



# SIR Branch 116 Trampas Topics Newsletter December 2020

Next Meeting via Zoom on  
Dec. 21st at 12:00 Noon

A Nonprofit Public Benefit Organization for Men Enjoying Active Retirement

## Message from Michael



As we begin the Holiday Season, I'm sure I speak for everybody when I say that these are frustrating and difficult times. Not being able to share, enjoy and be with our families and friends is a sadness and a real loss. Our lives have been truly turned upside down by COVID 19.

I know that many of you are also disappointed and upset by the latest directive from the State Big SIR, that all in person activities be ceased immediately. Your reactions and sentiments are completely understood. Our core values are built around fellowship, friendship and playing together. Somehow weekly or monthly Zoom meetings feel like a poor substitute, but there is no alternative.

On Monday, December 21st we are going have a special Zoom breakout rooms only get-to-gether where members will have an opportunity to meet, greet and chat freely with their fellow golfers, pickle ball players, walkers, etc. We experimented a little bit with breakouts at the end our November meeting and it was a lot of fun. (see more info on page )

This is my last month as BIG SIR and while it was not the kind of year I anticipated, it was the year that I was given! It has not been the norm or the ideal. Nonetheless I would like to sincerely thank all those members, especially the Little SIR, Sam Beret and the BEC that has tried to make it all work. It has been a challenge but also an honor to serve you.

I leave you with blessings for the Thanksgiving, and may your Christmas be filled with peace and happiness.

*Michael*



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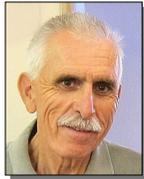


Please email or call any  
BEC member if you have  
any questions/news re-  
garding branch activities  
or members

## 2020 SIR Branch 116 Officers



**Big SIR**  
Michael  
Barrington



**Little SIR**  
Sam  
Beret



**Treasurer**  
Alan  
Fitzgerald



**Asst.Treas.**  
Al  
Satake



**Secretary**  
Fred  
Schafer



**Assist.Sec.**  
Paul  
Ramacciotti



**Member.Sec.**  
Phil  
Goff

## 2020 SIR Branch 116 Directors



Gary  
Boswell



Roger  
Craig



Al  
Farbman



David  
Harris



Fred Wa-  
chowicz



Jerry  
Hicks

## 2020 Activity Chairmen

Activity	Chairman	Asst. Chairman
• Amiable Amblers	John Riordan	Joel White
• Bocce	Jim Seven	
• Book Group 1	Rich Black	Steve Bort
• Book Group 2	Alan Pope	
• Book Exchange	John Fraser	Dick Kauffman
• Bridge	Jon Dickson	Bob Wolf
• Computer & Tech.	Neil Schmidt	Phil Goff
• Dine-O-SIR	Alex Lutkus	Team Members
• Duplicate Bridge	Conrad Robertson	Tom Henry
• Fishing	Harry Sherinian	Terry Miller
• Golf-18 Hole	Bernie Wroblewski	Jim Johnson
• Golf-9 Hole	Dick Chaffee	D. McLaughry
• Golf - Carmel	Jim Barstow	JJ, Harris, Eller
• Golf - Carson City	Tim Hubbard	Oberle, Harris
• Mexican Train	Richard Madden	Alex Lutkus
• Parties	Marty Katz	
• Pickleball	Ed Solomon	
• Poker	Lou Sandor	
• Saturday Tours	Greg Hughes	
• \$ums in Retirement	Ben Smith	
• Travel	TBD	
• Wine-O-SIR	Lou Meylan	

## 2020 Support Chairmen

### RAMP Department Heads:

- Recruitment Don Schroeder
- Activities Fred Wachowicz
- Member Relations Tom O'Brien
- Publicity Jim McCormick

### Support Chairmen:

- Audit Committee Ron Armijo
- Nominating Committee Jerry Hicks
- Sunshine Committee Matt Arena

### Luncheon Support:

- Attendance Mike Schneider
- Audio Visual Neil Schmidt
- Chaplain Committee Terry Sherman
- Greeters Committee Terry Grummitt
- Raffle Committee Ben Bryce
- Speakers Committee Sam Beret/ Al Farbman
- Storytellers Committee Mac Mcloughlin
- Cash Collection Ron Banducci

### Recruitment Committee

- Recruiting Don Schroeder
- Guest Packet Don Schroeder
- Guest Follow-up Don Schroeder
- Guest Statistics Phil Goff
- Sponsor Program Don Schroeder
- New Member Orientation Dave Williams
- New Member Packet Phil Goff

### Membership

- Member Relations Tom O'Brien
- Membership Secretary Phil Goff
- Membership Roster George Pryhuber
- Awards/Recognition Michael Barrington

### Publicity

- Publicity Jim McCormick
- Newsletter Editor Neil Schmidt
- Internal Communications Michael Barrington

**A Thank You to all Br. 116 SIR Who  
Volunteer to be Leaders**

## Some Other SIR Area 16 Activities

Apple User Group	Dick Macy (Br.171)	376-1180
Astronomy	Bill Hunter (Br.8)	947-6947
Bowling	Dan Weller (Br. 8)	935-5510
Digital Photo.	Bill Phelon (Br.8)	254-8338
Pocket Pool	Jerry White (Br.8)	944-9068
Tennis	Ralph Thornicraft (174)	376-8140

# December 2020

Sun.	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat.
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 Computer & Tech (9:30 via Zoom) Fishing Group (8:30 via Zoom) Book Group 2 (11:00 via Zoom)	18	19
20	21 SIR Br. 116 "Social" Meeting (12:00 via Zoom)	22	23	24	25  Christmas	26
27	28	29	30	31		



### Br. 116 Treasurer's Report

Alan Fitzgerald, Treasurer  
(galan.fitzgerald@gmail.com)

#### November 15, 2020

	Nov. 2020	2020 YTD
Contributions	\$ 72.22	\$ 20,786.01
Disbursements	\$ (422.81)	\$ (18,848.87)
Net (gain/(loss))	\$ (350.59)	\$ 1,937.14
August Cash Balance		\$ 11,782.96
Outstanding Checks		\$ 0.00
Bank Acct Balance		\$ 11,782.96

#### End of Year Treasurer Report

The Branch Financials are in very good shape this year. We are projected to end the year with a balance in our Bank Account of approximately Eleven Thousand Dollars. In preparing the Budget for 2021 while looking into a future that no one can predict with certainty, the BEC has decided to forego the Annual Contribution for 2021. We have eliminated or reduced as much of the Branch Expenses as possible. The State SIR Leadership has eliminated the first quarter 2021 assessment for the Branches and those savings are reflected in the new budget.

Hopefully we can get back to business as usual sometime in 2021.

Alan Fitzgerald  
Treasurer



### Membership

Phil Goff  
(philgoff@yahoo.com)

#### SIR 116 August Membership Status

Total Current Membership is 205

- Avila, Jim: Transferred from Br. 146. Sponsor is Don Schroeder
- Davis, Whitey: New Member. Sponsor is Alan Pope.
- Canane, John: Resigned. Moved out of area.

### December Birthdays

When you see these members, wish them a Happy Birthday!

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. John Antczak   | 9. Tim Hubbard       |
| 2. Salem Attiga   | 10. Walt Kawecki Jr. |
| 3. Nick Bowles    | 11. John Kopchik Jr. |
| 4. Allan Chasnoff | 12. Conrad Robertson |
| 5. Marv DeHeus    | 13. Ed Solomon       |
| 6. Jim Gleason    | 14. Doug Waterman    |
| 7. David Harris   | 15. Jamie Watson     |
| 8. Larry Heaton   |                      |



### Sunshine Report

Matt Arena  
(marena@astound.net)

SIR **Lou Meylan** had another procedure which has given him relief. The hematoma has reduced in size and he is out walking. Let's hope this is the end of his health issues. He deserves a rest.

SIR **Jim Nachtweih** continues to improve and has the best attitude for total recovery. He is down to walking with an occasional assist from a very basic cane.

Past BIG SIR **Robbie Robinson** was honored after donating golf clubs to the First Tee program. It was his way of saying that he continues to volunteer to a program he enjoyed so much.

WE LEARN FROM HISTORY THAT WE LEARN NOTHING FROM HISTORY

George Bernard Shaw

## 2020 Newsletter Hardcopy Subscription Due

If you are receiving, or wish to receive, a hardcopy of the Trampas Topics newsletter mailed to your home each month, the 2021 subscription fee of \$20 is due. Send your check, made-out to "SIR Branch 116", to our new Treasurer: Alan Fitzgerald, 1805 Wales Dr., Walnut Creek, CA 94595



## Meeting Speaker

Little SIR Sam Beret  
(snb49@Outlook.com)

I hope all of our members and their families are doing well.

On Monday December 21, 2020, we will have a "virtual lunch" meeting via Zoom, however we will not have a speaker. It will be a "social hour" when you can join a Zoom "Breakout Room" such as "golf", "travel", "book club" and others and talk to your friends in small groups. You will receive the technical details closer to that date in an email.

The December birthday-raffle winner will be announced at our January meeting. SIR Art Donaldson was the winning SIR for November.

Congratulations to all of our previous winners and they can claim their free lunch vouchers when we start meeting in person again.

I wish all our members and their families a happy and a safe holiday season.



## Computer & Technology

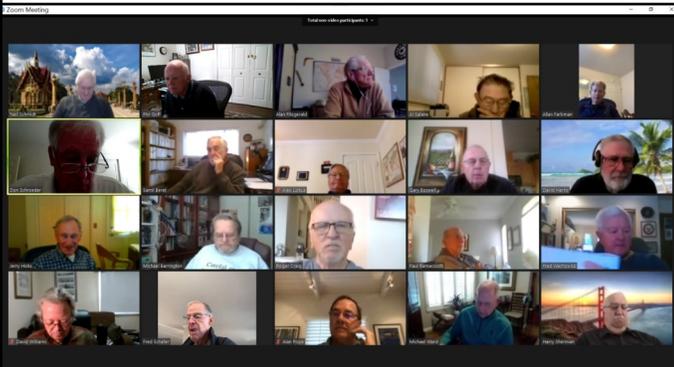
Neil Schmidt  
(SIR.Area2.CAT@gmail.com)

he next Zoom SIR Area 16 Computer & Technology (CAT) Group meeting will be Thursday, December 17th starting at 9:30.

In December the Computer & Technology presentation will be on "Residential Solar, Batteries and Generators" by a guest speaker Don Willoughby. Don recently evaluated and eventually had installed a residential solar system plus batteries on his Walnut Creek home. Being a good engineer, Don did an elaborate analysis of different solar, battery and generator options. He will share his analysis and the economics of the various options. Do you want to save money and/or do you want to avoid Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) by PG&E at your home? If so, join us on December 17th

To attend the Zoom meeting, individuals need to sign-up for the CAT's mailing list by sending an email to [SIRArea2CAT@gmail.com](mailto:SIRArea2CAT@gmail.com). A few days before the meeting, a Zoom web link that is needed to connect will be sent to members on the mailing list.

## SIR Br. 116 Branch Executive Committee (BEC)

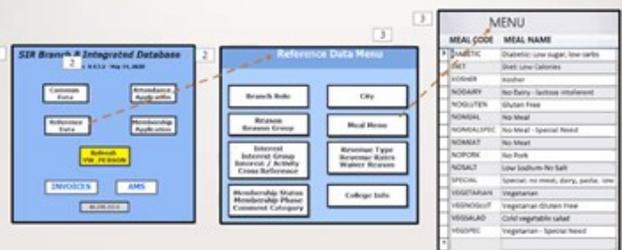


### November 16th BEC Meeting via Zoom

All members are encouraged to attend a BEC meeting to see what is happening and to contribute to discussions on Branch matters. The BEC meets via Zoom at 8:30 AM on the same day as our regular luncheon meetings (3rd Monday of each month).

### Access Forms

**Form** A form is a database object that you can use to enter, edit, or display data from a table or a query. You can use forms to control access to data, such as which fields of data are displayed.



Intro to MS Access

11/19/2020

23

### November 19th Computer & Tech Zoom Meeting





**Activity Chair**  
**Fred Wachowicz & Mike Ward**  
 (fredwach@pacbell.net)



What's your best guess on a Vaccine Introduction date? I'm voting for December! (Nov Newsletter prediction). Looks like I might have been close on the vaccine introduction but no cigar yet until we taste the pudding!

Since our ability to travel is restricted at this point I'm sure that it is difficult for members to sign up for a travel related activity. Other than our travel planning group we have only had 1 additional member check in to say that they would be interested in a Monthly Armchair Travel Planning Meeting while we wait for covid to retire.

The concept remains the same. We would hold a monthly Zoom meeting to virtually visit an interesting full day, weekend, National, or International location. In addition we would determine our priorities for travel and plan for travel events in the future. Since there are a wide range of travel activities hosted by SIR State and Area Branches we also intend to collaborate with other Branches to participate in shared travel events.

Get your name into Mike Ward to be included in this new approach to travel planning. Let's take advantage of the dead time now to be ready for travel opportunities when covid retires from the picture.

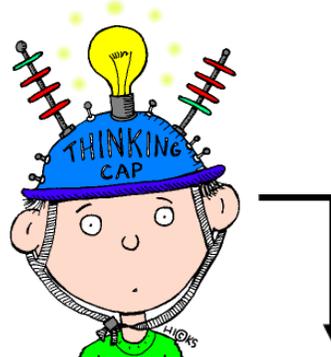
Also, please welcome Mike Ward aboard as our new Activities Chairman for 2021. Mike has my personal thanks sharing the workload and supplying much creative thought toward expanding and launching new activities over the past couple of years.

As most of you probably know by now, our current activities have been restricted to virtual events only due to the rise in covid case counts over the past several weeks. We look forward to the lifting of these restrictions as the numbers fall and the new vaccines hit the health market for distribution.

Be on the lookout for our annual Activity Survey. This year we plan to add a number of general

Branch questions for improving our organization, addressing the interests of our members, and maintaining a sustaining level of membership.

Lastly, we'll all miss our annual Christmas Party which has been one of our premier events over the years. Merry Christmas to all our members and families in this unusually different year.



## December Brain Teasers

1. If a brick weighs 3 pounds plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  a brick, what's the weight of  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  bricks?
2. If  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  men can eat  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  pies in  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  minutes, how many pies can 3 men eat in half an hour?
3. Yesterday afternoon, I went to visit my friend Albert, who is a painter. While I was watching him paint, I told him, "no wonder it takes you so long to finish a painting. Since I arrived, you have entered the studio twelve times." How many times did he leave the studio?
4. Two soldiers have been ordered to do the following chores:
  - Peel potatoes
  - Do the dishes
  - Mow the lawn

Each of these chores, when done by one person, takes one hour. If they start at 8 a.m., what could they do to take as little time as possible if they have only one knife, one lawn mower, and one sink with room for one person?

Answers are on the next page...



## SIR Fishing Group

Harry Sherinian

(h.sherinian@comcast.net)

All SIR members and guests are welcome, and indeed encouraged, to participate in fishing trips as well as attend the monthly meetings. Contacts are, Ron Lew 925-550-4166, Big Fish and Harry Sherinian, Branch 116 Fishing Coordinator.

Next meeting will be through ZOOM on Thursday December 17th, at 8:30am. Because our activity happens outdoors, we have been able to pursue our passion, observing all the COVID limitations. However, **we no longer have SIR sponsored in person events.** We have been fishing on party boats with half loads and increased prices. Bob Stein, Brion Beetz, Gordon Linebaugh, and Stan Wong, got crab and rockfish on the big water. Harry Sherinian, Terry Miller, Mike Corker, and Tom Kostik fished the delta for black bass and stripers in their boats, keeping distances, etc. Ron Lew also fished the delta and caught a fine keeper sturgeon. Rich Fiscina caught salmon, halibut, and crabs. Martin Steinpress caught nice trout fly fishing on the upper Sacramento.



Chuck Vanocini with a Beautiful Brown Trout



Charlie McInnis, Jim Barstow and Peter Coggiola at Boundary Oak's 4th Hole on November 9th

### SIR Web Addresses

SIR 116 Web Site  
[branch116.org](http://branch116.org)

Branch 116 Golf  
[branch116golf.org](http://branch116golf.org)

Branch 116 Shopping Cart  
[sons-in-retirement-las-trampas-br-116.square.site](http://sons-in-retirement-las-trampas-br-116.square.site)

Computer and Technology  
[sirinc2.org/a16cat/](http://sirinc2.org/a16cat/)

SIR Happenings State Newsletter  
[sirinc.org/newsletters/](http://sirinc.org/newsletters/)

### BRAIN TEASER ANSWERS

1. Since  $\frac{1}{2}$  brick weighs 3 pounds,  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  bricks weight 9 pounds
2. Since 1 man eats 1 pie in  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  minutes, 1 man eats 20 pies in 30 minutes, which means 3 men eat 60 pies in 30 minutes.
3. 11 times (one fewer than the number of times he went in)
4. By leaving a task half done (for example, peeling potatoes) so that the next soldier can finish it, they can do all the tasks in 1 hour and 30 minutes.

How did you do?



## Br. 116 Book Group 1

Rich Black

(blackrw41@comcast.net)

Book Group #1 will meet next on **Monday, December 21 at 12 noon** in a holiday breakout room to be scheduled by SIRs leadership. Members are encouraged to wear Christmas ties, Santa hats and other dress appropriate to the occasion.

It will then meet on January 25, 2021 to discuss to discuss "The Pillars of the Earth" by Ken Follett. It is the custom of Book Group #1 to meet at 10:15 am at Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, in Orinda but in all probability this meeting will again be conducted on the Zoom on-line platform on that date at that time. The Convener will notify members ahead of time if an in-person meeting consistent with BEC guidelines can be conducted. Prospective new members should contact Richard Black at [Blackrw41@comcast.net](mailto:Blackrw41@comcast.net)

Book Group #1 met on November 23 when it discussed "The Bridge on the Drina" by Ivo Andric.

Joel White recommended is Nobel Prize book and Richard Black led the discussion with Jerry Christopher, Mac McLoughlin, Art Donaldson, John Kopchik, Mike Schneider, Garret Girvan, Nick Bowles, Richard Kaufman, Paul Freitas and Steve Bort.

A principal character of novel is the bridge itself begun by a janissary Pasha of the Ottoman Empire in 1516 over the Drina river which forms the border between Serbia and Bosnia. Subsidiary characters—Moslem, Christian and Jew—all have their stories to tell over the next four hundred years until the outbreak of The Great War. Book group members commented on the elegant style of the writing and the universal wisdom in the tales presented. Book group members frequently consulted the web to understand the background of the conflicts in the novel, the Balkan wars in the 1990's and the enduring conflicts in that region today. Alas, there are reverberations in our own experiences of 2020. Although this book was not always an easy read, most members found the experience of reading it

and the subsequent discussion, rewarding while awarding the book 3.6 stars.



## Br. 116 Book Group 2

Alan Pope

(pope451@gmail.com)

Book Group 2 met by teleconference on Thursday, November 19, to discuss "The Nickel Boys", by Colson Whitehead. The central character, Elwood Curtis, who tried to do the right thing in life by following the teachings of Martin Luther King, is imprisoned on false allegations of being an accomplice to car theft. While serving his sentence at the "Nickel Academy", a reform school for boys, he finds out the hard truth about the world he lived in. The author told a fictional story, based on real-life events that occurred at The Dozier School for Boys located in Marianna, Florida. Even though the story was hard to read because of the subject matter, the group gave the book an overall good rating of 4.6 out of 5.

The next Book Club 2 meeting will be on Thursday, **December 17**, at 11 am by videoconference using the Zoom app. The group will discuss, "Buried in the Sky" the "extraordinary story of the Sherpa climbers on K2's deadliest day", by Peter Zuckerman and Amanda Padoan. We are also considering the following novels for future discussion: "The Paris Architect" by Charles Belfoure; "Manhunt" (The 12-day Chase to catch Lincoln's Killer) by James Swanson; and "City of Thieves" by David Benioff. We welcome anyone who is interested to join us on December 17.

## Trampas Topics Submissions



We need your contributions and suggestions for Trampas Topics. Please send photos, news items, SIR activities, and Letters to the Editor:

Neil Schmidt, Trampas Topics Editor  
[trampastopics@gmail.com](mailto:trampastopics@gmail.com)

# Something New!

## Breakout Room Only Meeting

On **Monday, December 21 at 12:00 Noon** SIR Branch 116 is going to have a Branch "Social" Meeting. Members will be able to join individual breakout rooms to meet, greet and chat freely with their friends.

Planned Breakout Rooms:

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| - Book Group 1   | - Book Group 2 |
| - Chevron Tables | - Fishing      |
| - Gourmet Table  | - Golf         |
| - Travel         | - Wine         |
| - A's Table      | - Tahoe Table  |

(Contact Neil Schmidt at [npschmidt2@gmail.com](mailto:npschmidt2@gmail.com) if you want to add another breakout room to the list.)

When individuals log into the December 21st Zoom meeting, they will have an opportunity to select and move into one of the breakout rooms. If they desire, they can later move to another open room or return to the main Zoom window.

The Zoom Breakout Room feature was tested at the at the end of our November 16th Luncheon Meeting and it was a lot of fun.

How do I select a specific breakout room?

- **If you are using a PC or Mac computer, it is helpful to have the latest version of Zoom on your computer.** You can do this by selecting the following link prior to the Dec. 21 meeting: <https://zoom.us/download> and then "Download" to update your software.  
When you join the Dec. 21 meeting, select the "Breakout Rooms: icon at the bottom your screen and choose your desired room.
- If you are using a smartphone or tablet, select the "Join Breakout Room" icon of the left side of your screen and choose your desired room. (No version update is needed for these devices.)

## More Questions & Answers About Our Breakout Room Meeting

**Q:** How often will these Zoom Breakout Meetings be held, i.e., monthly to replace the Virtual Lunches, only this first time since it is the holiday season, or periodically:

**Answer:** Regular luncheon speaker meetings are still planned and the BEC has not decided on how to deal with breakout sessions in the future. Success or failure of the December Breakout Only Meeting will undoubtedly influence BEC's decision. Individuals may want to attend a BEC meeting to provide their input.

**Q:** How long will the meetings last:

**Answer:** They can run as long as people are interested and still attending a session. Virtual chat sessions generally run out of steam after 60 minutes or so.

**Q:** Is there a suggested structure for the meeting?

**Answer:** The sessions will be freeform without necessarily a predefined structure but the leader may want to start off with a few leading questions to get the discussion going.

**Q:** Will members have a call-in option if they are not familiar with Zoom?

**Answer:** Members will be able to dial in via a regular phone. When they join the main Zoom session, they will need to tell the Host which group they want to be in and they can be manually moved. They will not have the ability to move around freely between groups though. They are essentially stuck in the initially assigned group unless they hang-up, rejoin the general meeting and get manually reassigned to another group.

**Q:** When will members get the December 21st Breakout Room Zoom web link?

**Answer:** Zoom web links are emailed to all members 3 or 4 days prior to each Zoom meeting. A reminder email is also sent out early on the meeting day.



**FIRST CLASS MAIL**

RETURN TO: Neil Schmidt  
2231 San Miguel Dr.  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596-5805

**Sons In Retirement: A non profit Organization for Men Enjoying Active Retirement**

### **Rules of Attendance & Membership for SIR Branch 116**

**RULE 100.** A member shall be notified in writing and/or telephone by his Branch of the pending termination of his membership should he be responsible for any of the following:

- Miss three (3) consecutive regular luncheon meetings without having been excused by contacting the designated Branch Attendance person prior to the meeting date.
- Did not attend one-half of the regular luncheon meetings within the previous twelve consecutive month period. NOTE: Excused meetings cannot be included to achieve the minimum attendance.
- All legitimate alternatives to termination shall be explored. The member's response may suggest an alternative to termination such as inactive status.

**RULE 101.** Certification of attendance by a member at another Branch meeting will be considered as a credit to his attendance record. Individual Branches may limit the number of make-ups during a 12-month period.

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### **Non Responsibility Declaration**

**RULE 345:** All activities arranged for or by, Sons In Retirement, Incorporated, and its Branches, are for the convenience and pleasure of the members and their guests who desire to participate. Sons In Retirement, Incorporated, 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.

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### **Checks for Trips**

Trips of 2 days and 1 night or less may be made payable to the Branch conducting the trip. Trips in excess of 1 night must be made payable to the travel agency involved.