



Luther Burbank Branch 17

Santa Rosa, CA

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

THE **REDWOOD BARK** NEWSLETTER For **JAN.** 2022

All members are invited to attend our next SIR In-Person Luncheon/ Meeting on Thursday, **January 20, 2022**, at The Epicenter, 3225 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, January 15**, 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!

January 20 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 reactivating. The chairmen will be contacting you.

January 20 Lunch Menu. for \$25.00

House salad

BBQ chicken breast, French fries, and Seasoned vegetables,

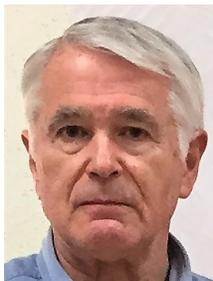
Bread and butter, fresh baked cookies,

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 hope you enjoyed the holidays! Now it is back to the daily delights of being a member of SIR and safely availing ourselves of the social activities we offer!

Some things will change for 2022 and others will remain the same. The Board Executive Committee (BEC) will be meeting the third Thursday of each month, rather than the first Thursday, and we will be meeting at 9:45 AM in the Trophy Room at Epicenter. A Zoom link with closed captioning will be available for those who do not wish to attend in person. BEC meetings are open to all members, not just Branch Officers and Directors. (But, of course, only BEC members can vote!)

Sirs Marvin Mai and Stan Borges will continue to be our Audit Committee. *(continued on page 2)*

Little Sir Gary Bondi's Message

gbondi@sonic.net 707-5392445



Greetings fellow SIRS and good wishes for a happy, healthy 2022!

This will be my first article as Little Sir for 2022 and hopefully many more to follow. I say that because I began 2020 as the Little Sir. As you may recall, the year started pretty normal. Then, things changed drastically for all of us. This pandemic arrived on the scene and we were suddenly faced with new challenges, not only for our branch, but for each of us individually. In addition, I was diagnosed with a serious illness that required me to resign as Little Sir. Our branch was faced with an uncertain future and the challenge of what do we do now? Well, here we are 2 years later, and our Branch has weathered the storm and continued to function in innovative ways. It is because our leaders stepped up and accepted the challenge. *(continued on page 2)*

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 Boulton	gboulton@aol.com	707-584-8063	Rich de Lambert
Little Sir: Gary Bondi	gbondi@sonic.net	707-539-2445	Bill Grafeld
Secretary: Terry Freeman	terryfreeman32@yahoo.com	707-235-7066	Ken Johnson
Asst. Secretary: Steven Saulsbury . .	stevensaulsbury@comcast.net	707-328-4627	Tom Johnson
Treasurer: Al Petrie	alpetrie7@aol.com	707-974-9193	Tom Lubas
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 Richard Kindle	AREA 10 GOVERNOR Robert Nadell	REGION 3 DIRECTOR Dennis Pangburn	Dennis Mangan Jim Fenstermaker

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

Immediate Past Big Sir George Traverso will chair the Nominating Committee and Dennis Mangan and Elias Zegarra will continue as committee members. 2021 Assistant Secretary Terry Freeman has moved up to Secretary and 2021 BEC Director Steve Saulsbury has been appointed 2022 Assistant Secretary. Bill Grafeld has been appointed to fill Steve's Director position. (Bill was originally going to be an ad hoc (non-voting) director in 2022.)

In light of our significant cash balance, the BEC decided at its December 2021 meeting to not charge members dues in 2022. Other suggestions on how to reduce the surplus had been proposed, including free monthly lunches, or making the annual BBQ free, but these would be contrary to SIR bylaws, since not all members would benefit.

We will continue the Phone Committee for the foreseeable future to ask members whether they plan to attend each monthly luncheon or not, rather than revert to the pre-pandemic process of members calling the point of contact given in the *BARK* only if they requested an excused absence. I feel this is a good idea since it allows us to maintain some personal contact with members during the pandemic and get feedback on their situations and concerns; it minimizes the number of phone calls/emails our current point of contact Al Petrie must receive; and it gives our Phone Committee members an opportunity to volunteer. For those of you keeping score, our attendance at luncheons in the years before the pandemic averaged nearly 70%; since resuming in-person luncheons at Epicenter we have averaged in the mid-40% range.

Our in-person lunches are being broadcast via
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BIG Sir Gordon Boulton's Message *(continued)*

Zoom so that members who are unable to attend or uncomfortable attending indoor events can still enjoy our guest speakers and say Hi to fellow members. The Zoom feature is closed captioned so that both remote viewers and those in attendance in-person can better follow the dialog. We have a way to go to achieve more accurate transcriptions but fortunately I think we have members with expertise in this area. Stay tuned!

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

I would personally like to express my gratitude to our current Big Sir, Gordon Boulton, for stepping in to fill my position of Little Sir for my remaining term. In addition, a big shout out and thanks to Big Sir, George Traverso, who took on the Big Sir job for two years. Along with the help of our BEC and many of our members, we are functioning today and looking forward to the new year. We have resumed our in-person luncheons and some activities. We are experiencing now about 35 members at our meetings. I realize there is still some uncertainty out there and some members do not feel comfortable attending. We understand that and look forward to seeing them whenever they feel the time is right.

With all the healthy protocols and the vaccines, we are in a much better position than the last two years. Let us all do our best to stay healthy, enjoy life and move forward. I Look forward to when we can all gather again and enjoy the true fellowship of our SIRS.

January 20, 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

February 17, 2022

Chris Smith, former, long-time columnist with the Press Democrat.

March 17, 2022

Jill Ravitch, current Sonoma County District Attorney.

(Article by Gary Bondi)

Looking for NEW SIR Branch 17 Members!

It was great to see many of you at our last in-person meeting at the Epicenter. It is a new and exciting time for our club.

Big SIR George, Little SIR Gordon and the RAMP committee members composed of Rich de Lambert, Fred Rose, Tom Johnson and Neil Wheeler, have worked hard to bring all this new information and programs to our club. So now it is your turn to help in finding new members to join.

Remember our club is driven by bringing in new members. Membership is also open to members who are not retired. We all have neighbors, wives, other clubs, golf buddies, old friends, bridge groups and traveling friends. Call them and introduce them to SIR. We need them and they need us!

Our website has been updated together with the information and application forms for new members. Check it out at: <https://www.sir17.org>

Our State SIR Organization has developed a new website just for new potential members to look at and get a better understanding of what SIR is about. Check it out at: <https://wearesir.com>

You are always welcome to call me, Rich de Lambert, at **707-545-3490** with any questions or comments. I will be waiting to hear from you.

CALL POTENTIAL MEMBERS TODAY!

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Recap of Meeting on December 16, 2021

Our December luncheon was, by plan, a low-key affair with no guest speaker. We had a delicious turkey dinner and ample time to relax and enjoy conversations with our tablemates and others in attendance.

Big Sir George Traverso presented Sir Duane Jensen his 90th Birthday SIR State Certificate of Recognition. Following that, Outgoing SIR Area 10 Governor and Branch 17 member Bob Reuther inducted the members of the 2022 Branch Executive Committee who were present. Big Sir George then presented Bob Reuther with a Certificate of Appreciation for his service as Area Governor from September 2018 through December 2021; and Incoming Big Sir Gordon Boulton presented Outgoing Big Sir George with a Certificate of Appreciation for his two years of service as Big Sir, and his Past Big Sir pin. George wrapped up the meeting by inducting new member Michael Casteel.

(Article by Gordon Boulton)



New Member Badge #138
Michael Casteel

Michael Casteel was born and raised in a small town outside Seattle but moved to California to attend college at Caltech in Pasadena in 1964. Upon graduation with a degree in Physics, he went to work for a defense contractor in the LA area. The work was mostly computer programming which served to hone his interest in software and led to another job working on a large computer operating system.

This led to him meeting his bride, Cathy, who lived in the same apartment house in Hermosa Beach. When the company moved to San Diego, Michael and Cathy went along, but after a couple years decided to sell it all and travel throughout Europe for a few months.

On returning to the USA in 1973, they chose to look in the Bay Area, settling on San Francisco because Cathy got a job offer in the city, then Michael got employed building software for another computer manufacturer. After only six months they left San Francisco (can't park anywhere!) for Oakland, which they enjoyed for years.

In 1979, one of Michael's co-workers and he started a software company, leading to a move to Silicon Valley.

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SIR Branch 17, Member Profiles:

John Gnam, Badge #163

John enjoys being around people. He grew up in Menlo Park surrounded by a neighborhood full of boys who rode bikes and played all kinds of sports. There was always someone to hang out with...even when he returned home. You see, John was one of 12 kids in the Gnam family. His parents were Irish Catholics who wanted a big family...maybe four or five...but things happened and then there was an even dozen. To most of us, growing up with so many sibs would be stressful, but John shrugs his shoulders and says it was fun, and "big families were common back then."

I couldn't stop thinking about his mom...I mean, really...12 children! John explained just how tough his mom really was. As a young girl, she and her mom came to America from Ireland during the depression with visions of getting an American education. After her mom died when she was only 12, she was placed in an orphanage. When emancipated from the orphanage, she went to work as a secretary. It was during this employment that she got assigned to the typing pool for an Irish guy working at Fort Mason, who she later married...and had 12 kids with! John describes his mom as being "a fiery redhead with a temper to match!" Her upbringing during the depression gave her the strength of resiliency and left her "mentally, physically, and emotionally tough." John reminded me that at this time, dads didn't help too much with child rearing. Her toughness rubbed off on John and his sibs, and he is grateful for her guidance, discipline, and strength.

A bookkeeping class in high school turned him on to math and accounting. John's dad was an accountant who liked this profession because "you are always the first to know what the results are!" John majored in accounting at College of San Mateo and later at Hayward State (now Cal State University, East Bay) before starting a long career in several local winery businesses. He used the accounting numbers to determine how many tons of grapes to buy and estimate how many gallons of wine to make.

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Member Profiles:

(continued)

Doing projections and looking at trends...John was in his element! He followed distributions of wines throughout the country, looked at consumer buying trends, and helped the wineries navigate a capital-intensive market. He even started collecting wines...well, at least those bottles he didn't drink. ☺

Retirement gave John a chance to slow down... but did he?! John stays physically active every morning by biking, but confesses, "I don't go fast, and I don't go far, but I do go up hills!" He enjoys woodworking, making clocks, hiking, and camping, and helping his church (Cathedral of St. Eugene) and non-profits transport food and people. He's trying to learn how to say, "I quit, no more!", but admits there is an "unbelievable need out there for people to help the less fortunate!" John instinctively jumped at the chance to serve SIR17 as our Assistant Treasurer. Next time you see John, thank him for helping our club and for letting us become part of his ever-expanding family of friends.

(Article by Dennis Mangan)

We are sad to inform you that our member

Robert Tuttle

passed away on Nov. 12, 2021.

We send our condolences to his family.

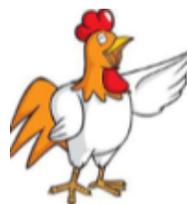
At our December 2021 meeting Bill Grafeld was the free lunch winner!

List of the **January Birthdays**



Glenn Andrade	Barry Bialkoski
Steve Carey	Steve Edelstein
Tom Lubas	Dennis Mangan
Jerry Peterson	

Joke of the Month



My 85 year old grandfather was rushed to the hospital with a possible concussion. The doctor asked him a series of questions: Do you know where you are? "I'm at Rex Hospital." What city are you in? "Raleigh." Do you know who I am? "Dr. Hamilton."

My grandfather turned to the nurse and said, "I hope he doesn't ask me any more questions."

Why? she asked. "Because all those answers were on his badge."

Doing Your Part

Did you know that membership in Branch 17 has declined by a third over the last eight years and most of that decline was before COVID-19? Our experience is common among SIR branches and numerous branches have gone inactive or were dissolved because they couldn't find new leaders. Statewide, the average age of the membership is approaching 80 years. Unless these trends are reversed, SIR is at risk of failure. SIR State has hired a marketing and communications consultant to help develop a plan to boost SIR membership. Now it's our turn to act.

We have:

- Learned the details of the state's new Publicity Plan and Branding Guidelines.
- Updated our marketing materials to attract new, and younger, members.
- Listed our meetings online at news media and broadcast radio sites.
- Posted information about SIR on social media, including Facebook and Nextdoor.

We are also:

- Working on public service announcements, articles, and press releases to promote SIR.
- Working to promote a Sonoma County SIR Facebook page that would contain information about all nine active SIR branches in the county.
- Working jointly with other branches to exchanges ideas and promote SIR.

What can you do? You can do your part by:

- Inviting guests to our luncheons using the new invitation cards.
- Helping distribute our updated brochures.
- Promoting SIR's public image by following our public Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/SIRBranch17/>) and invite others to follow us (there is a link to our Facebook Page on our website, SIR17.org)
- Like our Facebook posts and click on any links provided in the posts...this helps generate public awareness of SIR.

(Article by Neil Wheeler, Publicity Chair)

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.

When I was a child I thought "nap time" was punishment.
Now it feels like a small vacation.

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.

Poem for January

I'm January by Annette Wynne

**I'm January bringing you
A year of days—all brand, brand new;
I step upon the frosty ground.
When chimes and sleighbells ring around;
You welcome me and children sing,
And joy comes into everything.
I bring you love and lots of cheer,
And work and friends for all the year.**

ACTIVITIES:

Most indoors activities are now allowed to resume again, at the discretion of the activities chairs, and subject to all safety and health codes. 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 newsletter. Hopefully, we can start our outings then, although I will be gone during May and June, but let us get rolling!

Boys' Night Out:

(Article by Don Malvestiti)



January 12 will be the date to join us at **The Bear Republic Brewery**, 5000 Roberts Lake Road, Rohnert Park.

This picture was the group

from Aug. 14, 2019.



If you don't want to miss out this time, then join us by **5:30 pm** for social time and drinks, order dinner by **6:00 pm**. Hope to see you there!

You **MUST** have your vaccination cards and the signed waiver form to have been recorded by Gordon. You need to contact Don as soon as possible to let him know that you will be attending. Attendance will probably fill up **FAST!**

Reservations are a must!

Contact Don by **Sunday January 9**, at 5:00 pm.

malvestitidon485@gmail.com or call him at

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

Bridge:

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 February 2022 to see how things have settled down.



Jim Park will be accessing the situation then and have more information to share at that time.

If you have any questions contact Jim at

jcpark38@sbcglobal.net

or call him at **707-578-4255**

Camera Club:

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



In December, we had only one person attend. Was it COVID-19? Was it the Holidays? Or is Camera Club not of interest anymore?

Please understand that we're not "up tight photography hounds." I have belonged to some photography clubs that can be very critical and intimidating. We are not! We are your SIR buddies. We don't criticize your pictures. We just want an audience to show our pictures. Usually, we learn a thing or two from each other and the speakers. You don't need a multi thousand-dollar DSRL camera. The camera on your cell phone is better than the first camera many of us started with.

You are free to bring guests, spouses, partners, or friends. Most of us have already shown proof of vaccination and have signed the waiver. Any new people who have not, will need to be prepared to provide these requirements.

We meet at the Presbyterian Church of the Roses in the Rose Room, 2500 Patio Court, as long as church members are invited too—and some have attended in the past. I always bring my laptop and connect it to the large screen TV. The Church has Wi-Fi and internet connections available.

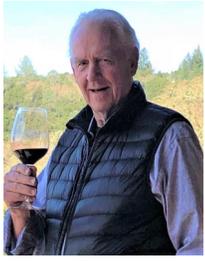
I am **not** going to schedule a meeting as yet because I need some feedback. Please contact me with your comments and questions before we make a decision of what to do next.

email to: richosborne@outlook.com

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

Thanks for your input, Rich Osborne

Couples' Night Out: (Article by Fred Rose)



We plan to start with the **La Gare Restaurant**, 208 Wilson St., Santa Rosa.

If you are interested in attending joining us for this CNO on **Thursday, January 27**, then watch for



an email from me with the final information. Do not wait very long after receiving my email, as spaces fill up very fast. Contact me quickly to reserve your seat at the table!

Reservations are a must!

Contact Fred Rose: fredicrose@comcast.net
or call 707-548-5797

GLOBAL FORUM: (Article by Marvin Mai)



Our first Global Forum meeting will be on Friday, January 14, 2022.

As we remember the many trials and tribulations of 2021, we will try to visualize and predict where we think the chal-



lenges, problems, and/or successes await our global community.

All SIR members who have met the SIR protocols for COVID-19 vaccination are welcome but please let Marvin know if you plan to attend so the proper amount of coffee, etc. is available.

We always try to meet on the **second** Friday of the month. This month's meeting is on **January 14, at 10:00 am**, located at 4743 Woodview Drive, Santa Rosa. *(South on Summerfield RD to the end, turn left up the hill about one-third mile, the house is on the left.)*

**PARK IN THE DRIVEWAY OR IN THE BAY
ACROSS THE STREET, AS THERE IS NO
PARKING ON THE STREET!**

Should you have questions, please contact Marvin at maimarvin57@gmail.com or give him a call at 707-545-2224.

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

Fridays: Jan. 14 Feb. 11 Mar. 11

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GOLF:



The golf update is a recap of the December 20 email to our 17/76 members. Due to the recent rains the Bennett Valley course cannot handle mowers or other routine maintenance. With a forecast of yet more rain, the golf committee consulted USGA rules for handicapping during conditions like these. As a result, we are temporarily suspending Monday competitions through January 10, 2022. As we get closer to that date we'll provide an update on course conditions and resumption of play.

USGA rules encourage players to not post scores at their home course during this suspension in fairness to other club members. Tournament and 'away' postings are OK.

Thanks to all the club members for timely paying their NCGA dues. We currently stand at 40 members. Whenever you have a chance please welcome our newest member, Mr. Ron Tonelli.

Hope you enjoy a great holiday season. Hit 'em long and straight...Your Golf Committee.

Jim Gurke 707-303-0989

1jgurke@gmail.com

POKER FEST

The poker group playing 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 Boultee.

Membership Application Process:

If you have a friend or acquaintance who might be interested in joining Branch 17, please familiarize yourself with the Instructions posted on the Branch website, <https://www.sir17.org>

They were recently updated, as were the names and phone numbers of the appropriate points of contact. This will enable us to process membership applications and welcome new members in a timely manner. Simply click the Member Application button on the Home page and it will take you to the application form and instructions.

A special Thank You to members Gordon Boultee 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

New Member Michael Casteel

(article continued from page 3)

After spending some 20 years growing the company, we moved to Seattle to gain some breathing space, and a few years later Michael was able to retire when the company was acquired.

In 2017, Cathy was fed up with Seattle's grey skies, so we decided to move back to California. Looking around the Bay Area, we found most of it too busy and crowded, so we ended up moving to Santa Rosa, where our daughter had settled some years prior. We still very much enjoy being able to park anywhere!

OLD AGE!

I have everything that I wanted as a teenager, **only 60 years later**. I don't have to go to school or work. I get an allowance every month. I have my own pad. I don't have a curfew. I have a driver's license and my own car, plus I don't have acne.

Life is great!

A Message from your Editor

I just want to **THANK** all of you for your cards, notes, phone calls, emails, well wishes, and prayers to get over this setback in my health. They are all working as I am slooowly getting much better, but I still have a long ways to go for full recovery.

Thanks also to SIRinc and their staff for getting the December issue to you, along with all of the help from you members who provided SIRinc with the necessary information. Amazing teamwork!

This week I am to meet with five different doctors to work out a game plan for what the future holds. I hope the first item is to be able to lessen this existing "soft food diet" and increase it back to more normal food selections!

It may be awhile before I will be able to return to our in-person meetings, but I do look forward to the Zoom coverage if possible.

Thanks again for everything and please feel free to call me!

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 November 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 are lots of very interesting articles to browse. Look especially at page 13 and 14 which are reprints of some articles from our Branch 17. Pages 56 to 65, there are all kinds of consumer tips 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 Nov-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!

Wasp Spray Better than pepper spray!

A friend who is a receptionist in a church in a high risk area was concerned about someone coming into their office on Monday to rob them while they were counting the collection. She asked the local police department about using pepper spray and they recommended to her that she get a can of wasp spray instead.

The wasp spray, they told her, can shoot up to twenty feet away and is a lot more accurate, while with the pepper spray, they have to get close to you and could overpower you. The wasp spray temporarily blinds an attacker until they get to the hospital for an antidote. She now keeps a can on her desk in the office and it doesn't attract attention from people like a can of pepper spray would. She also keeps one nearby at her home for home protection. Something to think about!