

happy new year



# TRAIL TIPS

Mission Trail Branch 35, Los Altos, California

Branch 35 web [www.sirinc2.org/branch35/](http://www.sirinc2.org/branch35/)



### - NEXT MEETING -

**Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

SIR Branch 35 Lunch Meeting 11:00am-1:30pm

Business 12:15pm, Speaker 12:45pm

Venue: Mountain View Community Center

### Program: **Dr. Michael Baker** **Teaching Casualty Care in Ukraine**



Dr. Baker will present a review of the history, geography, and politics leading up to the unjustifiable Russian Invasion of Ukraine. An explanation of what it is like to travel to Ukraine during the war, teaching Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) to civilian and military medical providers and Stop the Bleed (StB) to civilians. Dr Baker will explain

the connection between the terrible crisis in Israel/Gaza and the Russians/Iranians who benefit greatly while everyone else loses. Caution, there will be some graphic photos and videos.

Dr. Baker recently retired from a 40-year career in general surgery and trauma. He had a parallel career in the military that included qualifying in a warfare specialty, combat deployment with the Marines and strategic planning for both major conflicts and humanitarian emergencies. He retired with the rank of Rear Admiral and has numerous kudos including 3 Legion of Merit Awards and his Combat Action Ribbons. He currently teaches Political Science and Military Affairs for the Osher Lifelong Learning (OLLI) Programs at UC Berkeley, Dominican University, and Cal State University East Bay, and is on the Board of Trustees of the Commonwealth Club/World Affairs.

Peter Wong

### *The Big Sir says...*

As we stand on the threshold of a brand new year, I am honored to address you as Big Sir, and I want to take this opportunity to extend my warmest wishes to each and every member of our wonderful branch.

The past year has been filled with memorable challenges as we settled in to our new host facility and found a quality caterer. We concluded 2023 by celebrating with a festive Holiday Luncheon, relishing a delicious meal, enjoying the delightful performance by the Madrigal Singers, and enhancing our shared experiences with lively banter.

I wish to extend my gratitude to former Big Sir Ron Nakamoto for his leadership and to the entire BEC team for their unwavering efforts in guiding our branch through a year of transition. Their dedication has set a remarkable example, and as we move forward, we stand upon the foundation they have built.

In the coming year, let us continue to build upon the foundation we have. Let's embark on new adventures, create new memories, and strengthen our bonds of friendship. Our branch is a place of support, where we lift each other up and create a sense of belonging. I encourage every member to get involved, share your talents and ideas, and help us make 2024 a year to remember.

May the year ahead be filled with good health, happiness, and the fulfillment of your dreams. Happy New Year to you all, and let's make it a fantastic one!

Peter Wong.



### SOME ANNOUNCEMENTS



- Sir Branch 35 membership dues for 2024 are payable by January 15th! Watch for an email reminder with a link you can follow to the credit card payment page. See more details below.
- See a brief report and a beautiful collage of photos from our Holiday Party in December towards the end of this newsletter.

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## JANUARY 2024 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

**Active Members: 311 Net Monthly Change: -1**

No new members this month! There's room for more, we always welcome new members so bring a friend or neighbor!

Remember, you can search our member database at this link:

[SIR Branch 35 - Membership Directory \(wildapricot.org\)](http://SIR Branch 35 - Membership Directory (wildapricot.org))

## JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES: 10+ YRS

How long have you been a member? These members are celebrating more than 10 years with SIR Branch 35 this month!

Stan Barkey (20)	Bob Booth (9)	John Brown (14)
Jim DeLong (24)	Herb Fischgrund (21)	Dick Knock (21)
John McGowan (11)	Ernie Robertson (14)	Dick Treakle (13)
John Wong (25)		

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

John Ahn	David Arata	Russ Atkinson
Richard Blackborow	Vince Ciampa	Dick Costa
Gerry Czamanske	Dick DeLoof	John Faucett
Gerry Feeney	Don Fidler	John Files
Joe Geist	David Gobuty	Clive Hallatt
Rob Lipshutz	Robert Manetta	Les Miles
Cal Morris	Tom Moulton	Joe Mullen
Ron Murphy	John Richardson	Joe Scheid
Wendell Stephens	Ranney Thayer	JT Tompane
Ron Wilensky		

### In Memoriam



**Dick Heiman**, a member of Branch 35 since 2020, passed on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. Dick was a good tennis player and golfer, shot his age twice in the past year!

A celebration of life will be held at Peninsula Temple Beth El in late January, both in person & virtual.

We've lost a friend; he will be missed. R.I.P.

## 2024 MEMBERSHIP DUES

A reminder that membership dues for 2024 are payable by January 15th. If you have not already paid you should receive the first reminder email on January 1st. The email has a button to click which will take you directly to your personal invoice payment page on our website, without having to log in, so that you may pay by credit card. This is the easiest and preferred way to make the payment. You may also pay by sending a check to our Treasurer (Larry Low)

and instructions for doing so are in the email. Thank you for your prompt attention to this and please email me at [rjblackborow@comcast.net](mailto:rjblackborow@comcast.net) if you have any problems with making your payment.

Richard Blackborow (Membership Database Chairman)

## BOOK SWAP

See our [web page](#)

TIM TOPOLE  
650-793-0838  
[topole@yahoo.com](mailto:topole@yahoo.com)



The book swap will be back in business at our next monthly luncheon. Bring a book you enjoyed for sharing, grab something that piques your interest!

Tim

## BOOK CLUB

See our [web page](#)

JERRY BELDEN  
650-322-1391  
[jerry@gbeldenltc.com](mailto:jerry@gbeldenltc.com)



The Book Club is an activity where most months of the year, all members read the same book and then meet to discuss it.

Our group did **not** meet in December because of holiday scheduling conflicts. So, our next meeting will be on January 10th, and our next book is still "This Tender Land" by William Kent Kreuger. Happy New Year!

Jerry

## WINE FINDERS

See our [web page](#)

ALAN GAUDIE  
650-964-6510  
[alangaudie@yahoo.com](mailto:alangaudie@yahoo.com)  
  
RUSS AYRES  
650-776-6391  
[rrayres3@hotmail.com](mailto:rrayres3@hotmail.com)



This activity is for couples who want to have fun and meet new people. We gather at the home of a host couple to blind taste, grade wines and share appetizers. Contact either Alan or Russ to join or for more information.

Alan

## BIKING

See our [web page](#)

GORDON TONG  
408-242-0557  
[gordy6850@gmail.com](mailto:gordy6850@gmail.com)  
  
HANK BOTTINO  
650-207-4320  
[bottinoh@comcast.net](mailto:bottinoh@comcast.net)



**Next ride: January 11<sup>th</sup>, 11:00am**

Wives and guests welcomed; Helmets required and Face masks optional. If you plan to ride or have questions, please contact either Gordon Tong at 408-242-0557 / email: [gordy6850@gmail.com](mailto:gordy6850@gmail.com) or Hank Bottino at (650) 207-4320 / email [bottinoh@comcast.net](mailto:bottinoh@comcast.net), my biking group co-leader.

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## Stevens Creek Trail & Shoreline Park (Mt. View)

**Ride:** We will ride a flat, scenic 14 mile round-trip to Michael's Restaurant in Shoreline Park, plus an optional 5-mile loop to the Palo Alto Duck Pond, next to the Palo Alto Airport (total ride 19 miles). Lunch will be at the Baylands Cafe at the Baylands Golf Link near the PA Duck Pond.

**Directions:** Meet at the south end of the Stevens Creek bike path at the corner of Sleeper Ave. and Franklin Ave. From Palo Alto, go south on El Camino Real to Grant Rd; turn right. Drive past the 3rd traffic signal to Sleeper Ave.; turn left. Drive to the end of Sleeper Ave., which is the intersection of Sleeper Ave and Franklin Ave. Park your car near the intersection.

Gordy



**A little post-hike refreshment!**

This year we had one hike canceled due to heavy rain but we completed 10 others and with a little luck we will do 11 hikes in 2024. We hiked as far north as Redwood City (Pulgas Ridge), as far south as Calero County Park and as far west as Portola Redwoods State Park.

## HIKING

See our [web page](#)

JOHN TUCKER  
408-655-5435  
[tuckerjg6@gmail.com](mailto:tuckerjg6@gmail.com)



**What A View!**

The SIR Branch 35 Hiking Group wrapped up 2023 with an 8 mile trip up Mt. Umunhum and back. Nineteen intrepid hikers took part with ages ranging from 58 to 88! What an outstanding group. The weather was cold but the view was magnificent!

After the hike we retired to a local watering hole for some refreshment and more talk. This included our new Big Sir Peter and his wife Ellie.



**Women are always welcome and encouraged to join us!**

For 2024 I am planning a group of all new hikes. I have a list of wonderful places I would like to take the group in the new year. This year I also plan to add in some shorter, closer hikes for those who would like to give a SIR hike a try. If you are not on the hiking mailing list let me know and I will add you. We would love to have you join us.

John

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## JANUARY'S SPECIAL DAYS



PAT O'CONNOR  
[patoconnor61@outlook.com](mailto:patoconnor61@outlook.com)

- 1<sup>st</sup> New Year's Day
- 4<sup>th</sup> World Braille Day
- 7<sup>th</sup> Golden Globe Awards
- 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Peninsula Symphony: At The Movies
- 14<sup>th</sup> Critics' Choice Awards
- 14<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> Australian Open (Tennis)
- 15<sup>th</sup> Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 15<sup>th</sup> Emmy Awards
- 25<sup>th</sup> Robert Burns Night
- 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> Winter X Games
- 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> Symphony San Jose: Automation

## BOCCE BALL

See our [web page](#)

ED AUSTIN  
650-468-5341  
[austinv@aol.com](mailto:austinv@aol.com)

NORM PASS – SCHEDULE & CANCELLATIONS  
408-737-7639  
[normpass@sbcglobal.net](mailto:normpass@sbcglobal.net)

JOHN RICHARDSON  
650-996-7787  
[JLR@RCGC.COM](mailto:JLR@RCGC.COM)

**Every Friday, 10:00 a.m. to noon. Guests are welcome.**

Location: Bocce Ball Courts at the Los Altos Community Center, 97 Hillview Ave., Los Altos (off San Antonio Road), 650-947-2790. Ample parking in front. The Bocce Ball courts are in the left rear of the site as you face the front entrance of the Center.

As we complete a year with the Bocce Ball Activity, we reflect on what we have been especially thankful for:

- The level of participation each week during reasonable weather has been good. During some weeks as many as 16 show up to play on the two courts.
- The chance to be with friends and meet new ones.
- Faithful support for scheduling and notifications of necessary cancelations (by Norm Pass).
- Regular court surface maintenance by players before games are started.
- A good facility, centrally located.

We look forward to a good Bocce year of play in 2024!

John

## BRIDGE

See our [web page](#)

MARK LEVI  
650-305-9132  
[mlevi@comcast.net](mailto:mlevi@comcast.net)



The bridge group is meeting the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at the Los Altos Senior Center from 12:00 to 2:00 for a friendly game. Send me your email address and I'll add you to our mailing list.

Mark

## CHESS

See our [web page](#)

BEN KUCKENS 650-400-0353  
[bengk@att.net](mailto:bengk@att.net)



The Chess group meets on Wednesdays 9am to 1pm at the Los Altos Civic Center, 97 Hillview Avenue, Los Altos, in the senior center room. All are welcome to come and play non-competitive friendly games of chess (no time clocks). All levels of players are welcome. Ben and a few others are available to play on many other days, dates and times are flexible. If interested, contact me.

Ben

## BOWLING

See our [web page](#)

BOB TAGGART 650-321-2654  
[cbtaggart@earthlink.net](mailto:cbtaggart@earthlink.net)

PRIZES: ALAN GAUDIE

DOUG ANDERSON 415-407-4000  
[marktinti@aol.com](mailto:marktinti@aol.com)

**Every Tuesday, 1:00 p.m. (for a couple hours), at Homestead Bowl, Homestead & Stelling, in Cupertino.**

The Winter Season kicked off on December 5<sup>th</sup> but we've had a complicated Holiday time and haven't been able to compile the results to date. So, STAY TUNED for February's Trail Tips where we'll catch you up with the season's scores and standings! Call Bob or Doug if you have any questions.

Doug

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## GOLF

See our [web page](#)

BRUCE KARNEY 650-964-3567  
[bkarney@comcast.net](mailto:bkarney@comcast.net)

LES MILES 408-528-5473  
[Impomi@yahoo.com](mailto:Impomi@yahoo.com)

LARRY LOW 408-533-2651  
[low1721@gmail.com](mailto:low1721@gmail.com)



## December's Results:

Deep Cliff (Eclectic 1)			Par 60			Nov. 30, 2023		
Palmer Flt. 1	Net	\$	Palmer Flt. 2	Net	\$	Nicklaus Flt.	Net	\$
M. Haberman	56	\$18	John Gerich	61	\$18	Don Mattson	54	\$21
Les Miles	62	\$14	D. Squellati	67	\$14	Ben Gikis	59	\$16
J. Rittweger	63	\$10	Stan Scardino	68	\$10	Jim Narva	60	\$10
						Peter Wong	61	\$5

Low Gross: Marc Haberman 72

Castlewood Hill			Par 70			Dec. 4, 2023		
Palmer Flt. 1	Net	\$	Palmer Flt. 2	Net	\$	Nicklaus Flt.	Net	\$
Rob't Manetta	70	\$18	R. Pattisson	76	\$18	Don Mattson	71	\$15
Jim Thorne	72	\$14	John Gerich	76	\$14	John Ray	74	\$7
Alex Bush	73	\$10	Ken Cornwell	81	\$10			

Inside Putter Length: Ken Cornwell on #17 (\$15)  
 Low Gross (forward tees): Richard McGrath 83  
 Low Gross (back tees): Robert Manetta 78

Los Lagos (Eclectic 1)			Par 68			Dec. 7, 2023		
Palmer Flt. 1	Net	\$	Palmer Flt. 2	Net	\$	Nicklaus Flt.	Net	\$
Larry Low	69	\$18	Peter Lau	67	\$18	W. Stephens	71	\$18
J. Rittweger	72	\$14	Terry Barnhart	70	\$14	Ben Gikis	72	\$14
R. McGrath	73	\$10	Dick Wilson	77	\$10	Joe Enos	72	\$10
Chris Weberg	74	\$5	Herb Petersen	77	\$5	Tim O'Meara	74	\$5

Inside Putter Length: Richard McGrath on #16 (\$15)  
 Low Gross (forward tees): Ben Gikis 98  
 Low Gross (back tees): Larry Low 81

Deep Cliff (Eclectic 2)			Par 60			Dec. 11, 2023		
Palmer Flight	Net	Prize	Nicklaus Flight	Net	Prize			
Joe Cioni	60	\$25	Don Mattson	58	\$18			
Richard McGrath	62	\$19	Sam Im	59	\$14			
Chris Weberg	66	\$14	Jim Narva	61	\$10			
John Rittweger	66	\$9						

Inside Putter Length: John Gerich on #13 (\$15)  
 Low Gross: Joe Cioni and Richard McGrath tied at 70

Moffett Field Christmas Ball		Par 72		Dec. 15, 2023	
Team		Score		Prize	
Sam Im, Tom Taboada, Wendell Stephens, Jim Narva		136		\$15 @	
Richard McGrath, Peter Lau, Dick Wilson, Dave Ogle		140		\$10 @	
Joe Cioni, Stan Scardino, Don Mattson, John Ray		141		\$8 @	

Low Gross: Richard McGrath 77

## Fixtures for the Coming Month

SIGN-UP with John Gerich by Fri Jan 12 for the following			
Callippe Preserve (CPR)	Thu Feb 1	10:04	\$64
			NEED TC / Cornwell
Sunnyvale (SVL)	Mon Feb 5	9:30	\$39
			Schutz 408-313-6852 pschutz3@comcast.com / NEED ATC
Metropolitan (MET)	Thu Feb 8	9:30	\$49
			Double Points Cioni 650-393-5711 jacioni@yahoo.com / Cornwell
DeLaveaga (DLV)	Mon Feb 12	10:00	\$61
			Scramble NEED TC / Cornwell
Las Positas (LPS)	Thu Feb 15	10:00	\$60
			Weberg 408-205-9120 cweberg11@gmail.com / NEED ATC
Baylands (BAY)	Wed Feb 21	10:00	\$70
			Cioni 650-393-5711 jacioni@yahoo.com / NEED ATC
Shoreline (SHL)	Thu Feb 22	9:30	\$44
			4MM2BB ith 408-307-8056 richard.mcgrath@yahoo.com / NEED ATC
Castlewood CC Hill (CWH)	Mon Feb 26	10:00	\$115
			McGrath 408-307-8056 richard.mcgrath@yahoo.com / Garten
Poppy Ridge (PPR)	Thu Feb 29	10:00	\$67
			Garten 408-253-5860 xonon1@comcast.net / Wilson

## Balbir Kalsi Shoots the Round of the Year

Our golfing SIRs played something like 2000 rounds in Branch 35 tournaments this year, but only one round could be the **best** of 2023 as measured by the "over/under" metric. Drumroll, please, for **Balbir Kalsi!** On August 3, playing the challenging Callippe Preserve course, he shot 8.8 strokes under to win Round of the Year honors.

Here are the previous winners of ROTY:

- 2022: **Jay Jonkait** 9.7 under at Moffett Field
- 2021: **John Gerich & Joe Enos** 10.1 under at Dublin Ranch
- 2020: **Ken Newton** 10.1 under at San Jose Muni
- 2019: **Dave Ogle** 13.4 under at Las Positas

## Mattson Cards the Round of the Month

**Don Mattson** was 5.8 strokes under on Nov. 30 in the first round of the Deep Cliff Eclectic. Don won his flight by 5 strokes and followed that up by winning his flight again in the second eclectic round on December 11. Way to finish the year in style, Don!

## Mattson, Haberman, Gerich Lead Deep Cliff Eclectic

After two rounds of the Deep Cliff Eclectic, **Don Mattson** leads the Nicklaus flight by one stroke over **Jim Narva** and **Wendell Stephens**. **Marc Haberman** leads the low handicap Palmer flight by two strokes over **Joe Cioni** and **Chris Weberg**. **John Gerich** enjoys a six-shot lead over **Stan Scardino** in the high handicap Palmer flight.

## THE MYSTERIES OF OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Did you know that a CHP helicopter emergency airlift can cost you less than a local ambulance ride? How can this be? In a special article in The San Francisco Examiner, Chris Dolan and Alison Baird discuss this and other related mysteries. They describe some new laws taking effect in California on January 1<sup>st</sup> to address problem areas such as 'surprise billing' by private ambulance services and health care providers and overly aggressive credit reporting in the event the bill is not settled 'on time'. Check out their article here and explore further links to other similar content:

[https://www.sfoxaminer.com/our\\_partners/why-does-a-chp-helicopter-emergency-airlift-cost-less-than-an-ambulance-ride/article\\_ebc7b246-987f-11ee-9505-53cbad9f1e08.html](https://www.sfoxaminer.com/our_partners/why-does-a-chp-helicopter-emergency-airlift-cost-less-than-an-ambulance-ride/article_ebc7b246-987f-11ee-9505-53cbad9f1e08.html)

Pat O'Connor, Editor

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## MOVIES

### MOVIES

JIM QUILLINAN

[jvquill@pacbell.net](mailto:jvquill@pacbell.net)



See more of Jim's movie reviews here:  
<http://www.qsreviews.wordpress.com>

Our Movies group will meet on Zoom on January 16th at 3 PM. If interested, contact Jim Quillinan.



**The Crown.** The final five episodes are now streaming on Netflix. The long reign of Queen Elizabeth II is celebrated in this masterful series. These episodes cover the time between Princess Di's death and the marriage of Prince Charles and Camilla. The court and political intrigues are skillfully chronicled as the Queen handles the downsizing of the monarchy, the deaths of her sister and mother, and the relevancy

of the Monarchy. She relies heavily on the counsel of her husband. Her grandson William, now in college, is maturing into a wise counsel and someone to take over the family business when the time comes. The old Queen cleverly consults with her younger selves in times of crisis. Prince Harry is the family clown getting into to all sorts of embarrassing dustups. The Queen handles it all well and with grace. These shows are must-sees, so get them on your binge list if you have seen them already. Rated TV MA for language and adult situations. It is a Peggy's Pick.



**Archie.** This is a four-part docudrama about the life and loves of Archie Leach, better known as Cary Grant. It is based on the Book by Dyan Cannon, wife #4 of 5. Dyan and their daughter, Jennifer Grant, produced the series. The story starts with Archie as a young man from Bristol, England who is breaking into musical theater. He has a complicated relationship with his parents. He thinks his mother is dead. His father is distant but a good

dresser. His musical troupe travels to New York for an extended stay. When they return to England, Cary stays behind as he sees a future in America. Archie creates Cary Grant, and the rest is history. The series follows Grant's career in Hollywood. The screen idol and the man are quite different. If you are a fan of classic Hollywood cinema this is a must see. Available on Brit Box through Amazon Prime Video. Rated TV 14 for language.



**Anatomy of a Fall.** This is a French film that lets us get inside a stormy marriage and a mother/son bond all unraveling in a French courtroom. Samuel and Sandra are writers. She is successful, he is not. Samuel is found dead in the snow outside their Alpine chalet. Their son Daniel is partially sighted due to an accident. The authorities arrive and the death is classified as suspicious. Samuel may have jumped or been pushed out a third story window. Sandra is charged with his death and the story is told through the action in the court and flashbacks. If the court room process is even remotely accurate, you do not want to be in court in France. Slowly the full picture is revealed with Daniel providing key testimony that is really a closing argument. The performances, especially Sandra's, are mesmerizing. The story is too contrived to recommend. The film is mostly in English and when in French subtitles are present. Rated R for some language, sexual references, and violent images. Available on Amazon Prime Video.



**American Symphony.** This is a powerful documentary that gives us an intimate look at what it takes to be a world class musician and to love deeply. It is 2021 and famed musician Jon Batiste is basking in the glow of 11 Grammy nominations. He is at the pinnacle of musical success. He has now challenged himself to compose an original symphony with purely American themes and rhythms. The process of composing takes a toll on him and then his wife, author Suleika Jaouad, is diagnosed with a difficult cancer. This is their love story while he struggles to complete the symphony and care for her. She musters the strength to support him; together they are stronger. Great music and a great story – Available on Netflix. Rated PG-13 for some strong language.

Jim

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## MOVIE AND MUSIC HISTORY

RON NAKAMOTO  
[RONANDELAINE@COMCAST.NET](mailto:RONANDELAINE@COMCAST.NET)



*There are few constants in life. Turbulence, ever changing, "as time goes by" are phrases we typically cast to describe a period we lived through. When you encounter the Rock of Gibraltar on your maiden trip to the Mediterranean Sea you remember the moment. On subsequent trips, your memories flood back to that time. It has become one of those constants in time for you, forever more. Movies and Music elicit those same moments for all of us, constants of where we were and what we were doing when we first saw or heard it. This monthly article recalls the bits of movie and music history keyed to the month of its release. Ron*

The Showa Era 1954-1975 (18 movies): spanned from the original "Gojira" movie to a series of "tokusatsu" (live action with special effects) movies, directed by Ishiro Honda who managed to infuse his movies with serious drama even as the scripts became increasingly outlandish.

The Heisei Era 1984-1995 (7 movies): This series of Godzilla movies followed a theme of Godzilla tangling with another big monster. It is during this period that the Mothra (big moth) and Gamera (big tortoise) trilogy movies were spawned from the original.

The Millennium Era 1999-2004 (6 movies) This series on movies were all standalone features and not linked to previous stories. The only common thread was Godzilla destroying Tokyo.

The Reiwa Era 2016-2023 Produced by Toho Co. (2 movies) These movies were now blessed with big budgets, good scripts, and special effects. Toho did not count the American made movies as part of their era.

The MonsterVerse Era 2014-2024 Produced by TriStar and later by Legendary Pictures (5 movies). This count includes the upcoming release of "Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire" to be released on April 12, 2024.

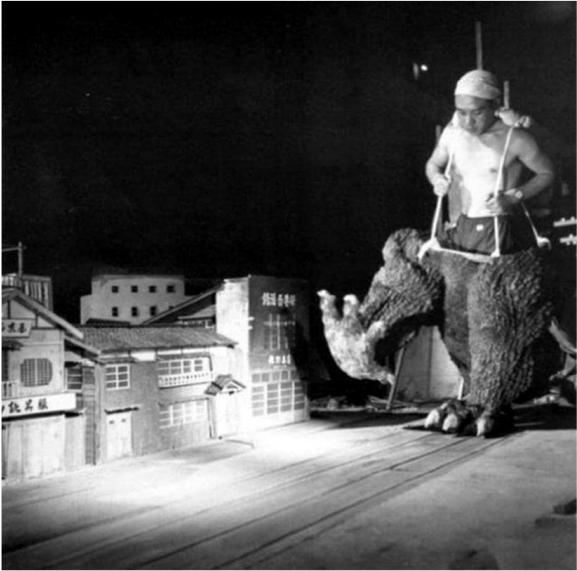
Why are they still churning out these unbelievable monster movies? Well, let's follow the money. The original "Gojira" (Japanese mix of words for gorilla and whale) movie cost Toho \$900,000 to make. It sold over 10 million tickets in Japan and attracted U.S. filmmaker Dick Kay to buy the U.S. rights and changed the name to "Godzilla" as it sounded more menacing. He proceeded to shorten the Japanese version and add a narrative that had American reporter Steve Martin (Raymond Burr) narrate. Corman was quoted as saying "I was particularly impressed by the special effects. They were both good and over-the-top. Today you'd say they had a campy quality." America, particularly, the American teenagers loved it and the film earned \$2 million (\$20 million today).



### Movie: Godzilla.

Let's start the year with a novel movie that premiered in the U.S. on April 24, 1956. It can be called a classic now as it's original release has spawned 38 sequels to date, 33 from Japan and 5 American films. The movie is credited with pioneering the use of special effects called "suitmation" which involved a stunt performer wearing a suit and interacting with miniature sets.

The original Godzilla suits were made of fabric that was sprayed with concrete to give it that distinctive scale look. The weight of the suit was about 220 lbs. and the actor would often pass out from the heat and weight of the outfit. No Unions back then. Since that time the costume moved to latex and filming evolved to stop motion and computer graphics animation.



Haruo Nakajima in portion of Godzilla suit, 1953

Did you know, there is a correct protocol to watch all the Godzilla movies as the Japanese creators instruct.



High Speed Rail....

"Ka-ching", Toho, the Japanese version of MGM Hollywood was quick to learn the value of "rinse and repeat" and the Godzilla franchise was born. The one small hurdle besides needing a script was that they had killed off Godzilla with the Oxygen Destroyer weapon in the first movie. In true Hollywood fashion, the sequel started with a second Godzilla that existed with the first and endured the same radiation exposure as the first but did not bother



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to emerge until one year later. Imagine that what timing. "Ka-ching, Ka-ching."

The franchise Godzilla movies have made over \$2 billion in box office receipts. The highest grossing movie was "Godzilla" released in May 2014 and grossed \$529 million. The highest production budget for a Godzilla movie came in May 2019 "Godzilla: King of the Monsters" which had a \$170 million dollar budget and grossed \$384 million. So, guess what? keep those Godzilla movies coming.

On a final note, the latest Godzilla movie released in 2023 was "Godzilla Minus One". The movie franchise has matured to receive U.S. film critic praise for its visual effects, direction, story, characters, musical score, and social commentary. The Director, Takashi Yamazaki won Best Director at the 48th Hochi Film Awards and the film is a finalist for Best Visual Effects at the upcoming 96th Academy Awards. Who says campy doesn't work?



Here is the movie trailer for the original release of Godzilla in America in 1954 with Raymond Burr. Campy!

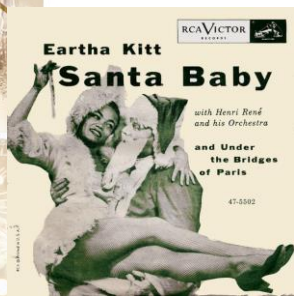
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVONRrcn9TI>

Here is the movie trailer for "Godzilla Minus One". What an evolution in animation technology!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VvSrHIX5a-0>

If you are a true believer of Godzilla movies here is a link to experience how Godzilla's roar has evolved over time. Enjoy.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORSvf8eVa0g&t=40s>



## Music: "Santa Baby" sung by Eartha Kitt

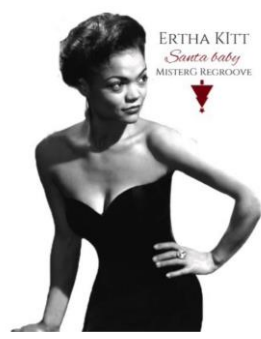
That voice! Eartha Kitt reveled in cultivating an image that was exotic, scary, sophisticated, and ribald. Her looks evoked someone from the Caribbean where the practice of Voodoo lives. Her unique, earthy accent is believed to have been

influenced by her mixed-race heritage, her life experience living in various places around the world, and her ability to speak in four languages and sing in ten.

She was one of those American singers whose career, reputation, and adoration was greater in Europe than the United States.

Eartha was branded an activist because she was. A famous incident in history occurred at a White House luncheon hosted by Lady Bird Johnson, the First Lady. She was encouraged to attend as she was active in social improvement programs in poor neighborhoods including her work with young inner-city kids in the youth group "Rebels with a Cause", she accepted. Lady Bird had set the topic of the luncheon as, "Why is there so much juvenile delinquency in the streets of America".

At the luncheon, after several members had given their talk on the topic Eartha raised her hand and Lady Bird recognized her. Eartha then said the following as recorded in history, "You miss the point on why juvenile delinquency exists. I've lived in the gutters and am therefore qualified to speak on these matters. The youth of America today are angry. They are angry because their parents are angry." She attributed this anger to high taxes and "because there is a war going on that the Americans do not understand." Kitt apologized to Mrs. Johnson if she offended her or the President but added "I am here to say what is in my heart." Kitt ended her remarks with a denunciation of the war in Vietnam. "You send the best of this country off to be shot and maimed. They rebel in the street. They will take pot ... and they will get high. They don't want to go to school because they're going to be snatched off from their mothers to be shot in Vietnam. I am talking as a mother who has a child ... so I know the feeling of having a baby coming out of my guts, particularly when it is a boy." Eartha was blacklisted from work in America for the next ten years.



The song "Santa Baby" was written in ten minutes by song writer, Phillip Springer. In August of 1953 he was asked by two music publishers to write a Christmas song for Eartha Kitt, the then 26-year-old Broadway star known for her onstage magnetism. When Springer was told it was for Eartha, he objected, saying "Kitt is the sexiest woman in the world. You don't write Christmas songs that are sexy. How are we going to do that?" The publisher's response was, "Stick to the music. Let us worry about whether this song is going to be sacrilegious or not." He did and was disappointed with his creation and told the publishers, "Gentlemen, this is not really the kind of music that I like to write. I hope it's OK. It's the best I could do." Eartha loved it, recorded it, and it is the most successful of Springer's songs.

Here is Eartha Kitt singing Santa Baby in a film recording from 1953. Who else have you seen that can capture your full attention in a film recording with the minimum of set features other than the singer herself? Ooh la la!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDS5RAaCi3U>

# happy new year



happy new year

One of the few live recordings of Eartha Kitt singing "C'est Si Bon". Her natural performance, her voice, and her movements capture and mesmerize you as only Kitt can do.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCGBqZm6Etk>

SIR  
HAPPENINGS

As Paul Harvey says, "And now, ... you know the rest of the story."

Ron

Our State SIR Organization publishes a quarterly bulletin highlighting SIR events, branch activities and state-wide activities. It's called **SIR Happenings**, and you can read the latest issue [here](#)

<https://sirinc.org/newsletters/>

**Let's Celebrate 2023 with our Holiday Celebration Luncheon**

*Happy Holidays*

It's time to wrap up the year with a 2023 Holiday Celebration with your fellow SIR members. Our celebration party will be at the Mountain View Community Center, Redwood Hall on December 13<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday). Doors will open at 11:00 am, with check in, table assignment, and some social time to mingle with your fellow members and friends. We will have buffet service from 11:15pm, and at 1:00pm we will be entertained by the MVHS Madrigal Singers. I'm sure they will put you in the holiday mood with their awesome singing and ...

... you will include oven roasted turkey and honey baked ham with ...

Our luncheon was a success by all measures. Peter Wong and his team selected and coordinated with a caterer who put together an excellent table presentation and meal. There was nothing but positive comments from those in attendance. Speaking of attendance, we had 152 members and guests signed up with 142 in attendance. A large gathering by any measure. The highlight of the luncheon was of course, the youthful singing of the Mountain View High School Madrigal Singers. Many of our members purchased their "Ring Those Festive Bells" booklet in support of their program. Andy and Jean Danver took the time to take and collage some pictures for us.

See a photo collage from the event below that Andy Danver put together!

Ron

happy new year



# SIR Branch 35 2023 Holiday Party





# happy new year

## SIR State Officers

State President	David Gonzales	916-587-3538
State Vice President	Dale D. Decker	209-573-0833
State Secretary	Rich Carlston	925-324-0838

## Branch 35 Executive Committee (BEC)

Big Sir (President)	Peter Wong	408-921-4884
Little Sir (Vice President)	Jerry Ososkie	408-219-6924
Secretary	Leland Chan	lchanlaw@aol.com
Asst Secretary	Dave Squellati	408-334-7988
Treasurer	Larry Low	408-533-2651
Asst Treasurer	Jim Narva	408-930-3353
Director (Activities)	Ron Nakamoto	408-440-2330
Director (Communications)	John Rittweger	650-740-3156
Director (Membership)	Paul Schutz	408-313-6852
Director (Nominations)	Andy Danver	650-906-3747
Director (Special Events)	Ben Gikis	408-802-0794
Director (Technology)	Richard Blackborow	408-314-2378

## Staff

Attendance	Bill Young	650-493-1710
Audio/Visual Support	Ron Schoengold	408-309-9830
Auditing	Gerry Feeney	408-515-8604
Beverage Service	Ben Gikis	408-802-0794
Historian/Photos	Frank Crossman	650-493-9182

## Staff (continued)

HLM	Bob Garten	408-253-5860
Luncheon Host	Dave Squellati	408-334-7988
Medical Emergency Resp	Dave Ogle	650-704-2130
Membership Roster	Jerry Belden	650-207-6280
New Member Orientation	Paul Schutz	408-313-6852
Trail Tips Editor	Pat OConnor	408-480-0409
Website Maintenance	John Ray	408-386-3573
Wellness & Comfort	Pat OConnor	408-480-0409

## Activities Directors

Bicycling	Gordy Tong	408-242-0557
Bocce Ball	Ed Austin	650-468-5341
Book Club	Jerry Belden	650-207-6280
Book Swap	Tim Topole	650-793-0838
Bowling	Doug Anderson	415-407-4000
Bridge	Mark Levi	650-305-9132
Chess	Ben Kuckens	650-400-0353
Golf	Les Miles	408-528-5473
Hiking	John Tucker	408-655-5435
Movies	Jim Quillinan	408-838-4379
Trail Birds	David Skurnick	650-796-5314
Wine Finders	Alan Gaudie	650-575-4332
Dining In	Andy Danver	650-906-3747
Personal Finance	Andy Danver	650-906-3747

**Wellness and Comfort:** Death or illness of a fellow Sir should be reported to **Pat O'Connor**. He will express condolences of our Branch and communicate memorial announcements among the BEC and members via e-mail.

## SIR Branch 35 Activities - January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Bowling 1:00pm Homestead Bowl	Chess 9:00am Los Altos Community Ctr.	Golf 9:30am Deep Cliff - \$43	Bocce Ball 10:00am Los Altos Community Ctr.	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Golf 9:27am Los Lagos - \$38/\$57	Bowling 1:00pm Homestead Bowl	Chess 9:00am Los Altos Community Ctr. Bridge 12:00pm Los Altos Senior Center	Golf 10:05am Coyote Creek - - \$38/\$57 Biking 11:00am Stevens Creek Trail Meet at Sleeper Ave. & Franklin Ave.	Bocce Ball 10:00am Los Altos Community Ctr.	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Golf 9:30am Canyon Lakes - \$52	Bowling 1:00pm Homestead Bowl Movies 3:00pm Zoom Meeting	Chess 9:00am Los Altos Community Ctr. Branch 35 Luncheon/Meeting 11:00am - 1:30pm Mtn. View Community Center	Golf 9:27am Los Lagos - \$38/\$57	Bocce Ball 10:00am Los Altos Community Ctr.	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Golf 10:00am Spring Valley - \$47/\$63	Bowling 1:00pm Homestead Bowl	Chess 9:00am Los Altos Community Ctr. Bridge 12:00pm Los Altos Senior Center	Golf 9:30am Moffett Field - \$51/\$69	Bocce Ball 10:00am Los Altos Community Ctr. Hiking 10:00am TBC	
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
	Golf 9:27am Los Lagos - \$38/\$57	Bowling 1:00pm Homestead Bowl	Chess 9:00am Los Altos Community Ctr.			

# happy new year