

COLLECTIONS OF SIR ACTIVITY IDEAS THAT WORK

China Camp Branch 151, Fairfax “Ellis Island” of California

Eckart Sellinger, Bulletin Editor

Sam Ennis, the new travel chairman of China Camp Branch 151, organized his first day trip to the Angel Island Immigration Station. It is only a short ferry ride from Tiburon to this Island in San Francisco Bay, which is often referred to as the “Ellis Island” of California due to its history. Following many years of Spanish control of the island, it served as both a military base and the site of two government facilities – Quarantine and Immigration Stations – for nearly 100 years starting in the mid-1800’s. The Immigration Station structures have recently been refurbished and were a key part of the interesting docent-led tour, after which the picnic facilities were available for lunch.

The group found the visit very educational. They enjoyed the exercise touring the island, and are pictured with San Francisco Bay in the background.



Pleasant Hill Branch 146, Walnut Creek Terrific Food

Harry Tutton, Branch Member

The Branch 146 Cooking Group was founded in 1999 and is the original and longest established cooking group in the Branch. Wow, do these guys cook some good food!

Led by Big Sir Dave Johnson, the Cooking Group puts on their aprons and meets once a month at the home of a member who prepares a bountiful meal for all to enjoy. The following are some of the recent meals prepared by the members:

- Dave Johnson - Spring Salad with Honey Lemon Vinaigrette, Jambalaya with Rice, Carrots Vichy, Frozen Vanilla Yogurt with Blueberries

- Gene Diana - Italian Manicotti
- Dan Hungerford - Baked ham, Cole Slaw with Pineapple, Potato Au Gratin, Chunky Apple Sauce, Black and White Cheese Cake
- Charlie Kiser - Grandma’s Tamale Goo
- Frank Mandic - Spring Salad, Honeybaked Ham, Norwegian Parsley Potatoes, Glazed Carrot Coins, Holiday Peas, Cheese Cake
- Barney Meade - Hawaiian Fruit Bowl, Pork Shoulder cooked 6 hours, Rice, Spinach and Shredded Cabbage, Macaroni Salad, Lime Jello and Tofu Pie
- Don Nunn - Fresh Salad Greens, Spiced Pork Chops, Potatoes Au Gratin with Wine, Old Fashioned Fruit Cobbler
- Bob Spellman - Shrimp Scampi, Pasta, Greek Salad, Lemon Bars

Wine is part of all the meals and in September, The Cooking Group has a wine bottling session at the home of Bob Spellman, where they bottle over 100 bottles of bulk wine purchased from a Half Moon Bay winery and put a personal label – with the member’s name and photo – on each bottle.

The Cooking Group is happy to share good food ideas, and so in 2002, the Group published a cookbook with recipes from members and wives of Branch 146 and sold over 500 copies.

The Cooking Group has been so successful, that other members of the Branch have formed cooking groups with catchy names like “Cooking Too,” “Tres Gourmet,” and the “LAW (Lunch and Wine) Group.” We hope your Branch has a cooking group for a great chance to share good fellowship and good food!

In the picture from left to right are members: Frank Mandic, Dan Hungerford, Bob Spellman, Charlie Kiser, Dave Johnson, Don Nunn, and Barney Meade.



Pleasant Hill Branch 146, Walnut Creek

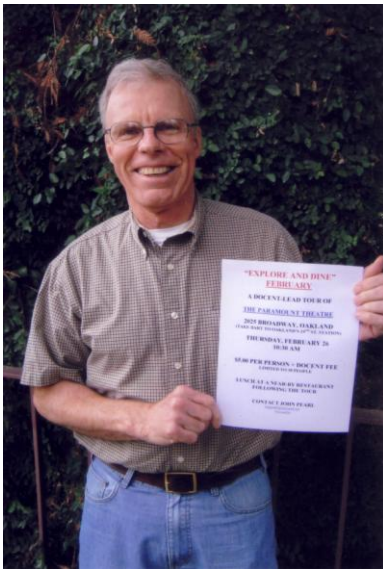
Explore & Dine

Harry Tutton, Branch Member

Explore and Dine is a popular program in Branch 146 and gives members and their wives a chance to visit an interesting place and then have lunch together. When new members join our branch, they are encouraged to get involved in activities or even start a new activity. Soon after John Pearl (see picture) became a member of Branch 146, he created the Explore and Dine activity and now serves as the chairman.

Some of the places and restaurants that Explore and Dine have visited include: Blackhawk Auto Museum...with lunch at Mexican Restaurant, Tao House...with lunch at The Peasant and the Pear, Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF)...with lunch at The Greenery, Leshar Regional Center for the ARTS...with lunch at Katy's Kreek, Shadelands Home...and Mary's Pizza Shack, Asian Art Museum in San Francisco...and Hayes Street Grill, Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco...and Annabelle's Bar and Bistro, Ruth Bancroft Gardens...with lunch at Sweet Affair, Benicia State Capitol...with lunch at Union Hotel, John Muir House with lunch...at Mengia Bene.

John plans an outing about once a month to interesting places around the San Francisco Bay Area and usually about twenty members and wives come along to share an enjoyable day. You might want to create an Explore and Dine activity in your Branch...it's a lot of fun!



Las Trampas Branch 116, Walnut Creek

Dine-O-Sirs

Ben Smith, Dining Chairman

The name "Dine-O-Sirs" is derived from the group of carnivorous and herbivorous reptiles that roamed the earth looking for their next good meal.

Our Dine-Out activity is coordinated by a Branch committee, which selects the restaurants and the menus and makes arrangements for members and their wives and friends to meet every other month. Menu's are set and paid in advance. The group meets for a social "re-adjustment hour," on a no host basis, prior to having dinner. Reservations are taken on a first come basis and the activity has proven to be very well received and has drawn sell out attendance. How can you beat getting together with good food, good SIR people and good fun? This is an activity that we would recommend for almost any SIR Branch. If you have any questions feel free to contact me ...Ben Smith, at 925-820-5403.

The picture shows a happy group of Sirs and their guests enjoying dinner at a recent outing.



Pleasant Hill Branch 146, Walnut Creek

A Beautiful Setting

John Pearl, Branch Member

In August, the Explore and Dine group took advantage of San Francisco's Palace Hotel's 100 year anniversary by taking a tour of the hotel and having lunch in the famed Garden Court. The hotel had reopened after the 1906 earthquake and fire in 1909, making 2009 the year it has been open for 100 continuous years.

The tour was conducted by a person who is part of the "City Guide" group that gives tours all over San Francisco. We learned a lot about the hotel and the people who have been involved with it over the years. We also had one of our largest turn-outs for any of our outings.

The beautiful and professional grade photo was taken by our branch photographer Rich Ahlf, who joined us with his wife Shirley.

