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 September 2026

All members are invited to attend our next regular SIR Luncheon/Meeting on Thursday September 17th at The Epicenter, 3215 Coffey Lane, Santa Rosa.

You can reserve a place at the luncheon, or cancel a reservation, through our website by clicking here. If you told the Phone Committee **"Yes"** you plan to attend but later find that you will be unable to attend, please contact **Rod Mooney** at (707) 328-1819 or by email at rnktla@gmail.com by **noon on September 10th**. Also: If you are bringing a guest, or if you originally said **"No"** but changed your mind and decided to attend, then please contact **Rod Mooney**. If you are a no-show you may be charged for your meal!

Big Sir Art Appling's Message:

art4747@msn.com (707) 538-1769

Saturday SIR? Why Not?

Are we missing a recruiting opportunity because all of our activities are on weekdays? Are there potential members who are working into their late 60s or 70s and would love to participate in SIR activities if some were on weekends? Of course, golf and some other activities are best kept as weekday events, but surely there must be some popular activity that would work well on a Saturday. I would think of activities they would naturally choose to do with friends, rather than those specifically designed for seniors. Co-ed events come to mind as something younger prospects might appreciate.

Since new members in this age group represent the future of SIR, I have a good bottle of wine as a gift for the member who starts such an activity and keeps it organized and functioning.

State SIR annual meeting:

Stew Lauterbach and I will be attending State SIR's annual meeting in Sept. and anticipate voting on revisions to the corporate bylaws. A majority vote by those attending the meeting is how such changes are made. The anticipated major change will be for the State SIR to become a "GENDER NEUTRAL" organization, thus leaving each branch the option to revise its bylaws to align with the Gender-Neutral position or remain exclusively a men's organization. I expect much more on this subject in the near future.

(cont'd on page 2 left)

Little Sir Stew Lauterbach's Message:

stewlauterbach@gmail.com 707-495-0985

SIR inc.

What does the state organization do for us? A partial list includes:

1: SIR is the state organization that is the legal structure for SIR, general liability insurance, and standard corporate bylaws.

2: Offers job descriptions for the Big Sir, Little Sir, Secretary, Treasurer, Directors, Membership Chair, Recruiting Chair, Activities Chair, Member Relations Chair, Publicity and Image Chair, the Audit Committee Chair, and the Nominating Committee Chair.

3. Provides a SIR Leaders Guide and offers training for local branch leaders (currently Big and Little Sirs, with other positions under consideration).

4: Maintains a central database for leader registration, uniform branding materials and digital tools like Ask SIR.

5: Keeps financial files and files tax reports.

There are a few branches that have become gender-neutral (both men and women) and the bylaws need to be updated to accommodate this.

The state leadership has hired a law firm to allow for this update, where each chapter can vote on this issue.

In summary, State SIR inc. saves our chapter the cost of insurance, filing tax returns, web page support, legal support, technical support when needed, educational support and more!

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Hopefully, you have noticed that Branch 17 is growing. We are now up to 180 members, having recovered from the COVID days, when membership was around 70. Interestingly, state membership has turned the corner and experienced slight growth over the past several months. I guess this goes to show that with strength and resolve, one cannot keep a good thing down. We should all say Thank You to our former leaders who established the framework for this recovery and continue to work hard for our benefit.

Buffet Buddy:

*(Article by **Glenn Seime**)*

If a member has a hard time navigating the buffet line, someone at that member's table should offer to be a "Buffet Buddy" for that member needing help. He will first dish up for his buddy and then himself. He would have access to the head of the buffet line for both his buddy and himself, and it is important that this service **be offered,** and not wait to be asked. It seems to be working, so let's keep it going!

AMAZING FACTS

Around the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor, a dentist/inventor watched bats flying out of Carlsbad Caverns and came up with an idea: use the bats to carry bombs. A 1943 test run at the air base nearby proved successful (for the military, not for the bats), but the project was ultimately cancelled.

(cont'd from page 1 right)

Art Appling (Big Sir) and I (Little Sir) will be going to the State meeting in Lafayette next month and will update in next month's newsletter.

More to come!

Five New Members Inducted

*(Article by **Gordon Boultbee**)*

Five new members were inducted by Big Sir Art Appling at the August luncheon. They are **John Arends**, sponsored by Charles Kennemore; **John Beilharz**, sponsored by John Dutil; **Burt Fohrman and Jeremy Olsan**, sponsored by Stew Lauterbach; and **Mike Mundell**, sponsored by Bob Conover.

John Arends was an assistant parts manager for the Hansel Auto Group; **John Beilharz** was in marketing and public relations; **Burt and Jeremy** are both attorneys; and **Mike** is a retired anesthesiologist at Sutter.

Left to right: Jeremy Olsan, Burt Fohrman, Mike Mundell, John Beilharz, John Arends, Big Sir Art Appling

September Lunch Menu

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

- *Turkey Breast*
- *Mac & Cheese*
- *Cornbread*
- *Caesar Salad*
- *Bread and Butter*
- *Cookies and Brownies*

Sir Deano Loughran Receives Senior Sir Presidential Award

Sir **Deano Loughran** celebrated his 90th birthday on August 5th and was presented with a Senior Sir Presidential Award Certificate signed by SIR State President Fred Serena to honor Deano on achieving this milestone in life at the August luncheon by Branch 17 Big Sir Art Appling. Deano also received a free lunch!

New SIR Luncheon Entry

Beginning at the September 17th lunch meeting, **our entry location** at The Epicenter will be from the door by the middle stairs rather than the previous entry at the north end of the building. This entry is marked by the long ramp on the side of the stairs. Signs will be posted as usual.

September Luncheon Speaker—Mayor Mark Stapp

Mayor Mark Stapp was elected to City Council in 2022 representing District 2, which includes neighborhoods around Montgomery Village, Bennett Valley, and Taylor Mountain. On Dec. 17, 2024, his council colleagues selected him as Mayor of the City of Santa Rosa for a two-year term.

He has worked at Sonoma State University since 2015, and is currently the Senior Director for Corporate and Foundation Relations. Former positions include Deputy Director of Development at the San Francisco Zoological Society, and Operations Director at Paradigm HealthCare Services.

IDMP Pin Award

(Article by Gordon Boultbee)

Sir **Bernie Stephan** received an **I'm Doing My Part** (IDMP) pin at the August luncheon from Big Sir Art Appling. He received if for sponsoring Sir Larry MacDonald. The IDMP pin is a one-time award for sponsoring a new member or serving in a branch leadership position for 12 consecutive months. They are handed out approximately quarterly at a monthly luncheon to members who have earned the award.

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 guests 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.

Activities:

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

Boys' Night Out

*(Article by **Don Malvestiti**)*

A member of SIR told me Gary Chu is going to retire and might close his restaurant. I would like to go there one last time. Therefore BNO for September will be at the Osaka Japanese Restaurant, 2446 Patio Ct. in Montgomery Village, Wednesday September 9th; 5:30 p.m. social, 6 p.m. dinner. RESERVATIONS ARE A MUST. Contact me by September 4th if you want to join the group: malvestitidon485@mail.com.

Bridge

We meet in the Valley of the Moon Club in Oakmont, Tuesdays, 11 AM to 1 PM for bridge and lunch. If you have an interest in Bridge, contact:

Dean Lundgren 707-544-8088 mdlundgren@msn.com
or
Steve Virtue 707-695-2597 stephenvirtue2015@gmail.com

Explore & Eat

*(Article by **Tom Sparrowe**)*

Did you know that Windsor has a Museum & Historical Society? Well, they do! And E&E will be visiting the Windsor Museum (aka Hembree House) on **Tuesday, September 29th** to learn more about the settlement and formative days of Windsor.

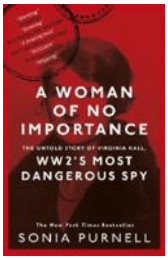
Before our trip to the museum, we will lunch at **KC's American Kitchen** on Windsor's Green Square (9501 Du Vander Ln.) at 11:30 a.m. followed by a short trip to the Windsor Museum (Hembree House) at 9225 Foxwood Drive.

Explore & Eat is a casual daytime extension of Couples' Night Out for those who would enjoy a luncheon experience. So, bring your wife or significant other for a wonderful and casual time. Single Sirs are also welcome.

For a seat, contact: Tom Sparrowe at: tsparrowe@yahoo.com or Fred Rose at: fredricrose@comcast.net Please respond by Thursday, September 24th. Cheers!

Book Club

*(Article by **Neil Wheeler**)*



Our book selection for September is ***A Woman of No Importance*** by Sonia Purnell.

In 1942, the Gestapo sent out an urgent transmission: "She is the most dangerous of all Allied spies. We must find and destroy her."

The target in their sights was Virginia Hall, a Baltimore socialite who talked her way into Special Operations Executive, the spy organization dubbed Winston Churchill's "Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare." She became the first Allied woman deployed behind enemy lines and–despite her prosthetic leg–helped to light the flame of the French Resistance, revolutionizing secret warfare as we know it.

Virginia established vast spy networks throughout France, called weapons and explosives down from the skies, and became a linchpin for the Resistance. Even as her face covered wanted posters and a bounty was placed on her head, Virginia refused order after order to evacuate. She finally escaped through a death-defying hike over the Pyrenees into Spain, her cover blown. But she plunged back in and led a victorious guerilla campaign, liberating swathes of France from the Nazis after D-Day.

Based on new and extensive research, Sonia Purnell has for the first time uncovered the full secret life of Virginia Hall—an astounding and inspiring story of heroism, spycraft, resistance, and personal triumph over shocking adversity. *A Woman of No Importance* is the breathtaking story of how one woman's fierce persistence helped win the war.

Bocce

Bocce can be played on most Fridays on the west side of Juilliard Park starting at 10 am. Contact Ken Ford at Kennethford063@gmail.com for more information or simply come on by. Bring a friend and introduce them to SIR!

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Community Involvement Program

*(Article by **Bob Reuther**)*

On August 6th, our group of thirty-one were very productive at **the Redwood Empire Food Bank**. We packed 352 boxes of food to be distributed the following week. In total, this is what we accomplished:

13,590 lbs. of food packed—That is over **6.5 tons** of groceries and **11,325 total meals** provided to our community.

2,520 lbs. of fresh produce sorted, including:

- **1,400 lbs.** of potatoes
- **1,120 lbs.** of peppers.

Huge thanks to the incredible hands that made this happen.

Join Us Next Month. We'd love to see even more volunteers in the months ahead. Whether you're a returning volunteer or considering joining us for the first time, there's always a place for you in our community service efforts. Mobility is never a barrier. We have jobs for everyone.

Our next outing is **Thursday, September 3rd**. If you plan to join us on our next outing, contact **Bob Reuther at** rareuther@yahoo.com **by Sunday August 30th**. We need to send your name by Monday, since on Monday they have a one day a week volunteer person who will post our list of volunteers on their computer program.

As a thank you, all participants are entered into our monthly prize drawing held during the coffee break. Last month's winners included Gordon Boultbee (wine), Cris Smith (49ers hat) and Rich Yahn (49ers Bobblehead). We also want to thank Rich de Lambert for providing a bottle of wine, John Gnam for the 49ers prizes, and Jim Taylor for providing coffee for our break.

After volunteering at the Food Bank, you are welcome to join the group for a Hot Dog Thursday Lunch close by at the Pacific Coast Air Museum from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. A large hot dog or Polish dog, chips, and a drink costs $10. Well worth the price, and a good way to support another good cause.

Coffee Club

*(Article by **Jim Taylor**)*

With good weather we have returned to our outdoor location near the boat ramp at Howarth Park, the second and fourth Thursday of each month from 9 a.m.-10 a.m. Bring a lawn chair and $1 for coffee and pastries. Guests and Partners are welcome so bring a friend. **No RSVP required**. If you have questions, call me, Jim Taylor, at (707) 322-4959 or email me at jameswt@sbcglobal.net

Everyone who attends is entered into our prize drawing and we hope to have you join us!

Global Forum

*(Article by **Marvin Mai**)*

La entrée means "the return" or "the re-entry" in French and refers to the nationwide return to regular routines, school, and work after the summer holidays in early September. With our schools having returned already this past week I recall that our school year didn't start until after Labor Day. Must be hard dealing with a bunch of sweaty kids coming into the classroom after recess on a 95-degree day.

Globally, it seems that it's time to acknowledge that the old order really has disappeared—and to plot a new approach to geopolitics. The old order has been swept by fragmentation, geographic, economic, and technological chokepoints. Can we be flexible enough to adjust the grand strategy? NATO is changing and there seems to be a new alliance every other day. Just think about Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. India and China, long time foes, are being more cooperative relative to trade. Can they become allies?

Our biweekly meetings are well attended and the topics and discussion are wide ranging and engaging. We have no preset agenda as the global issues of today are not what has happened in the last day or two. If you'd like to give us a try, email me at: maimarvin57@gmail.com for a seat reservation. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month.

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Hiking Group

*(Article by **Gordon Boultbee**)*

The SIR hiking group meets every Friday, weather permitting, typically at 8:30 a.m. The location changes weekly, and is announced via text message the day before by our hiking activities chair Stew Lauterbach. We are starting an additional hiking opportunity of 5 to 7 miles and 500+ feet of elevation, probably Wednesdays twice a month. Let Stew Lauterbach know if you are interested. If you would like to be added to Stew's list, contact him at:

stewlauterbach@gmail.com or 707-495-0985

Left to right: Andy Parsons, Alan Johnson, Gordon Boultbee, Jim Taylor, Stew Lauterbach.

Single Sirs

(article by Chuck Stark)

Our September meeting will be at noon on the 2nd at **Juanita's Mexican Restaurant** located at 2227 Mendocino Avenue. Parking is on-site if you come early. We have four members starting to attend regularly so far. Get better acquainted with other single members. All single members are invited to attend for good food and fellowship, but must RSVP in advance to Chuck Stark, starklaw@sonic.net for this month and/or future meetings, the Monday before the first Wednesday at noon.

Poker #1

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

Can you believe it's September already? Football, baseball and more poker. We had two very good games on August 13th. Twelve players, which worked out great. At Table 1, Chris was the big winner, for that table and overall. At Table 2, believe it or not, I was the big winner. What fun. Our next game is Sept 10th. Come by, have lunch with us. Just let Mike know you will be there. In the future, we will have poker openings so you can check things out. Meet the guys.

FOOD: As usual, everybody I talked to was happy with their lunch. At our table, three had the great steak sandwich, two had the burrito special and one ordered the chicken sliders, and I know Glenn had them as well. I had steak and tater tots. Where else can you get tater tots? They were really good. Ted got onion rings and Mark went sandwich only. All of us had doggy boxes to take food home. The serving sizes are large.

BBQ: Have you heard they are adding a deep pit BBQ? Not sure what the menu will be yet, but maybe a brisket sandwich, a pulled pork sandwich, sausage and ? Supposed to be operational sometime in September. I'd guess October. Stand by.

SERVICE: Shawn really takes care of us. When I got there, our two poker tables were set up and he had a dining table set up for 14. Great guy. We are really fortunate to have Epicenter.

Contact Mike at Mikeo46@sbcglobal.net with questions, lunch or ??

to all those born in September!

- *David August*
- *John Beilharz*
- *Stan Borges*
- *Walter Clark*
- *Terry Grumley*
- *Tom Johnson*
- *Richard Lundblad*
- *Jeremy Olsan*
- *James Oswald*
- *Frank Panza*
- *Marc Perl*
- *Mike Requarth*
- *Mike Rogalski*
- *Fred Rose*
- *Ted Scapeccia*
- *George Schneider*
- *Marv Schouweiler*
- *Neil Wheeler*
- *David Young*

Beer Call

*(Article by **Keith Hall**)*

Beer Call has been issued for 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, **September 22nd at Fieldwork Brewing Co., 2400 Midway Dr, Santa Rosa, CA 95405.** You are cordially invited to join us for beer and BS. We look forward to seeing you.

www.fieldworkbrewing.com

Please let me know (keithlhall573@gmail.com) if you would like to be on the email list for future beer calls. Also, if you would like to suggest a venue for future Beer Calls, please let me know and I'll put out the call.

SIR Poker #2

*(Article by **Bernie Stephan**)*

Poker #2 continues to mature; we seem to be entering adolescence. Barry has graciously agreed to be backup whenever I'm unable to attend, while Jack introduced what may be our most important technological advance yet: a portable card shuffler. It became an immediate hit with our old hands.

Jeff missed one game recently, and in a remarkable statistical coincidence, everyone else immediately started winning more. Further research required. We've also voted to end our games at **2:00 p.m.**, proving that even poker players are capable of reaching agreement on something.

Our schedule has been reshuffled along with the cards. Victory House is transforming itself into a **barbecue sports bar**, requiring us to move our September third-Wednesday game back a week. Our **September games will be September 2 and September 23,** after which we return to **first and third Wednesdays in October**.

I'm looking forward to seeing the new Victory House menu, featuring barbecue. Poker #2 players have a water-only option. There's no complaining about losing due to indigestion! And as Poker #2 grows, I'm beginning to wonder: could **weekly poker** someday be in the SIR cards?

I'll be studying the flop.

Oktoberfest

*(Article by **Neil Wheeler**)*

Did you know that the 191st official Munich Oktoberfest runs from September 19 to October 4, 2026?

In celebration of this German tradition and Sonoma County's love of craft beer, Branch 17 will host an Oktoberfest event on **Wednesday, September 30th at 1:00 p.m**. Partners are welcome! Bratwurst, Sauerkraut, Pretzels, Potato Salad, Beer, water and soft drinks, and traditional Oktoberfest music will be provided for this festive occasion! We might even sneak in a bottle or two of wine. A $5 donation is requested.

We'll meet at **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 or text me at 707-291-0271 or send an email to neil@science-one.org. Please respond by September 24th.

Walking Group

*(Article by **Richard Lundblad**)*

The walking group meets every **Tuesday morning at 10 am**, weather permitting.

We have been leaving from Cypress Point and go for coffee afterwards. Come join us and bring a friend! If you would like to be on our email list, contact me at:

richardlundblad@gmail.com

707-888-8386

Long Beach Island 1933

*(a **John Weaver** Story)*

Every summer my family would embark on weekend trips to Long Beach Island off the coast of New Jersey. We would pile into a two-car caravan and head toward Manahawkin. From there it would be 6 miles as the highway crossed Barnegat Bay and took us to the middle of the 18-mile island.

We usually drove north toward Barnegat City and would pick a camping spot on the beach. The entire beach area was vacant other than a few small towns. Long Beach Island is two city blocks wide at its narrowest. Barnegat Light, the lighthouse, is located at the extreme North end of Barnegat Light, the city. It is a very old and a very famous lighthouse.

Like clockwork the trip would include a flat tire. Usually the flat tire would happen on that part of the highway that was routed through a forest of giant pine trees. There were no towns - but we were prepared. The routine was to get out the jack, pull off the wheel, remove the tire, take out the inner tube, find the nail, or whatever poked a hole in the tire. We were ready. The tools were lug wrench, tire irons, inner tube patch kit, spare valve core, air pump, and all manner of food for lunch time had been declared. At 8 years old my job was to stick my nose into everything that was happening. When I got too close, I was the first one given a sandwich in order to keep me away from the repair.

Upon arrival we would park near the beach, pitch our tents, prepare for dinner and enjoy one of the greatest campgrounds you could have. When it came time to leave I didn't want it to end. On our way home I was secretly wishing for another flat tire that would extend our two-day vacation to the Atlantic Ocean.

Golf

*(Article by **Bob Nadell**)*

Golf is a game that can provide great joy and painful memories all in the same round. We have had a full field for the last several weeks and anticipate that to continue through the summer.

The weather has been great with lots of players wanting to be included. You are advised to sign up early as we have no additional spaces allocated on a Monday morning. When we reach 20 players the list is closed.

We have also increased our away tournaments as we just returned from an Oakmont outing. Golf is a game for life. Make it part of yours. Hope to see you on the course.

New Member:
Jeremy Olsan
Badge # 51

I graduated from UC Berkeley in 1985 and from McGeorge School of Law at the University of the Pacific in 1991. Before law school, I was a commercial real estate agent, and served as the Executive Director of the California State Senate Advisory Commission on Cost Control in State Government.

While working for the State Senate in Sacramento, I met my future wife Ann DuBay, a fourth generation Sonoma County native. Such was my love for Sonoma County, I asked Ann to move back shortly after our son Jake was born in 1993.

When not practicing real estate and business law (check out www.olsanlaw.com). I love to ski (both downhill and XC). I also love long distance cycling (with Ann), and we continue to have many cycling adventures all over the country.

New Member:
Mike Mundell
Badge # 124

I was born in Portland Oregon in 1946–a genuine Boomer, for better or worse. I attended Grant High School, subsequently made famous in the movie Mr. Holland's Opus, which was filmed there. From an early age, I knew I wanted to be a physician–joining a Medical Explorer Scout post and working as an orderly in a hospital during my high school years. I left Portland for four years to attend the University of Oregon in Eugene. It was there I met my first (and only) wife Ellen (together now for 61 years and counting), who came with me back to Portland as I attended U. of O. Medical School, now Oregon Health Sciences University, OHSU.

I left Portland for the last time in 1972 to intern at San Francisco General Hospital. The next year I joined the Public Health Service and went to Rapid City S. Dakota to work, and learn, at the Indian Health Hospital there. In the spring that year, we visited Ellen's parents in Mill Valley and decided to take a trip north to check out this acclaimed Family Medicine Residency at Community Hospital in Santa Rosa. They were already filled for the next year, but they would put me on a list. Sure enough, I got a call in May saying that there was an open spot at the 2nd year level and if I wanted it, it was mine, starting July 1. I took it, moved my wife, my one-year-old daughter and our dog Barney to Santa Rosa in 1974 and have been here ever since.

I completed the residency and was asked by the Hospital to include anesthesia in my practice as they needed the coverage and I was deemed competent. I did, and practiced both Family Medicine and Anesthesia for almost 20 years, then only Anesthesia for 30 more until retiring in 2020 (COVID). Along the way I was blessed with two wonderful daughters and three incredible grandchildren–two in college and one making applications for next year.

But enough about me. I look forward to meeting, and learning about all of you, one by one, as we enjoy all that Branch 17 has to offer.

New Member:
Bob Cook
Badge # 53

I was born in Petaluma, CA on July 30, 1942. I have not moved far from my hometown. My family moved to Novato when I was young. I attended Marion school and then Novato High School. I was in the first freshman class to attend the school and graduated in 1960.

My father owned Cook's Automotive in Novato. This is where I learned my trade as an automotive technician. I worked in the automotive industry for over 40 years. I worked with mainly American made cars with at least 17 years as a Cadillac/GMC specialist. I am proud to say that I was a certified Automotive Service Expert for several years. I returned to Sonoma County in the late 1970s and continue to call this home.

After retiring from Bianco Cadillac I branched out in a new direction and became an assistant teacher at Santa Rosa Junior College in their Diesel Mechanic program. I had so much fun teaching the mechanics of diesel engines and giving hands-on instruction in the fixing and building of these engines. One on my students, a wonderful young lady, later became on engineer on a Merchant Marine ship. I continued to work out of my garage for several years until my body would no longer bend to accommodate the demands of the job.

I was hard on my body in my youth and as a young adult. I rode horses often, worked on my aunt and uncle's dairy ranch, rode bulls and rode off-road motorcycles. I have a passion for hunting. I have been hunting since the age of 13. My greatest achievement in this sport is being awarded with a Boone and Crock one year for largest deer in Mendocino county. I loved to hike, camp and I used to run marathons. My horse, Spur, and I were a successful team in team penning and my other horse, BG, was a successful cutter. Unfortunately I can only now camp in my RV which I have to admit is more comfortable than a tent.

I'm glad to be able to attend SIR for the all the great lectures and social interactions.

New Member:
John Arends
Badge # 73

I was born in 1952 at Stanford Hospital in Palo Alto. Our family gradually moved north, eventually settling in Calistoga in 1962.

For many years, our family owned and operated a Music and Hobby Shop in Calistoga. That experience eventually led to one of the great passions of my life—a 35-year stint as a bass guitar player in a local Napa Valley rock-and-roll band.

My wife, Sue, and I moved to Santa Rosa in 2003. Between us, we have a wonderful combined family of six children and 11 grandchildren, who keep life interesting and our family gatherings lively.

My career in the automotive business began in 1974 when I went to work for Veale VW and BMW. The dealership was eventually purchased by the Hansel family, and I continued my career with Hansel VW, Hansel BMW, and Hansel Subaru. I spent a total of 47 years as the Assistant Parts Manager.

I started homebrewing in 1990 and have continued brewing ever since. Over the years, I've had the opportunity to share my passion for brewing by teaching at various events and festivals, as well as at Santa Rosa Junior College and local homebrew shops. Brewing has been a rewarding hobby that has allowed me to meet many great people while sharing knowledge and enjoying the craft of making good beer.

I retired at the end of June this year, although I'll be doing some part-time fill-in work to help cover vacations. After so many years in the automotive business, I'm looking forward to having more time to enjoy life.

I'm especially looking forward to attending and volunteering at many of the upcoming SIR events. I'm excited to meet more members, get involved, and enjoy this next chapter with Sue and all of my new SIR friends.

Artificial Intelligence Assisting Seniors

What if there was a way to receive an immediate answer to any question you might have? Or quickly get help and advice with a nagging issue? Or get accurate step-by-step directions on how to fix anything that doesn't work perfectly? Or get all the facts necessary in order to make an informed decision on any matter? And get it all instantly for free.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a powerful tool for senior citizens, acting as a quiet companion that enhances daily independence. For older adults navigating digital spaces or managing lifestyle adjustments, AI transforms how they access vital information.

The Ultimate "How-To" Companion

One of the most practical benefits of AI for seniors is answering "how-to" questions. Whether troubleshooting an iPad, adjusting a thermostat, or making sense of complex medical questions, AI eliminates the frustration of confusing search results. Seniors can simply speak or type the questions and receive a tailored, easy-to-follow guide.

The National Council on Aging recently published this excellent article regarding benefits and risk of using AI tools. Please click the link if interested:

https://www.ncoa.org/article/can-ai-help-older-adults-age-well-benefits-risks-and-what-families-should-know/

How to Use Google AI Mode:

Using Google AI mode (like **Google Gemini** or Search **AI Overviews**) is simple:

- **Open Google:** Open the Google app on your phone or google.com on a PC.
- **Ask a Question:** Tap the microphone icon to speak naturally, or type your query.
- **Read the AI Summary:** Google will present an **AI Overview** at the top of the screen, summarizing the answer in plain language.

Remember that AI is not 100% accurate, but by simplifying information gathering, AI grants seniors the autonomy to solve complicated problems quickly.