



Luther Burbank Branch 17

Santa Rosa, CA

New Website: www.sir17.org

THE **REDWOOD BARK** NEWSLETTER

For **MAR. 2021**

All members are invited to attend our next SIR Meeting on Thursday, **March 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

March 18th 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: 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.

March 18th 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 528-6987



We take for granted a situation or event that appears right in front of our eyes, yet we do not appreciate and fully recognize the beauty and importance of the object or sense until it is questioned or removed. In some cases, until it is too late.

Such is the situation that appears to us on almost a daily level.

During the past year we have been engulfed in a world-wide pandemic. The stress on humanity that this disease has unleashed is formidable. During the past 12 months society has witnessed and been forced to adapt to a "new norm." Our socio-economic settings, such as modes of shopping, banking, working and the other many daily routine tasks, have been altered by this scourge.

Now, let us take a moment and reflect and appreciate the blessings that Nature has given us. All too often, when we take a leisurely walk and notice a grey squirrel scampering up a redwood tree at Armstrong Grove Park or a flock of birds flying over a trail near the Petaluma River, we are blind to the beauty in front of us. *(continued on page 2)*

Little Sir Gordon Boulton's Message

gboulton@aol.com 584-8063



The State SIR has launched a Branch Vaccination Assistance Program. Our Branch has elected to participate on an informal basis only. So, if you are interested in getting the COVID-19 vaccination but have had difficulty making an appointment because you do not have internet access or are not confident in your ability to navigate myriad websites, and would like some assistance, please call me at the phone number given on page 2 of the **BARK** and I or another Branch volunteer will see what we can do to assist you. If you need transportation help getting to a vaccination appointment, I can help with that also.

The sooner we can get vaccinated the sooner we will be in a strong position to resume in-person luncheon meetings when the County allows inside activities for non-related individuals. Legends is no more but the BEC has a tentative new location lined up for when the time comes. Looking forward to it!

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

BIG Sir George Traverso's Message (continued)

I believe that I can speak for most of us who reside in this beautiful spot, that on many occasions one overlooks this beauty and concerns oneself with the dangers of the pandemic, economic pressures and just planning for the next day. Nestled in the Sonoma Valley, stretching along the Santa Rosa Plain and hugging the Sonoma Coast, we live in a beautiful place. Enjoying nature's diversity such as the commanding Pacific Coast to the west, the lovely trails, lakes, creeks and peaceful open spaces that dot our county are gifts for all to enjoy and respect. Granted, we have experienced several devastating fire storms and the occasional shakes from earth movements beneath our feet. However, the beauty of our living space in Sonoma County is often overlooked.

One of the most notable individuals who loved our area is Luther Burbank. Arriving from his native state of Massachusetts in the 1870's, Burbank was a botanist, horticulturist, a pioneer in agricultural science and quickly became a famous Santa Rosa citizen. Working from his experimental farm in Sebastopol, he soon admired the beauty of this area stating, "I firmly believe, from what I have seen, that this is the chosen spot of all this earth as far as nature is concerned." Such words from an individual who devoted a lifetime to the secrets of nature and complimenting the spot in which we live is an affirmation to the beauty that surrounds us.

So, when you feel a little depressed with the media news lately, take a walk, smell the spring daffodils, enjoy the singing birds and wear a mask, maybe a double one!

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

[Return to Page 1](#)

Our guest speaker for our March Zoom meeting will be Bill Hodges.

Bill is a docent on the USS Potomac, FDR's Presidential yacht. His presentation includes a 15-minute video.

Bill has been involved with the Potomac Association for twenty years, as docent, narrator, speaker and crewman. He also has cleaned the heads.

Bill and his wife Sue live in Oakland. He served as Chairman for the Alameda County Veterans Affairs Commission, and is president of Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 400 (East Bay).

He also is a California Department of Justice Certified Firearms Safety Instructor.

While not engaged in these activities, Bill is an independent manufacturer's representative in the photographic industry.



Upcoming Speakers

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

May 20: **Jim Sweeney** is the Editorial Director for the Press Democrat. He'll be telling us how the editorial page of the PD is put together.



Recap of February 18th, Luncheon Speaker

Mike Barrington, former Big Sir of Branch 116 in Walnut Creek, gave us a PowerPoint presentation about the French Resistance during the German Occupation of France during World War 2. Mike wrote an historical novel about just that, and his presentation included photos of the locations where the novel takes place: the railroad yards where supply trains from Germany were sabotaged; railroad viaducts that were blown up; the town hall used as headquarters of the local Gestapo; the monastery where the monks assisted in the Resistance; and so forth.

Mike lived in France, belonged to a French order of missionary priests, married a Frenchwoman and his father-in-law was a member of the Resistance. His "local knowledge" was very apparent during his fascinating talk!

Congratulations to our *February 2021* winner: *Jim Fenstermaker*

List of the **March Birthdays**

Bill Archer	Mark Burchill
Jim Dale	Mike Heinzelman
Marvin Mai	Mike Mouat
Jack Rosetti	Elias Zegarra

Bob Zie

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

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.

MAR 18th Apr 15th May 20th June 17th

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

MAR 4th Apr 1st May 6th June 3rd

CONFUSED ABOUT HOW TO USE *SIR*?

Many members are, and here are some tips.

SIR stands for ***Sons In Retirement...*** if you want to use the corporate title, use ***SIR, INC.*** or ***Sons In Retirement, Inc.***

MOST COMMON MISTAKES:

SIR is never plural—there is only one Sons In Retirement—**so, never write or say *SIRS*** when referring to Sons In Retirement.

SIR is always capitalized.

There are no periods between the letters.

The possessive of *SIR* is *SIR's*.

SOME EXAMPLES:

John is a member of *SIR*—Not *SIRS*.

SIR's annual meeting is held in August—possessive

Sir refers to an individual member of *SIR*.

SOME MORE EXAMPLES:

Sir John Jones is a member of *SIR*—Singular.

Many *Sirs* attended the *SIR* luncheon—Plural.

A *Sir's* son attended a *SIR* luncheon—Singular Possessive.

Many *Sirs'* wives attended *SIR* picnics—Plural & Possessive. (Article by Region 3 Director, Dennis Pangburn)

The Poem of the month for **March**

A March Motto

by Anonymous

Month of bluster, ice and sleet,
 Silent wood and ugly street,
 Winds that roar and flakes that fly,
 Frozen earth and gloomy sky,—
 Angry March, thy name to me

Like a battle-cry shall be!

"Forward, march!" but leave behind
 Stubborn will and stupid mind.

"Forward, march!" and sing a song
 As we stoutly march along.

"Forward, march!" away from sin;

"Forward, march!" the goal to win;

"Forward, march!" without a fear;

"Forward, march!" through all the year.

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 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 or click [here](#).

SIR Branch 17, Member Profile:

Jim Gurke, Badge #56

Live, learn, train and connect...these are the four pillars for success for Jim Gurke and an organization he would later help build. The offspring of first-generation immigrants from Poland, Jim is a product of Detroit and a father returning home after WWII. He enjoyed his upbringing with his sister in a loving, middle class family in southeast Michigan. With a love of reading that he got from his parents early in life, Jim discovered the world through books. He became the first to graduate from college in his family, and for a while, tried teaching American studies and history to eighth graders high on adolescent hormones and low on interest.



One day in 1980, Jim had the epiphany to head out of Michigan and go north to one of the wildest places in North America. Like Johnny Horton's song, North to Alaska, Jim headed "way up north... where the river is windin' and big nuggets they are findin'." Jim didn't find those nuggets of gold, but did find a place full of beauty, adventure and friendly people. "I moved to Alaska and never looked back." As Jim learned, Alaska has reasons to be the setting for books about its wilderness, sled dogs and tough men. Jack London wrote blockbuster books about Alaska (*White Fang* and *Call of the Wild*) as did John Muir (*Travels in Alaska*). Jon Krakauer's book, *Into the Wild*, (recently made into a movie) tells the tale of what people bring to Alaska—disaffection, idealism, the search for reinvention and redemption. Jim took advantage of the open roads and magnificent vistas to do some serious long-distance bicycling, being careful to stay clear of the grizzlies along the way.

Jim enjoyed working at the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation which provides money to the Alaska General Fund by underwriting mortgages for homebuyers to obtain safe, affordable, energy efficient housing. AHFC is also well-respected for helping renters avoid evictions and securing housing for seniors, persons with disabilities and other special needs populations.

(continued at top to right)

Member Profiles:

(continued)

Together with former Senator Ted Stevens' staff, Jim helped secure land and funding for the Alaska Job Corps Center. Job Corps is a tuition-free training and education program that connects eligible young men and women with the skills and educational opportunities they need to establish practical careers. The Corps use a four-step program to learn about and prepare for careers, search and apply for jobs, and then get hired. Live, learn, train, and connect are considered pillars of success for Job Corps trainees. For his efforts, Jim was awarded Alaska state employee of year!

Jim has developed friendships with many people over the years, and friendship is something he takes very seriously. He credits his friends for a lot of successes in his life and maintains connections with his buddies in Alaska, Santa Cruz (where he vacationed to get away from those dark cold winters), and Santa Rosa (where he met guys who played golf and eventually got him involved in SIR17 about seven years ago.) Jim has served as our Little and Big Sir, Secretary, and is currently our Assistant Secretary. As you likely know, Jim loves golf and co-chairs the golf club with Roy Thuestad. He says that along with golf, the luncheons and guest speakers attracted him to our Branch. Jim encourages us to meet more SIR17 members and to sit at different tables at luncheons...with hopes that in-person luncheons become possible again soon! Jim, thank you for the golden nuggets of friendship and dedication to SIR17!

(Article by Dennis Mangan)

Joke of the Month



Parents were discussing whether their son was mature enough for kindergarten, or whether to wait another year to enroll him. Their little guy overheard their conversation. Later, a neighbor asked the boy if he was going to attend kindergarten in the fall. "No," he replied. "They're not ready for me yet."



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.**

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 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, Mar. 5th at 10:00 am** for the Global Forum meeting, then contact Marvin at 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: March 5, March 19 & April 2

[Return to Page 1](#)

GOLF:

(Article by Roy Thuestad)

When in Rome,



do as the Romans do.

Until next time, Good Golfing,

Roy Thuestad

707-975-4406

roymond@comcast.net

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.

SIR BRANCH Golf PROCLAMATION CLARIFICATION

There has been discussion in some Branch BEC's and Golf Committees about opening Golf with a resolution and protocol that deviates from the Model Resolution and Protocol the State Board has approved for use by Branches. Some of the proposed changes are significant and greatly reduce the safety afforded to members participating in Branch golf. The proposed changes also open the Branches to a much greater risk of liability for failure to provide due care for Branch members participating in golf activities.

The Model Golf Resolution and Protocol the State approved was created in consultation with our Insurance Provider and our State Legal Advisor to provide a Minimum of care and due diligence for the Branches.

If the Branch leadership diminishes these standards, they are doing so at the risk of liability to themselves, their members and the Branch itself. Each Branch is a Separate Corporation and is responsible for its own governance and responsibilities.

I understand that Branches would like to set their own rules, and they want their Area Governor or Regional Director to approve those rules. However, the AG's and RD's are not authorized to approve modifications to the Model Resolution and Protocol; it isn't their job to modify standards set by the State Board.

Branches must understand that the Model Resolution and Protocol are there to protect SIR Branches against claims of Gross Negligence, and the Branches need to understand the Model Resolution and Protocol are there to Protect them; not restrict their reopening golf. The same may be said for the reopening of other Outdoor Activities.

Stu Williams, SIR, INC. President 2021

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.

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

**SIR
HAPPENINGS**

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 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!



On
Sunday
March
14th

