



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 May, 2024

### All members are invited to attend our next SIR In-Person Luncheon/Meeting on Thursday May 16th 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](mailto:rnkta@gmail.com) by **noon on May 9th** 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** per the above!

### Big Sir Chris Nelle's Message

[nelleval@hotmail.com](mailto:nelleval@hotmail.com) 916-205-1717



Joy and gratitude, frames of mind I try for constantly. It's not easy, especially if you read and keep up with current events...but they're out there, you just need to be more observant!

I sensed joy in listening to Rod Sverko share stories from his career as a Santa Rosa Police Officer. I heard a man who obviously enjoyed what he did and keeps his memories alive by sharing his experiences. A proud man who takes with him that sense of accomplishment for a job well done and for serving his fellow man.

I sense gratitude for more fully appreciating the work Neil Wheeler does for our club now that he has been incapacitated. I hope like hell that he returns soon to pick up where he left off. The latest news is very encouraging and the more notes of encouragement we can all send to his home address will no doubt be helpful to his psyche. Why is it we seldom appreciate a person until they are gone?? I can only encourage us all to be more mindful and more diligent in recognizing the contributions made by those around us (spouses, friends, neighbors) and don't be bashful in expressing our gratitude!

*(cont'd. on right)*

### May 16th Luncheon Menu – \$30

Chicken Parmesan

Caesar Salad — Herbed Pasta

Glazed Carrots

Bread and Butter and Brownies

Water, lemonade, coffee, or iced tea included

*(cont'd. from left)*

As for programs, remember that in June there is no speaker but rather our annual picnic, or better described, lawn party! If you haven't attended in the past the venue is very attractive and the set-up is more akin to an outdoor wedding reception than a 'sit-on-the-blanket' picnic. The food is great, we'll have lovely raffle prizes and nothing but fellow Branch 17 Sirs with which to socialize. Tickets are \$45/ea. (\$90 for a couple), so buy them now!

We're always working to develop a candidates list for various positions that come up...if you're in need of fulfilling your vow to 'volunteer' when asked, please reach out and let me know what you might be interested in doing for our branch. Thanks.

Parting words to reflect upon:

"It's not happiness that brings us gratitude. It's gratitude that brings us happiness."



## Memorial Day Events 2024:

Plan to enjoy your holiday at any of the special events in Sonoma County on May 27th:

The **Memorial Day Car Show** has grown every year to be the largest of its kind in Windsor. Last year there were over 200 cars. In addition, there will be food trucks on site and fun activities for kids. The event is free, family friendly, and open to the public. The address is 167 Arata Lane Windsor.



## Santa Rosa Rural Cemetery Memorial Day Tours

Honor the day with tours of veterans' graves. Tours



departs at 12pm. Meet at the Franklin Street Gate. Admission is free; donations appreciated. No pre-registration required.

## Rohnert Park Community Center Event

You are invited to the Rohnert Park Community Center, 5401 Snyder Lane, on Monday, May 27 to remember and honor those who lost their lives serving our country. The opening ceremony will begin at 10am. Additionally, the Avenue of the Flags will be on display outside of the Community Center complex.



## Are You Receiving the Weekly Agenda Email?

Every week Activities Chair Fred Rose emails all members the SIR Branch 17 Weekly Agenda. It lists all activities scheduled for the upcoming week, times, locations whether reservation are required, and who to contact. Reservations required for the following week are also listed. If you are not receiving Fred's email, please contact him at [fredricrose@comcast.net](mailto:fredricrose@comcast.net) or (707) 548-5797.

(Article by **Fred Rose**)

## Get Well Cards for Neil Wheeler:



The membership was informed at the April luncheon, with his wife Barbara's permission, that **Little Sir Neil Wheeler** was hospitalized just before the March luncheon. He is now at a Kaiser rehabilitation facility in Vallejo. Neil's family requests that you not try to call or email Neil or Barbara, but cards mailed to his home are welcome and encouraged. Barbara says that Neil misses his SIR buddies! Neil's address is 4066 Angeline Court, SR 95405.

If you *must* contact Barbara for some reason, please email Dennis Mangan at [dfmangan@gmail.com](mailto:dfmangan@gmail.com), and he will relay your message to Barbara.

## Four New Members Inducted:

Four new members were inducted by Big Sir Chris Nelle at the April luncheon. They are **Barry Chapman**, sponsored by George Traverso; **Rick Reisman**, sponsored by Len Grosso; **Jim Riedy**, sponsored by Davis Bullwinkle, and **Hans Verhoeff**, sponsored by Fred McMane.

(Article by **Gordon Boulton**)



Big Sir Chris Nelle with inductees Hans Verhoeff, Jim Riedy, Rick Reisman, and Barry Chapman. Welcome to Branch 17!

## Phone Committee Members Needed!

We **urgently** need more members of the Phone Committee to call about 10 members each month to ask if they are coming to the monthly luncheon. Contact Gordon Boulton at [gboulton@aol.com](mailto:gboulton@aol.com) to volunteer.

# The SIR Branch 17 Picnic

**Thursday, June 20th, 2024**

**Outdoor Event Area at Windsor Golf Course 1302 19th Hole Drive, Windsor, CA**

**Catered By Charlie's at Windsor Golf Course**

**11:00 am Social Hour- 12:00 Noon Lunch Served**

**BBQ Chicken, Veggie Pasta, Chili Beans, Corn on the Cob,  
Salad, Bread, Butter & Dessert  
Wine, Beer, Soft Drinks  
Raffle, Music**

**All for Only \$45.00 per person!**

**Picnic Sign Ups at April 18th and May 16th Meetings**

**or**

**Sign up by mail:**

**Al Petrie, 2188 Francisco Ave., Santa Rosa, Ca 95403-8173**

**(707) 974-9193 / alpetrie7@aol.com**

**Purchase by mail deadline is June 1st.**

**Be sure to include mailing address and name(s) for name tags**

**No tickets will be sold the day of the Event**

**Contact John Gnam 528-0592 musicmed@sonic.net or  
Kurt Wehrmeister 630-461-2715 kurtwehrmeister@gmail  
- Branch 17 Picnic Co-Chairs if questions**





# Activities:

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

## Bocce:

Bocce can be played on most Fridays at Juilliard Park west side starting at 10:45 am. Contact Ken Ford at [kennethford06@gmail.com](mailto:kennethford06@gmail.com) for information.



## Bowling:

*(article by Fred Rose)*

If you have an interest in helping to get this activity going again so you also could enjoy it then contact our Activities Chair, Fred Rose at:

707-548-5797 or [fredricrose@comcast.net](mailto:fredricrose@comcast.net)

## Book Club:

*(Article by Les Brodie)*



For May the book club selected ***Small Mercies: A Detective Mystery*** by Dennis Lehane. Weather permitting we will meet at 2pm at Howarth Park on Wednesday May 22. If you have questions or would like to be on (or off) our email list, send an email to [Lsbcal2@gmail.com](mailto:Lsbcal2@gmail.com).

## Boys' Night Out:

*(Article by Don Malvestiti)*



BNO IS MOVING TO THE 2<sup>ND</sup> WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH.

BNO for May will be at the **Los Molcajetes Bar & Grill**, 6599 Montecito Blvd. #110, Santa Rosa, Wednesday May 8<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 p.m. Social, 6 p.m. Dinner.

Don needs to know if you will be joining the group by May 3rd. Email only at:

[malvestidon485@gmail.com](mailto:malvestidon485@gmail.com)

DO NOT EXPECT TO BE INCLUDED IF YOU EMAIL DON AFTER THAT DATE.

## 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](mailto:mdlundgren@msn.com)

**James Park 707-578-4255**

[jimcpark38@gmail.com](mailto:jimcpark38@gmail.com)

## Coffee Club:

*(Article by Rich de Lambert)*



Hi again Coffee Goers! Our next meeting on May 9th will be at Howarth Park. Coffee and treats will be served all for the price of \$1.00. Any dress will be permitted with the exception of sleepers or pajamas. Important—bring a camp chair and a potential member. Park your car in the upper parking lot and meet at the trail starting to Spring Lake. All meetings for the summer will be at the same place. Our next meeting, on the 23rd of May, will also be at Howarth Park. Call me - Rich de Lambert - if you have any questions - at (707) 545-3490.

## Community Involvement Program:

*(article by Bob Reuther)*

We hope you will join us at the Redwood Empire Food Bank on Thursday, May 2, from 9:45 a.m. until noon. If you plan on joining us, we ask that you contact Sir George Traverso when he sends an email. And remember, friends and family are welcome. We have arranged with the Food Bank Volunteer Coordinator to tell them that you are attending, so that you don't need to check in on their computer. This prevents a pile-up at the entrance of the building. We are continuously seeking to improve our outings, so that you have a good time helping others. Last time we ensured that the group had a break after the first hour of work. The staff members are aware of our needs. Always feel free to tell us if there is something that needs to be improved.

*(cont'd on page 5 top left)*

## Community Involvement: (cont'd. from pg. 4)

This is a great way for new members of former Branch 76 to meet members of their new Branch 17. At our last outing, we had 16 people participate. Thirteen were Sir Branch 17 members, two were spouses, and one member of Oakmont Branch 92. We worked together as one group on an assembly line. We packaged eight pallets of senior food boxes. This amounted to 360 boxes of nearly 11 lbs. of food—enough for 9,090 meals. In addition, several of us prepared 1,500 bags for produce. The Food Bank appreciates our work and sent us this message:

*“Thank you all so much for your time and energy last week in the warehouse. It was wonderful to see your group having such a good time while working to help the Redwood Empire Food Bank end hunger in our community. What a great team you have!”*

You will be provided with a name lanyard and a card to be punched for attendance when you come to the Food Bank. Ten punches and you are entered into a monthly prize drawing. The Branch 17 CIP Committee has started an additional prize drawing on every visit. Your attendance will automatically enter you for a prize. The March winners were Sir Elias Zegarra and Sir Chris Nolen.

You can always find us on the [www.sir17.org](http://www.sir17.org) website under the first Thursday of each month. All the information related to time and place is on that site.

*“Those who are the happiest are those who do the most for others.”—Booker T. Washington*

After the Food Bank you can join the group led by Sir Rich de Lambert that has a Hot Dog Thursday Lunch close by at the Pacific Coast Air Museum. A large hot dog, chips, and a drink cost \$8. Well worth the price, and support for another good cause as discussed by one of our members Sir Gary Greenough as the guest speaker at our February luncheon meeting.

-Barry Bialkoski and Bob Reuther Co-Chairs

-Rich de Lambert / George Traverso Co-Vice Chairs



## Explore and Dine: (Article by Art Appling)



Early April saw a relative small group meet at Franchetti's restaurant in Santa Rosa for a fine lunch and good conversation. It turns out that small functions are nice as we get to know each other a bit better through conversation.

Because of the similarity between the Explore and Dine activity and the Wine and Beer tasting function, both of which encourage spouse or significant other participation, we will likely not do both events in the same month.

May is bringing a Beer tasting event and June is our annual picnic, so Explore and Dine's next event will be in July. I mentioned in prior postings that we would like a SIR to volunteer to be a group leader and pick out a destination and a restaurant for the Explore and Dine function.

It has been mentioned that a SMART train ride to Petaluma for lunch and then a return back to Santa Rosa sounded interesting to several members. Do I have a group leader for this in July??? Please email me: [art4747@msn.com](mailto:art4747@msn.com)

## GLOBAL FORUM: (Article by Marvin Mai)



During last month's discussion we thought we'd solved all the world's problems by consulting the oracle of our youth, The Magic 8 Ball. Question: "Will there be peace in the Middle East?" Answer: "Don't count on it." The conclusion is we need to continue our discussions and conversations to try to make some sense of what's happening in our world.

We have a variety of perspectives and bring to bear our various backgrounds. It's always great fun and the monthly GLOBAL FORUM provides a place and a group interested in all that is going on around us. We don't always agree, but we enjoy exploring our diverse information and opinions.



(cont'd. on page 6)

The May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting will be at the home of **Big Sir Chris Nelle** and a reservation for one of eight seats is required. So, email Chris at [nelleval@hotmail.com](mailto:nelleval@hotmail.com) for your seat and his address. The Zoom meeting will be on May 24<sup>th</sup> and if you're not on Marvin Mai's email notices email him to get added to the invitees at [maimarvin57@gmail.com](mailto:maimarvin57@gmail.com).

## 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:

[stewlauterbach@gmail.com](mailto:stewlauterbach@gmail.com).



Gordon, Stew, and Jim enjoy Armstrong Woods

## Live Comedy Group:

(article by *Mike Burchill*)



I am planning to restart the Live Comedy Group. Prior to the pandemic, our group enjoyed free comedy shows at the Double Decker Lanes in Rohnert Park. Now there is a club in downtown Santa Rosa, **Barrel Proof Lounge**,

that features free comedy shows a few Tuesday evenings per month.

If you are interested in seeing some up and coming comedians in downtown Santa Rosa, please email Mark Burchill at [SIRMarkB@sonic.net](mailto:SIRMarkB@sonic.net).



## Couples Night Out:

(Article by *Fred Rose*)



April CNO at La Gare was, as usual, great. Small table groups made conversation easy, great service and food made the evening complete. For May we are going to the always favorite, Central Market in Petaluma. For your calendar, the date, May 23rd, at 6:30 PM. RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED, please contact Fred Rose at [fredricrose@comcast.com](mailto:fredricrose@comcast.com), no later than May 20th.



## Poker Update:

(Article by *Mike O'Neill*)



Our next game is scheduled for Thursday, May 9th. At this time we already have seven players signed up to play. We added a new player in April. A good sign. If anybody is interested, contact Mike O'Neill at [Mikeo46@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Mikeo46@sbcglobal.net).

New players will get priority for future games. As well, with a couple more players, we can have two games. We did that once a couple of months ago.

We play at Epicenter from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. We order lunch about 12:30. Since they do not charge us to use the room, we ask each player to buy lunch off the menu, and a beverage. That is required, if you want to play. Buy-in is \$15.

## 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](mailto:richardlundblad@gmail.com)

or call me at 707-888-8386



## The Science of Aging—Earwax

(Article by **Dennis Mangan**)

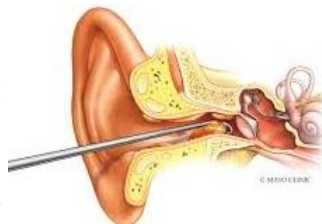


I'm always amazed at how much stuff leaks out of our body every day. Saliva, nasal discharge, tears, sweat, and of course urine and feces. However, don't forget the ears! Earwax, formally called cerumen, is a secretion that flushes the ear canal, moving dead cells and other debris away from the eardrum.

Normally, earwax exits the ear during chewing and neck movement. Wiping the outer portion of the ear every day with a damp washcloth is usually enough cleaning. However, roughly 57% of guys our age have a problem with earwax buildup (aka cerumen impaction). With age, the ear canal starts to collapse and the flow of earwax is slowed as it becomes drier and stickier. Hair growing in the ear canal along with lost manual dexterity make it harder for us to clean our ears. Hearing aids can interfere with the natural movement of earwax out of the ear canal, increasing the risk of buildup as well as damage to the hearing aid. Certain medical conditions such as osteoporosis or arthritis, can make it more difficult to clean the ears properly, while some medications, like those used to treat allergies, increase the production of earwax or dry it out.

If earwax builds up, it can be hard to remove. Earwax blockages can be painful or cause a feeling of fullness in your ear, itching, discharge, or hearing loss. That ringing in your ear (called tinnitus) may be due to a plug of earwax. If the whole ear canal is occluded by earwax, it can press against the eardrum, leading to problems with the middle ear, and may even cause dizziness, increasing the risk of falling.

You've heard it before from your parents and doctors, "Don't put anything smaller than your elbow in your ear!" Don't insert cotton swabs, fingernails, toothpicks, or other gadgets into the ear canal. Don't go digging! If the ear is impacted with a hard, stubborn chunk of earwax, see an ear, nose, and throat doctor (that is, an otolaryngologist) who will have the arsenal of precise tools to clean it out. You'll be glad you did.



(cont'd top right)

(cont'd from left)

Seventy five percent of those treated for blockages had improved hearing after earwax was removed. In a small study, researchers even found removing impacted earwax improved the cognitive ability of elderly patients with memory disorders. So keep your ears clean...you'll hear better and might even think better.



**New Member Welcome -  
Bo Greaves Badge #182**



Hello SIR Branch 17. I was raised on the east coast, mostly in the Allegheny Mountains of central PA. My childhood was blessed with lots of outdoor fun and loving family. I headed south to Baltimore for college in the tumultuous and empowering late sixties. Right after college I met Daisy, and we married and moved to California in 1971. For the next 10 years I worked as a welder in the body shop of the GM Fremont factory that now makes Teslas. And during those years we had and began raising our awesome four kids. When the GM plant closed down, I decided to get back on the path to becoming a physician.

Luckily, I was allowed in at UC-Davis medical school, and we moved to Santa Rosa in 1987 for my family medicine training. After residency, I practiced family medicine, first in an office in Rohnert Park and then in Santa Rosa. And the last six years before retiring in 2015 were spent helping to lead the Vista health center. It was important to me to help provide quality health care to those most in need.

I love to hike in the woods. Annadel has kept us firmly planted in Santa Rosa—such a treasure. Sadly I haven't been able to go up there for a couple of years due to knee arthritis. Last November I had a total knee replacement, and am making progress in my rehab. I WILL get back into Annadel by this summer. I also love to read, to cook (and eat), and do home projects to keep our old house functioning. But my main joy comes from my family. Our four kids have multiplied, giving us 11 grandkids. My happiest days are when all 21 of us can be together, and I can just sit back and watch them laugh and love each other.

## Sir17 Golf:

(Article by *Jim Gurke*)

Bennett Valley has finally dried out to the point that weekly Branch 17 SIR golf is back; first tee time at 8:30 AM. As a reminder to long-time members and those new to our Monday morning rounds, please adhere to the following protocol.

If you wish to play you must sign up in either one of two ways. First, there's always a weekly sign-up sheet for those who played the prior Monday. Add your name if you wish to play the following Monday. Otherwise, please call the BV pro shop, 707-528-3673, by Friday to add you name to the Monday morning SIR tee time. Please also remember, if you sign up to play and don't show up without prior notice to BV, the course has a policy of charging you \$20 for a no-show.



Touchstone Golf is the managing agent for Bennett Valley. They're trying to keep greens fees and practice range rates below what neighboring Sonoma County courses are charging. But rates are likely to rise beginning July 2024.

Notable changes include:

- A Resident and new Non-Resident rate
- A distinct Friday rate
- 11-19% price increase for Residents
- ~30% price increase for Non-Residents
- Annual memberships for Non-Residents will be grandfathered in at Resident rates

Rate increases are intended to enable operations to fund irrigation maintenance, drainage improvements, and general course conditions while still retaining costs well below competitive courses.

Touchstone will present the new rates to the Santa Rosa City Council at the May 7 Council meeting.

## Baseball in the 1930's - by *John Weaver*

March 28 was Opening Day and baseball season started with 15 games. All 30 Major League teams were playing. That took me back to the late 1930's when I was young. The first thing I remember was the World Series. It was heard on radio but we were in school. Somehow the status of the game was whispered all around the classroom.

In March, baseball was our main activity. Making a ball diamond was our initial project. Any vacant lot was fair game and there were plenty of them. After a few games the field was broken in and we were able to play other guys from other parts of the city. We were not in a league and we usually played on Saturday. The other days it was used for practice.

Baseball season also meant listening to MLB on radio. I lived near Philadelphia so we listened to the A's and the Phillies. It was also possible to get the Giants or the Dodgers from New York. One time I was invited to join a group that had tickets to a Yankees/Athletics double header. That was when Joe DiMaggio started playing left field for the Yankees. Home runs were plentiful. There were 12 in the two games we watched.



One day while in high school, the Phillies sent a scout crew over to check us out. There were only about 15 players on our high school baseball team but on that day there were 30 of us - all ready with our gloves and bats. We were taking batting practice. My friend Wally was the pitcher, so he gave me a chance to bat. He put the ball right over the plate. I hit a beautiful groundball to the second baseman but was thrown out. I never got the call - but it was great while it lasted!

## Happy Birthday to all those born in May!

- *Bill Brooks*
- *Davis Bullwinkle*
- *Kenneth Fox*
- *Tom Gemetti*
- *Gary Greenough*
- *Stew Lauterbach*
- *Peter Lee*
- *Joubert Olson*
- *Mike O'Neill*
- *Chris Smith*
- *Lance Thompson*
- *Roy Thuestad*





## SUNSHINE COMMITTEE:

Our Sunshine Committee is Sir Kurt Wehrmeister. If you know of a SIR Branch 17 member or one of his family members who is seriously ill or who has passed away, please let Kurt know so that he can send an appropriate card. Kurt's contact information is [kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com](mailto:kurtwehrmeister@gmail.com), 630-461-2715.

# Welcome!

**Rod Mooney —  
Badge # 171**



My name is Rodney Mooney. I was born in Castro Valley California and grew up in the East Bay. I moved to Sonoma County in 1976, attended Sonoma Valley High School and graduated in 1980.

I am married to my high school sweetheart and she is my best friend. We have three beautiful children and one grandchild.

I live in Santa Rosa and retired four years ago after a 40 year career as a general contractor. I was a member of Branch 76 for many years. I enjoy traveling and golfing, which I started doing about 16 years ago.

**(Editor's Note:** Rod is our new Food Service Coordinator! Thank you, Rod!)

## SIR HAPPENINGS

The **February** 2024 edition of Newsletter 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.

Click here: <https://sirinc.org/uploads/newsletters/2024-FebruaryHappenings-Opt-240201.pdf>



**New Member :**

**Barry Chapman  
Badge #194**



I was born in San Francisco in 1956, raised in Redwood City with weekends and summers spent in Occidental. I graduated from Woodside High in 1974. I attended Sonoma State University and graduated in 1984 with a degree in management, with an emphasis in accounting and a minor in computer science.

I became a CPA while working for Laventhol and Horwath in San Francisco and had a career as a CFO for several companies in Sonoma County. In 1987, I moved back to Sonoma County where my wife and I raised our 7<sup>th</sup> generation Sonoma County children. I am a true 49er in that my ancestors came from North Carolina in 1849 and are buried in the Rural Cemetery here in Santa Rosa. We may not have all been born in Sonoma, but we all grew up in our beautiful county.

I met my wife of 37 years while attending SSU. Both of us worked in San Francisco and tied the knot in 1987. Going strong and proud grandparents of six grandkids.

I am very excited to join SIR and have already become active in a couple of the events. I look forward to getting to know everyone!

## 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.