.com</a> . . . . .	707-545-7208	Elias Zegarra
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b> Jim Fenstermaker .	<a href="mailto:sirsrbrn17@gmail.com">sirsrbrn17@gmail.com</a> . . . . .	707-548-3346	<b>WEBMASTERS:</b>
			Dennis Mangan
			Jim Fenstermaker

**Big Sir Message** *(continued from page 1)*

of the friendship models. I believe that Aristotle's first two types of friendships find their rightful conclusion in model three. A fitting ending to understand true friendship lies in this model because mutual respect and admiration flows from the first two types. In other words, Aristotle would define true friendship in the concepts of respect and admiration.

I realize that the words "to have a friend is to be a friend" are so true to the value of friendship. Friendship does not grow on trees just for the taking. We must carefully prune, harvest the fruit and cultivate the "soil" to enjoy the tree of friendship. The "poison" of loneliness and despair stifles growth and withers its potential bloom. Today's major social dilemmas reside in the issues of homelessness and the manifestation of drugs. There are many explanations to the "roots" (pardon the pun on the tree of friendship) of these challenges but I feel that one answer may reside in the absence of friendship. Many people who are in such situations suffer from not having a friend to lean on by listening to their problems. Listening and doing the positive in these situations is critical to human relationships. These two actions naturally lead to true friendship.

The cruelties of hopelessness, depression and abandonment are scourges in our society. Friendship plays an immense role in human happiness. Just saying "hello" or courteously reaching out to a stranger makes all the difference in the world. Remember...little steps make great strides.

**Membership Attendance on April 16th**

It was **CANCELED** due to the virus outbreak.

At the end of the February meeting we had a total of **82** members. Since then Romie Schneider has died and two members have turned in their resignations, leaving us with possibly now 79 members.

[Return to Page 1](#)

**Little Sir Message** *(continued from page 1)*

**May 3:** *World Press Freedom Day.*

Boy, do we ever need that!

**May 6:** *Beverage Day.* Isn't that everyday now?

Also, *National Nurses Day.* Keep them in your thoughts as they are facing danger everyday.

**V-E Day:** Celebrating the end of WW-2 and the beginning of a new era in the history of mankind.

**May 10:** *Mothers Day.* Special memories for us all. Need I say more?

**May 15:** *Police Officers Memorial Day.*

**May 16:** *Armed Forces Day.* Remember all the men and women serving our country today.

**May 25:** *Memorial Day.* Our thoughts of family, friends and all those who have gone before us.

My hope is that May will also be the beginning of a winding down of the COVID-9 pandemic. We all know that our way of life will be drastically different, but we can at least begin to move forward. Let's keep our SIR fellowship together. Although we have not been physically together, I know we are keeping our SIR brothers in our thoughts. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such a fine group of gentlemen. In the meantime, good health to all and hoping we can meet again in June!

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE from your BIG SIR**

We are still in unprecedented times. Due to these extraordinary situations, the **cancellation** of the May 21<sup>st</sup> luncheon at Legends is appropriate and necessary.

Some good news--the **golf courses** are now to be opened but with several restrictions. Also, we will be having our **BEC meeting** via the Zoom program.

Meanwhile, I wish you and your families to be safe, be smart, stay healthy and we shall meet again!

Respectfully,

George Traverso, Big Sir Branch 17

## A New Monthly Feature, **Member Profiles:**

### **Badge #92 Kurt Wehrmeister**

*How many times do we get a shot at second chances?*

Have you ever gone back to a high school reunion and met your high school sweetheart and wondered what life would have been like had you married her? Would she still be the same girl you knew back then? What would have changed in between then and now (besides your weight, posture and flexibility)?

Sir Kurt Wehrmeister grew up in Geneva IL, about one hour west of Chicago. (You might get a glimpse of it when landing at O'Hare Airport.) In high school, Kurt met Paige, a lovely sophomore and his first love, who agreed to go to the senior prom with him. They dated for a while then drifted apart when Kurt was in college at the University of Illinois. They briefly dated again when he returned home to work on the local newspaper. The romance faded when Paige, ready to see the world and have new adventures, moved to the west coast, married and eventually settled in Santa Rosa. Meanwhile Kurt, eager to start a family, married the local librarian and had two boys. For the next 30 years, Kurt and Paige had no contact. After Paige's husband died, then Kurt's divorce and following a chance connection via Facebook, they met in Portland on a business trip and the romance flared once again.

Kurt now faced another challenge: knowing that a long-distant relationship would fail, he needed to move from Chicago to Santa Rosa and get a job. At age 56, Kurt found searching for jobs not as easy as it had been when he was in his 30s. He sent out 70 applications, received one interview, and got no offers! Fortunately, Moose International, where he worked in Chicago, didn't want to lose him and allowed him to work as a field representative overseeing Northern CA and Nevada lodges. So, Kurt moved out to Santa Rosa, married Paige, worked a bit over three more years for Moose International before retiring, then (most importantly) joined SIR Branch 17.

Some say you can never go back. Kurt and Paige actually didn't go back...they moved forward as adults having

*(continued at top to right)*



## **Member Profiles:** *(continued)*

fresh perspectives on their lives based on years of experiences. We can learn something from Kurt's romantic rekindling. Although we can't change the past, the people from the past can bring new meaning into our lives. Even when we think our friends are long lost, they may be waiting for us to reach out and discover exciting new relationships.

Years from now, will you remember the friends you made in SIR Branch 17? Will there be opportunities to rediscover your friends from the past? SIR Branch 17 is a blended family. Let's keep those connections tight with fellow SIR members ...and have a second chance at friendship after this COVID 19 situation eases. *(Article by Dennis Mangan)*

## **GLOBAL FORUM:** *(Article by Marvin Mai)*



Even though our "in person" meetings have been canceled we have held two "virtual" meetings via "Zoom."

Although, we have not developed a cure for COVID-19, we've alleviated a little of the quarantine boredom. We briefly explored, what the "new normal" will look like and the 40 minute time limit of the "Zoom" meetings will require that our meetings to be shortened somewhat.



We will have more to explore about the new release of some restrictions and what new businesses can start to reopen.. Also, of course are all the other global issues such as: Iran, China, North Korea, Syria and Turkey.

If you'd like to be included in the future "Zoom" meeting for on **Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>** for Global Forum and need more information about how to use "Zoom," then please send an email to Marvin at [maimarvin57@gmail.com](mailto:maimarvin57@gmail.com) or give him a call at 545-2224.

## **Couples' Night Out:** *(Article by Fred Rose)*



**April 16<sup>th</sup>** was **CANCELLED**, like most other activities. Possible this will happen now on May 28<sup>th</sup> at **La Gare French Restaurant**, 208 Wilson Street.

Cocktails at **5:00** pm, order dinner at **5:30** pm.

**CANCELED!**

## ACTIVITIES:

### Bocce:

(Article by Chuck Stark)



Every member will be receiving a separate email with a short survey regarding how interested you are in participating in our Bocce group. Depending on the number of responses, I will choose a casual lunch spot to hold an organizational meeting. From there we can plan events from April through October, near or far, with or without a meal. If we have members of the Santa Rosa League, I would appreciate a call or email to learn about availability of the Julliard Park courts.

Suggestions or questions please contact: **Chuck Stark** at: [cstark@sonic.net](mailto:cstark@sonic.net) or call 707-571-0207.

### Bowling:

(Article by Mike Heinzelman)



If you have an interest in joining the SIR bowling league, or just want to see how Mike is progressing, come-on-down to Double Decker Lanes in Rohnert Park any **Monday at 10:00 am**. Ask for the SIR bowling group.

(Remember, it's not a weekly commitment--just come when you can.)

Whether you are a good bowler or a beginner, you are welcome!

For more information call Mike Heinzelman at 579-6615 or email to: [mdheinz2@gmail.com](mailto:mdheinz2@gmail.com)

**CANCELED!**



### Boys' Night Out:

(Article by Don Malvestiti)



All restaurants this year will be picked from the "Best of Sonoma County"

Apr - Best overall, Gravenstein Grill

May - Latin Jun - Sushi

Jul - Outdoor dining, Aug - Burgers

Sep - Indian Oct - Craft beer

Nov - Seafood Dec - Nothing at this time.

**CANCELED!**

### List of the May Birthdays

Davis Bullwinkle	John Hafner
Pete Mc Grath	Bud Morgan
Mike O'Neill	Claude Schwarz
Lance Thompson	Roy Thuestad
Paul Willihnganz	

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

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

[Return to Page 1](#)

### Bridge:

Bridge is 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 now coordinated by **Pete Mc Grath**, at: [pmcgrath@sonic.net](mailto:pmcgrath@sonic.net) or call 579-8133. for the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, OR Jim Park at: [jcpark38@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jcpark38@sbcglobal.net) or call 578-4255 for the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays.



Bridge days scheduled this month for play at Legends Restaurant in Bennett Valley starting at **9:00 am** on **Tuesdays**, , at **10:00 am** on . If in doubt, contact Mike Heinzelman at [mdheinz2@gmail.com](mailto:mdheinz2@gmail.com) or call Mike at 579-6615.

**CANCELED!**

### Camera Club:

(Article by Rich Osborne)



We have selected Quarryhill Botanical Garden, for our next outing on **Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>** to meet there at 10:30 am to photograph spring flowers followed by a potluck picnic lunch on the grounds. Food items will be discussed when we get closer to the date. Everyone is welcome, all men and ladies interested in photography, so please come join us! [richosborne@outlook.com](mailto:richosborne@outlook.com) or 303-304-9262

Please leave a message if he does not answer.

**CANCELED!**

### Free Comedy!

(Article by Mark Burchill)



**Kingpins of Comedy** is a **free** comedy show the second Tuesday of every month. It's held in the lounge at Double Decker Lanes in Rohnert Park.

There are usually five comedians, in a show lasting about 90 minutes. There is no admission fee, drinks are very inexpensive, but they usually ask for a tip for the comedians.



The **May** show will be on the **12<sup>th</sup>** at 8:30 pm.

If you are interested in joining our Sir group and their partners (*this is a co-ed activity*) at these free comedy shows, please contact Mark Burchill at [SirMarkB@sonic.net](mailto:SirMarkB@sonic.net) for more details.

**CANCELED!**

**GOLF:***(Articles by Roy Thuestad)*

I think I have already forgotten how to play golf...seems like a lifetime has passed since our last game.

Several Stay-at-Home restrictions have just been lifted and golf is finally back on the menu for the general public. You'll have to book your own tee time and there are several operational restrictions in place. Follow this link to see how things have changed: [https://socoemergency.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Appendix-C\\_05-01-2020.pdf](https://socoemergency.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Appendix-C_05-01-2020.pdf)

Many of you took an active role in communicating with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and I want to thank you all for your efforts. The fruits of your labors can be seen in the easing of restrictions and opening of the courses. SIR Golf however, will **NOT** resume at this time. The State SIR Board and State SIR Golf Committee are considering the current situation and will make a decision as to when to re-start our golf activity.

You can again urge the process along by communicating with our State SIR Golf Chairman, Mark Stewart, and let him know that you would like to see our golf activity up and running again.

Email him at: [mss95678@hotmail.com](mailto:mss95678@hotmail.com)

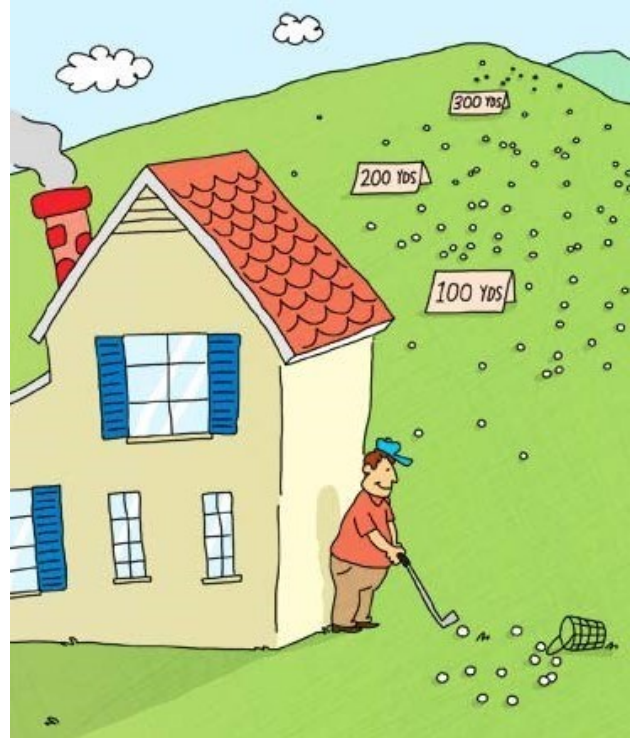
If we do nothing, SIR Golf will come back to us someday... but don't hold your breath waiting for it.

**Until then, Stay Safe, Stay Smart & Practice your Golf !!!**

**Joke of the day**

I guess there is nothing that will get your mind off everything like **golf** can. I have never been depressed enough to take up the game, but they say you get so sore at yourself that you forget to hate your enemies. --Will Rodgers

♪♪♪♪  
**Home, home**

**on the range...**

Come join us **SOMEDAY**  
for a fun day of golf.

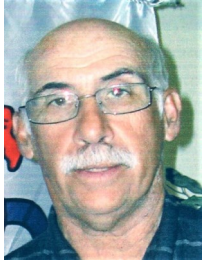
The place to be is the Bennett Valley Golf Course - The time to be there is Monday mornings starting at 8:30.  
*Hope to see you all out there.*

Until next time, Good Golfing,

Roy Thuestad

707-975-4406

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

**POKER FEST:***(Article by Steve Edelstein)*

Come try your hand at a game of poker. It's fun and a good way to meet your fellow Sir members. The date this month is **CANCELED**, from **12:30 pm to 4:00 pm**, at **Legends** in the Bennett Valley Golf Course.

Please call Steve to confirm this date for sure.

Contact **Steve Edelstein** by email at:

[1hatisland@gmail.com](mailto:1hatisland@gmail.com)

or call **206-8084**.

Please leave a message, I **will** return your call!



**CANCELED!**

**Stay safe, stay healthy and of course, wash your hands and wear your mask!**

**The Poem of the month for May**

**May Day** by Sara Teasdale (1884 – 1933)

A delicate fabric of bird song  
Floats in the air,  
The smell of wet wild earth  
Is everywhere.

Red small leaves of the maple  
Are clenched like a hand,  
Like girls at their first communion  
The pear trees stand.

Oh I must pass nothing by  
Without loving it much,  
The raindrop try with my lips,  
The grass with my touch;

For how can I be sure  
I shall see again  
The world on the first of May  
Shining after the rain?

**Wine, Beer and Spirits:** *(By Gary Bondi)*

Well, not much to say about our WBS activity. It looks like it will be a while, even after some restrictions are lifted, before we will be able to get back out again. But, all is not lost! I'm sure all of you have been continuing wine, beer and spirits activity on you own! So, cheers to all! It's never to early for **Happy hour!**

The May 2020 edition of **SIR HAPPENINGS** is now available to view online.

This a very informing newsletter produced by **SIRinc** with many articles re-published from many of the SIR Branches throughout our area. Look at pages 17,18 & 19 of articles from Branch 17, and all of the other items in its 44 pages. The last four pages, 39 to 44 have lots of interesting consumer tips for you to check out. To view this free newsletter go to [www.sirinc.org/sirhappenings](http://www.sirinc.org/sirhappenings), then click on the **Happenings** May, 2020 tab. This will ask you to open or save the PDF file in you favorite PDF program. Best to select "Open." You can always save if you want, for later reading. Also you can print what pages you what or the entire document. Read and enjoy!

**What State has the highest percentage of people who walk to work?**

Alaska

**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.

## Socially Connected in the Time of COVID-19

By: Dennis F. Mangan, Ph.D.

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a chilling effect on our freedom to gather with friends and family. These restrictions are seen as urgent for seniors because they are more vulnerable to serious respiratory complications. Socially isolated senior men are impacted especially hard.

After retirement, senior men often struggle to stay connected with society. Most of male social identity is built upon years of working at a job. Who you are is often related to what you do professionally. Upon retirement, men lose and have difficulty finding new identity along with workplace friends.

Sons in Retirement (SIR) is a non-profit started in California in 1958 with a mission to enrich the lives of members through fun activities and events, while making friends for life. Sonoma County has ten SIR clubs having a total of about 725 active members. SIR is different from other social clubs in that it does not sell anything or have a commitment to community services. SIR espouses no political party, religion or sect of any kind.

SIR members gather at a monthly luncheon where they are greeted and welcomed by old and new friends. Although sometimes awkward at first, the guys share stories of their personal history, current activities, and goals for the future. Conversations range from former employment and military service, to recent travel spots, to advice on where to get a good deal on a new car. Each luncheon features an interesting speaker, including local sports figures, biomedical researchers and even reporters from the Press Democrat. Besides the luncheon, SIR offers a wide range of social activities including golf, poker, bocce, bowling, and dining out. Some activities welcome partners as well.

So why does SIR exist? Senior men are one of the highest risk groups for depression, substance abuse, and, let's admit it, overt crankiness. Social interactions are critical for mental and physical health, healthy behavior, and mortality risk. Scientists have shown that social isolation of healthy individuals can lead to psychological and physical decline and even death. Civil rights officials know that long term solitary confinement of prisoners is a form of torture.

Humans of any age require interaction with other humans. It's in our genes. Knowing that you are loved, cared for and listened to is essential for normal functioning. Being around good friends reduces stress, and benefits the immune, digestive, and heart systems. These relationships foster a sense of purpose and meaning in life and minimize unpleasant thoughts that instigate harmful behavior (think drugs, alcohol and suicide.) A commitment to being a good friend can lead to wanting to stay healthy.

Social relationships can have a dark side when they become stressful, as seen in our current political situation. For that reason, SIR does not have a political or religious agenda, and members practice ways to listen to and respect opposite opinions.

SIR luncheons have been canceled for now. However, here are four ways that we can stay connected with our friends: **1)** Call them. Hearing a friendly voice and talking can lift our mood as well as theirs. **2)** Even better, "see" your friends by using today's internet video chat platforms such as Skype, Facetime or Zoom. **3)** Text or email them with updates and uplifting comments. **4)** Mail an old-fashioned handwritten note with a little drawing or a photograph.

SIR clubs understand the importance of in-person as well as remote socialization for senior men. More information about SIR throughout northern California can be found at <https://www.sirinc.org>.

*(This is the article that was submitted to the Press Democrat to be a "Close to Home" article but it was shorten down to what was published in the Monday, May 4th edition.)*

### Sunshine Report:

We need your help to tell us if you know of any of our members are sick, depressed, that need help with something or if a SIR member has died.



Just contact Kurt Wehrmeister, our Secretary at **630-461-2715** or send him an email to: [kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com](mailto:kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com).

Kurt will then process the message onto someone qualified to take care of what needs to be done.

**Thanks for your help!**

Pictures from some of the SIR members and partners that received special “home made masks” produced for by SIR Chris Nolen  
**THANKS Chris, for your thoughtfulness and generosity in helping all of us to stay safe and healthy!**



The Bondi family

Mel & Mark Burchill



Dennis & Delphine Mangan



Lorraine & Robert Reuther

**Mother's Day**

**Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>**



Elias & Nancy Zegarra

