



A non-profit club devoted to the promotion of independence and dignity.

Luther Burbank Branch 17, Santa Rosa, CA,

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



The **REDWOOD BARK** Newsletter Octoberber, 2024

All members are invited to attend our next SIR In-Person Luncheon/Meeting on Thursday October 17th 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 **Rod Mooney** at (707) 328-1819 or email rnkta@gmail.com by **noon on October 10th** to help keep our count more accurate. Also of importance: 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 **Rod Mooney**. If you are a no-show you may be charged for your meal!

Big Sir Chris Nelle's Message:

nelleval@hotmail.com (916) 205-1717



Hello fellow Sirs. Little Sir Neil Wheeler and I are just back from the annual SIR statewide leadership meeting in Lafayette. A quick and extremely concise recap would be... there is a ton of time and effort being spent by many very well-intentioned fellows to determine what can be done to stem the tide of SIR's dwindling membership numbers. The issue: SIR started in 1959, grew very nicely and peaked at about 31,000 members. Over the last 20 years there has been a steady decline and statewide membership now sits at roughly 8,200. Statewide, the median age of our members is 80! The positive to take from this is SIR must be delivering on its "enhance your life" slogan because our median age is better than the 78 year average life expectancy for a California male! But I digress...

Nothing has been definitively decided yet, but an advisory committee is being assembled to fine-tune the number of ideas being tossed about, e.g., paid executive director, using marketing vendors, changing to a 501(c)(3) non-profit so donations could be tax deductible, seek donations (Kaiser Health has expressed interest), move to co-ed, dive into social media as a key marketing tool, etc.

(cont'd on page 2 left)

Little Sir Neil Wheeler's Message:

neil@science-one.org (707) 291-0271



Autumn's Arrival. It is autumn and I would like to share a few fall facts with you.

The autumnal equinox occurred on September 22nd, and with it, a shift to longer nights, shorter days, and the start of astronomical fall in the northern hemisphere. Equinoxes occur when the earth reaches a point in its orbit where the sun shines directly on the equator. This happens twice a year, in March and in September. Meteorologists use a separate system that establishes seasons by calendar months with meteorological fall beginning on September 1st and ending on November 30th.

Most people will experience about 12 hours of day and 12 hours of night during September's equinox. But scientists and staff members at Antarctic research stations near the South Pole will see the sun peek over the horizon for the first time in six months. The opposite is true at the North Pole: Its last sunset happens on the autumnal equinox and will remain in darkness until the vernal equinox in March.

"Autumn" comes from the Latin word "autumnus," with the root of the word meaning "the passing of the year." The term "fall" was likely derived from the Old English words "fiaell" and "feallan," both of which mean "to fall from a height." We assumed that this new name for the season was inspired by the falling of leaves.

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Big Sir Chris Nelle's Message: *(cont'd)*

Our branch, along with three other branches, was singled out for our excellent membership growth stats, some of which came as a result of our merger with Branch 76, but we enjoyed excellent organic growth in addition to that merger. About one-third of branches are growing or at least holding steady, but two-thirds are shrinking at various rates.

In my opinion, using our branch's experience, if we keep having members who are willing to step forward and take on leadership roles, keep introducing friends, neighbors, and contacts from our other social encounters to SIR, we will continue to prosper. When you hear stories from other branches where the Big Sir wears several different hats to keep the branch alive and in many cases has been in his role for a number of years because of an inability to share the load, you realize how fortunate we are here at Branch 17!

I sound like a coach (wait, I am a coach) but it comes down to the fundamentals. Fairways hit, greens in regulation, putts made, 3-putts avoided and minimizing the cost of mistakes (manage your blow-ups). If we all remember the oath we took regarding "volunteer when asked" and agree to take on some leadership positions so we never find ourselves having to lean on too few guys and continue to "sell" the value of membership to as many as you can...we'll be fine. From where I sit, we are mastering the fundamentals, let's keep it up!

October 17th Meeting Lunch Menu

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

- *Pesto Chicken*
- *Wedge Salad*
- *Roasted Potatoes*
- *Green Beans*
- *Funnel Cake*



Little Sir Neil Wheeler's Message: *(cont'd)*

One of the most stunning signs of autumn is the turning of the leaves. The shorter days are a sign to trees to begin to prepare for winter. During winter there is not enough light for photosynthesis to occur, so as the days shorten throughout autumn, the trees begin to close down their food production systems and reduce the amount of chlorophyll in their leaves.

Chlorophyll is the chemical which makes tree leaves green and as it declines other chemicals become more prominent in the leaves. These are responsible for the vibrant ambers, reds and yellows of autumn. The chemicals responsible are types of flavonoids, carotenoids and anthocyanins.

Some folks think the end of summer is sad, but autumn is our favorite season. We think of it as a festive season, full of pumpkin spice, crisp autumn walks, apple picking, and all the things we can do with friends and family. So, embrace the season and plan on one of the following fall activities now that the weather has cooled down and the trees are about to put on a foliage show.

- Fall is one of the best times of the year to visit a winery. Not only are the vineyards especially beautiful this time of year, but you can also experience the excitement of the fall harvest.
- The autumn season is chock full of fall festivals and harvest celebrations with activities to enjoy, and fun food and drink.
- Reading is fun any time of year, but there's something even better about cozying up with a book, blanket and a cup of cocoa by the fire when that first hint of a chill is in the air.
- Light a scented candle and enjoy the smells of autumn. We can't resist the smell of apple spice, pumpkin, cinnamon as well as the smoky scents that pair perfectly with fall.
- Be sure and carve out some time to go apple picking. Maybe you'll want to return home and bake an apple pie or make a batch of apple butter.
- Enjoy a classic Pumpkin Spice Latte. To make it extra special, have it with a slice of that apple pie you made or perhaps some spice cake.

Autumn is a great time to shift gears, slow down, and prepare yourself for the winter. Enjoy!

Activities:

Use this link below to view the latest online Calendar of Events:
<https://www.sir17.org/calendar-of-events.html>

Book Club:

(Article by *Neil Wheeler*)



In October we are reading *No Democracy Lasts Forever: How The Constitution Threatens The United States* by Erwin Chemerinsky.

A groundbreaking work from one of America's leading legal scholars, *No Democracy Lasts Forever* audaciously asserts that the only way a polarized America can avoid secession is to draft a new Constitution.

The Constitution has become a threat to American democracy. Due to its inherent flaws—its treatment of race, dependence on a tainted Electoral College, a glaringly unrepresentative Senate, and the outsized influence of the Supreme Court—Erwin Chemerinsky, the dean of Berkeley Law School and one of our foremost legal scholars, has come to the sobering conclusion that our nearly 250-year-old founding document can no longer hold.

We will meet to discuss the book at 2:00 pm on the fourth Wednesday (10/23). The location of our meeting will be announced the week before we meet.

If you have any questions or would like to be on (or off) our email list, send an email to njmwheeler@science-one.org.

Boys' Night Out:

(Article by *Don Malvestiti*)



Celebrate Italian Heritage Month!
 at Riviera Ristorante, 75 Montgomery Drive, October 9, 5:30 p.m. Social, 6:00 p.m. followed by dinner.

PLEASE RSVP TO DON BY OCTOBER 4th
malvestitidon485@gmail.com

Bocce:

Bocce can be played on most Fridays on the west side of Juilliard Park starting at 10:45 am. Contact Ken Ford at kennethford06@gmail.com for information or simply come on by. Bring a friend and introduce them to SIR!

Bridge:

Eight of us met in the Valley of the Moon Oak Club for bridge and lunch. If you have an interest in Bridge, contact:



Dean Lundgren 707-544-8088
mdlundgren@msn.com

James Park 707-578-4255
jimcpark38@gmail.com

Bowling Anyone?

Branch 17 has not yet been able to resurrect our bowling activity since the COVID pandemic. But with new members joining us and old members perhaps getting the urge again, we are always interested in determining if there is an interest. If you think you might be interested, please contact our **Activities Chair Fred Rose**.



Couples' Night Out:

(Article by *Fred Rose*)



Couples' Night Out, on Thursday, September 26th, was held at Riviera Ristorante. Twelve couples enjoyed a comfortable evening outside and the food and service were impeccable. Bob and Kit Conover were celebrating their forty-third anniversary.

The October CNO will be the last one this year and held at **La Gare French Restaurant**, 208 Wilson Street, Santa Rosa on Thursday October 24th at 6:30 p.m.

Golf:

Golf remains a top activity of our branch, however we have not had a sufficient number of players for the past few weeks. You can easily sign up by contacting the clubhouse by the Friday proceeding the Monday tournament. Buy-in is still only \$5.00 and the course is in good shape. The weather is projected to be good for golf for several more weeks. Come out and join us!

Community Involvement Program:

(article by **Bob Reuther**)



Our group will be at the Redwood Empire Food Bank on Thursday October 3, 2024, from 9:45 until noon. Last month 16 of us packaged 105 thirty lb. containers of pears which provided 2,625 meals to be delivered the next day. Eight of us worked on an assembly line with another group. They boxed 44 pallets of boxed food providing 9,300 meals to be delivered the next day. Three Food Bank employees short that day provided an additional challenge. In the end it all worked out by the positive attitude of our Sir members.

We were joined again by our neighbor SIR Branch 92 from Oakmont at our last outing. The outing is for members, spouses, significant others, and children. Children 14 years old or older do not have to be accompanied by an adult. Bring your grandkids with you when you come in October.

If you plan on joining us, we ask that you contact Sir George Traverso when he sends an email. You will be provided with a name lanyard and a card punched for attendance when you volunteer at the Food Bank. Ten punches and you are entered into a monthly prize drawing. The CIP Branch 17 Committee has an additional prize drawing on every visit. Your attendance will automatically enter you for a prize. The winner of a bottle of wine last month was Sir Tom Beime of Branch 92. He is a lucky guy—he also won a bottle the month before. You can always find us on the www.sir17.org website under the first Thursday of each month. All the information related to time and place is on that site.

After volunteering at the Food Bank, you are welcome to join the group led by Sir Rich de Lambert for a Hot Dog Thursday Lunch close by at the Pacific Coast Air Museum. A large hot dog or Polish, chips, and a drink cost \$8. Well worth the price, and good way to support another good cause. Due to the weather, after October they will close Hot Dog Thursday until March 6, 2025.

Barry Bialkoski and Bob Reuther Co-Chairs

Rich de Lambert and George Traverso Co-Vice Chairs

Coffee Club:

(Article by **Rich de Lambert**)



The morning coffee events will continue at Howarth Park every 2nd and 4th Thursday until we get in the cool fall months. Come join us in the upper parking lot (near the boat house) at Howarth Park starting about 8:45 a.m. and finishing at about 10:15a.m.

Please bring your chair and a friend for a great time. We do a lot of talking and the usual BS. All this for \$1.00, including pastries, coffee (regular and decaf) and fruit. Now what is your excuse, get up out of your chair or bed and join us!!

Global Forum:

(Article by **Marvin Mai**)



Global Forum has been a mainstay event for over 30 years. It was started by Chuck Aver and he was our host for about 18 years, I think. Then it was moved to Dr. Ibrahim's home for about five years ending with his poor health. I took over at that time and have been host for about 10+ years.

We have always met on the 2nd Friday of the month and will continue that date with Sir Chris Nelle as our new host taking the reins on October 11. The Zoom discussion will still occur on the 4th Friday at a NEW time of 1:30 p.m.

Reservations for the in-person meetings are still required with the limit of eight.

If you're interested in a wide-open discussion of the world situation and at times a little history background which has led us to the current situation this is the activity for you.



A special **Thank You** to **Gordon Boulton** for spotting all the errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and other boo-boos before this edition went to press.



—*Bob-the-Editor*

Hiking Group:

(Article by **Gordon Boulton**)



If you would like to join us, get on the hiking activity email list by contacting Stew Lauterbach, at:

stewartlauterbach@gmail.com.

Oktoberfest:

(Article by **Neil Wheeler**)

SIR Branch 17 will host an Oktoberfest event on Wednesday, October 2th at 1:00 pm.

Bratwurst, Sauerkraut, Pretzels, German Potato Salad, German Beer, water and soft drinks, as well as traditional Oktoberfest music will be provided for this festive occasion! A \$5 donation is requested.

We will meet at the Upper Oak Picnic Area in Howarth Park.

If you plan to attend, please let me know so you won't go hungry or thirsty. Call me at 707-291-0271 or send an email to Neil Wheeler at:

njmwheeler@science-one.org



Poker Update:

(Article by **Mike O'Neill**)



Does a **Full House** beat a **Straight**?

Do you know how to play **5 ½** vs. **21 ½**?

You can get answers to these questions and many

more by joining the Poker group, plus you can have a nice lunch and meet some nice guys. At our September game, we had 11 players, which was the most so far. In October we already have 12 players signed up. New players get priority on playing, so if interested, contact Mike O'Neill at Mikeo46@sbcglobal.net. Our October game will be on October 12th at 12 noon at Epicenter Sports and Entertainment.

Walking Group:

(Article by **Richard Lundblad**)



The walking group meets every **Tuesday morning at 10 am**, that is weather permitting. Exact meeting places to are TBD but we have been leaving from Cypress Point and go for coffee afterwards. Come join us and bring a friend!

If you have any questions or would like to be on our email list,

Contact me at richardlundblad@gmail.com

or call me at 707-888-8386

Happy Birthday to those born in October!

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| ♦ Art Appling | ♦ Don Malvestiti | ♦ Steven Saulsbury |
| ♦ Barry Chapman | ♦ Edward Morris | ♦ Bradley Smith |
| ♦ Bob Conover | ♦ Tony Negri | ♦ Tim Stewart |
| ♦ Gary Erickson | ♦ Jim Park | ♦ Robert Tutone |
| ♦ Timothy Fawcett | ♦ Al Petrie | ♦ Bob Zeni |
| ♦ John Grant II | ♦ Sal Rosano | |



The Science of Aging—

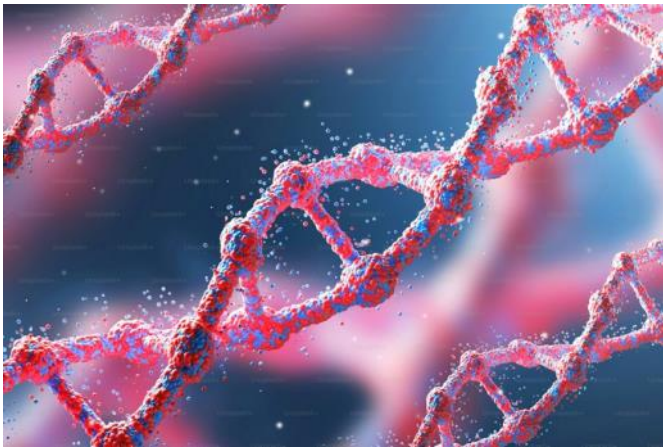
Cell Mortality—Limits to life

(Article by **Dennis Mangan**)



Until the early 1960s, medical researchers thought it possible we could live forever if we could avoid infections like pneumonia, eat lots of fruits and vegetables, or not get run over by a bus. However, researchers studying cell division radically changed the way we think about human mortality. Dr. Leonard Hayflick and colleagues noticed that human cells could divide a maximum of 40-60 times (known as the Hayflick limit) before pooping out, a condition called cell senescence. By doing some calculations, they said that a human might be able to have a lifespan of 125 years, but no further. How intriguing to think we could live to be 125! Today, men in the USA can expect to live an average of only 76 years before we poop out. So, why are we dying so much earlier?

Hayflick and hundreds of scientists studied senescence and found that longevity is literally tied to the end of our chromosomes, like the aglets at the end of shoelaces. DNA in our cells is packaged into 23 pairs of chromosomes. At the tips of each chro-



mosome are repetitive DNA sequences and proteins called telomeres that protect the chromosome ends from damage. However, each time a cell divides, the chromosome pairs pull apart and the telomeres shorten slightly. Eventually, when telomeres become too short, the cell can no longer divide and enters senescence.

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The "Hurleybird"

(Story by **John Weaver**)



Sherdon "Lu" Hurley was literally a bright light at the end of the day. Around 5 pm he would appear at the KRON-TV transmitter building on top of San Bruno Mountain where we maintained transmitter facilities and operated our master control. Lu was not working for KRON. He was on a coffee break.

Lu worked for KGO radio and it was his routine to land his helicopter, The Hurleybird, near our transmitter and come inside for coffee until his next report was due. The report was the Bay Area commuter traffic.

Lu was the first traffic reporter to broadcast from a helicopter. He had been a salesman for KSRO in Santa Rosa when he came up with the idea of a traffic report from above. He loved to create shortcut names, calling that portion of 101 that passed San Francisco General the "Hospital Curve."



Another of his great ideas was, "How about a coffee break at the KRON Channel 4 transmitter site?" Some days the coffee was laced with a bit of bourbon. It was cold at higher elevations.

On this particular day we went outside to observe the Hurleybird take off. It went very smooth until he took a sudden dive and disappeared from our view. We all had a shock that lasted for several minutes until we saw him flying up and away toward Highway 101 to do his next report. He gave all of us an unexpected thrill.

The late Lu Hurley was inducted into the Bay Area Radio Hall of Fame in 2009.



The Science of Aging -

(cont'd from page 6)

This constant chipping away at the ends of chromosomes is like when the aglets wear out and the shoelace becomes frayed and difficult to use.

In addition to shortening due to cell division, oxygen molecules created by inflammation contribute to telomere erosion. Lifestyle factors such as emotional or physical stress, poor diet, lack of exercise, and habits like smoking accelerate telomere loss. Although there is a protein in our cells called telomerase that blocks this shortening, there's not enough of it to keep the cells going past the Hayflick limit.

The exceptions are cancer cells which have lots of telomerase that prevents those cells from entering senescence. Researchers are currently studying ways to use telomerases to protect against telomere loss. Maybe someday we can reach or even exceed that 125-year limit. But for now, a lifetime of stressing out, fighting off infections, eating junk food, and not moving around is shortening our telomeres and fraying our longevity.

New Member Inducted and Another Returns

(Article by **Gordon Boulton**)

One new member was inducted by Big Sir Chris Nelle at the September luncheon. He is **Vince Buettner**, sponsored by Ernie Giampaoli. Vince is a retired director of 3-Way Van Lines.

Charlie Bertoli has rejoined us after a brief departure for health reasons. Welcome back, Charlie!



Chris Nelle inducts new member Vince Buettner in September

Nominees for 2025 Approved

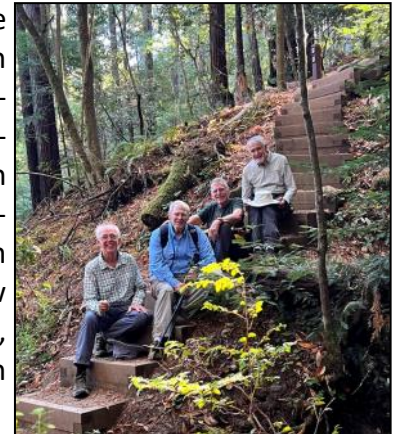
The BEC, in a unanimous email vote, approved the Nominating Committee's recommendations of **Sir Art Appling for 2025 Little Sir**, and **Sir Keith Hall for 2025 Assistant Treasurer**. The members present at the October 17th luncheon will vote on the approval of these two nominees.

In addition, the BEC approved the appointment of Sir Keith Hall as Assistant Treasurer for the remainder of 2024, filling that vacant position. The Nominating Committee and the BEC extends their sincere gratitude to Art and Keith for their willingness to step up.

As Nominating Committee Chair Sir Gary Bondi told them, "The survival of our branch, as well as that of the entire SIR organization is entirely dependent on members, such as you, coming forward when asked, to accept leadership positions."

SIR Hiking: Enjoying Nature

These remarkable and steep stairs are in the Monte Rio Redwoods Park and Preserve. They go down one side and up the other side of a creek. From the bottom to top: Stew Lauterbach, Hap Culp, Jim Taylor, Gordon Boulton.



Three of us took the Umbrella Tree trail in North Sonoma Mountain Regional Park to see the magnificent views of Bennett Valley, east to the Valley of The Moon

and west to Rohnert Park and Petaluma. Alas, we were greeted with a thick fog bank with just Bennett Peak and Hood Mountain peeking above it. So we took a selfie at the sign. L to R: Stew Lauterbach, Hap Culp, Gordon Boulton.

We had a great turnout, good food, and lively conversation at the **September Couples' Night Out** at Riviera Ristorante. Thanks again to Fred Rose for organizing another successful activity!



The Great Wave of Ale—An October Story

On Monday the 17th of October, 1814, a terrible disaster claimed the lives of at least eight people in St Giles, London. The Horse Shoe Brewery contained a 23-foot-high wooden fermentation tank installed on the premises. It was bound together with massive iron rings that held the equivalent of more **3,500 barrels** of brown porter ale.

On the afternoon of the fateful day, one of the iron rings around the tank snapped, releasing the hot fermenting ale with such force that the back wall of the brewery collapsed. The ale also blasted open several more vats, adding their contents to the flood which rushed onto the street. More than **320,000 gallons** of brown ale poured into the St. Giles Rookery, a densely populated London slum of cheap housing and tenements.

The 15-foot-high wave of brown tide and debris inundated the surrounding streets, filling basements and destroying homes. In all, eight people were killed.



The wave of alcohol in these poor neighborhoods no doubt had other effects. There was talk of locals lapping up the free beer with gusto, and one man is said to have died of alcohol poisoning. It was a sad time for many in the slums of London 210 years ago.

Autobiographical Sketch:

Vince Buettner Badge #40



I was born in San Francisco on July 31, 1939. I attended Mission High School, then served in the Army reserves for six years. My active duty was served at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I got married to my late wife Stephanie 1968. We lived in San Bruno from 1969 to 2008. We had four children and eight grandchildren.

I worked in the transportation industry from 1969 to 2008. I worked my way up to become Director of 3-Way Van Lines, with over 200 employees. I retired in 2008 and we moved to Santa Rosa. I'm a lifelong 49er fan, and I like fishing.

My wife Stephanie passed away in 2017. During my late wife's sickness I became involved in my church. I started by working in our small gift shop. The customer and workers became my family and friends. I worked with a lady named Mary Hart. We both had the same ideas on what we wanted for the growth of the store. We called it a ministry. In 12 years we built it to a big business, which is doing very well today.

During that time Mary experienced the death of my wife, and four years later I experienced the death of her husband Mike. We not only became partners in the store but also became best friends. In 2022 we decided we were meant to finish the rest of lives together so she is now Mary Hart Buettner. This year we both retired from the gift shop. For the first time in my 85 years I had nothing to do.

At a coffee social I mentioned this to my friend Ernie Giampaoli. Rich de Lambert was also there, and he threw me a line with a hook and reeled me in. SIR was the bait. I believe it's just the place for me and have enjoyed every activity I have attended. I've already met so many new people and look forward to keeping busy for the rest of my life. Thank you SIR!

NON-RESPONSIBILITY DECLARATION

All activities arranged for, or by, or sponsored by SIR INC., and its Branches are for the convenience and pleasure of the members and their guest who desire to participate. SIR, 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.