



KEEPING MENTALLY  
STIMULATED

BENEFITS OF GETTING  
THE COVID-19  
VACCINE

REMEMBERING SIRs  
WHO ARE NO  
LONGER WITH US

2021 DUES ARE  
NOW DUE

HOW TO BE A  
GENTLEMEN



Kelly's Stable, Sonora Circa ?

SIRS Mission

To improve the lives  
of our members  
through fun  
activities and events  
- while making  
friends for life.

## Message from the “Big Sir

**Gene Zanoni (209-532-1989)** With the period 2020 now fading fast from our rearview mirror, we now move swiftly in the direction of fulfilling our 2021 aspirations. As a reminder, let us not forget to obtain a new wall calendar to assist us in remaining vigilant of those important 2021 dates relating to events that are of major concern to us all. Chief among those concerns involve our SIR

Branch 136 (the “Branch”) reopening tasks that await our diligent attention.

The composition of our 2021 Branch Executive Committee (the “BEC”) includes some carryovers from 2020 as well as new members. BEC Officers that have generously committed to serve another year include the following member positions: Big Sir (Gene Zaroni), Secretary (Bill Burnes), Treasurer (Eddie Toews), Assistant Secretary (Dick Aberle) and Assistant Treasurer (Steve Aldridge). It is only the Little Sir position which will be occupied by a new member: that being John White. Returning Directors include the following members: George Cocomes, Bill Guenza, Marty Martin and Chris Methot. New Directors include both Bob Morrison and Rex Page. We must all remain grateful to have these positions filled for they carry a considerable portion of the workload demanded by our Branch’s internal mechanism. This also applies to other positions that remain occupied by members that have remained for multiple years. As such, each position plays a vital part in the extent of our overall success.

Incidentally, you may recognize John White as being our Bulletin Editor during 2020. John has done an extraordinary job in this capacity. For the time being and no later than mid-year 2021, John will continue to remain both our Bulletin Editor and Little Sir. Thereafter, he will relinquish his Bulletin responsibilities so that he will be able to focus his attention solely on the demands of being Little Sir. Any member possessing the necessary skill set and/or desire for becoming our next Bulletin Editor, please feel welcome to contact me, John White or any other BEC member regarding your interest. Members deciding not to remain current in their review of our monthly Bulletin may just want to reconsider that notion since it contains the vital source for general information relating to our Branch.

Just as the year 2020 proved to be immensely disruptive due to inactivity, for 2021 your BEC has agreed upon that some changes will be introduced on a trial basis to determine if they provide a superior membership engagement experience. After all, the essence of our organization is for the purpose of enabling all of us to come together with one objective in mind: which is, to be entertained through social activities. Simply put this means having fun! One method of achieving success in our effort is to improve our luncheon events. The Big Sir will now take the lead in the recital of our Pledge of Allegiance and in the singing of God Bless America. We have decided to have our lunches plated so we can reduce the amount of time required for members to return to

Social Distancing Reminders - even cats do it (sometimes)



their tables to eat and enjoy the presents of their fellow members. Eating shall take place prior to the guest speaker's presentation. Other changes will evolve when deemed necessary to improve our overall social experience. Please feel free to contact any BEC member for introducing ideas regarding possible changes that you deem appropriate. All such suggestions shall receive thorough consideration before possible adoption.

Dale Decker, last year's Area 5 Governor, is now the SIR Director Region 2 with Paul Squeri becoming our new Area 5 Governor. As a result, we must remain available to support them whenever we are called upon. Both members are highly qualified for their new positions and we wish them continued success relating to the tremendous responsibilities that await them.

My final remarks shall be confined to honor our late friend Jim Johnson, who passed away last month. Jim was our 2015 Big Sir, only one of three of our Branch's Honorary Life Members and was to be the 2021 SIR State President-Elect. His sudden passing has created a gigantic void in the lives of all that knew him: none greater than for the family that he leaves behind. He was truly their patriarch. Ginny, Jim's wife, has reached out to me with the request to informing everyone in our Branch their entire family greatly appreciates the tremendous outpouring of support they have received during this extremely difficult time. Personally, I greatly admired his dedication and hard work that resulted in enabling him to achieve accomplishments that far surpassed those of most of us. Jim's indelible legacy relates to his insatiable appetite to make things better for all.

Happy New Year.

## Committee Chairman & Activities

Are you looking for something to do especially during this pandemic! Then please give our various committee chairman a call to get involved in a fun activity.

**Golf** - Danny Lauretta (209-586-4567). Our regular tournaments are typically the third Tuesday of the month. Please call me for specific information as to dates, times, and locations.

**Bowling** - Jerry Fountain (209) 532-0650.

**Pinochle** - Bob Morrison (209-588-0994).

**Car Club** - Rich Rinaldi (209-532-8366).

**Fishing** - Chuck Simmons (209-532-9550). The trout bite has picked up in the last few weeks. Dodgers small spinners tipped with night crawlers.

**RV Group** - Eddie Toews (209-532-3970).

**Kayaking/Easy Hiking** - Sol Robin (209-651-1054).

## How to Keep Mentally Stimulated

From Amanda Lambert, Lambert Care Management LLC. During this extraordinary time of isolation and stress, mental health has become an important topic to discuss. Seniors are under stricter visitation guidelines depending on what state they live in, and whether they are at home or in senior living. Regardless of your living situation, maintaining good mental health is vital to your overall health.

You may be asking, “what is mental health?” Let’s look at some of the characteristics of mental health and what can negatively affect it:

- Mental health is our perception of psychological and emotional well-being.
- Good mental health helps us cope with stress, disappointment, and grief. It doesn’t mean that we don’t experience these feelings. But it does mean that we can cope and recover.
- Research has shown that mental health can be adversely affected by social isolation and loneliness. Loneliness can contribute to depression and anxiety.

Lack of social engagement can lead to increased problems with thinking and memory. It can also cause a worsening of medical problems.

Social distancing is the idea that when people stay apart (6 feet) they are less likely to be exposed to the virus. COVID-19 is spread through respiration. This includes coughing, sneezing, or otherwise touching surfaces where the virus lives for several days.

We now know that some people may have the virus but may not have any symptoms, which means that everyone must follow safe hygiene protocols. Many assisted living communities across the country are requiring a mandatory 14-day quarantine for anyone who leaves the community. This would minimize their chances of passing the virus to someone else if they are confined to their apartment or room.

Now that we have a better understanding of the importance of staying mentally and socially stimulated, let’s look at some activities to make this possible. This will require ingenuity and a little courage too!

### Fun Ways to Connect with Technology

Technology can be unfamiliar and frightening territory for many seniors. But what better time to learn than now? To take advantage of the many social platforms, it will require you to get a smartphone, laptop, or iPad. Here are some of the more popular options for staying connected with technology: **Facebook** - is the largest social networking platform in the world, and with good reason. Using Facebook is a good way to stay connected with friends and family. You can share ideas, repost articles of interest, post photos, and more. You can even follow news outlets to get up to the minute information; **FaceTime** - is a video and audio calling service. You will need an iPhone, laptop or iPad to use it. Like Facebook, it is free. Seeing your children or grandchildren can be immensely reassuring and fun.; **Email**;

Yes, good old fashion email is still a great way to communicate with people. If you really want to impress your grandkids, learn to text.

## Stimulating Mental Activities

Being alone can make it tough to stay mentally engaged, but mental engagement is more important than ever if you are without a spouse or other person to be with. Consider these options.

**Games.** Word and card games can keep your mind active. Consider jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles, and Sudoku. Don't forget about online games like solitaire, Words with Friends, and hundreds of others.

**Using the internet to travel.** It is now possible to travel right from your chair. Visit museums, other countries or cities. Check out Travel and Leisure's 12 Famous Museum Tours. Here is another collection of museums and other travel sites including some National Parks. And if you haven't tried Google Earth, you must give it a try. Fly to any part of the world that appeals to you and before you know it, hours have passed by. You can do this from your smartphone, computer or iPad.

**Reading.** Reading is an under appreciated activity. It can stimulate the imagination and take you to places you have never been to before. Use a kindle or the good old fashion library.

**Writing.** If you can write, try it out. Whether it is journaling or a story you have been burning to tell, now might be the time to do it. Perhaps this is a good time to write your personal history for your children and grandchildren.

**Humor.** Although humor may not seem like a mentally stimulating activity, it is a mentally healthy one. Watch movies or funny television shows. Subscribe to Netflix or Hulu to expand your options and view from the comfort and safety of your home.

## Do we have the right information on you?

We are in the process of updating our membership records. Sometimes we move, change our phone numbers, or email address and don't even think about letting others know of the change. So please go to our website at [www.https://sonorasirs.org/roster](https://sonorasirs.org/roster) to verify your information. Should there be a change, then please contact George Cocores directly at 209-456-9814 or [greekbeak1@aol.com](mailto:greekbeak1@aol.com). If there are no changes to your membership information, then no action from you is required. To access the roster, you will need to input a password, the user name is "safety" and the password is "first"(all lower case).

# 2021 DUES ASSESSMENT

## Please Read

Due to the COVID 19 situation in 2020 and that there were very few club activities, the BEC has voted that the 2021 dues will be discounted by 52% to \$12.00 per member.

This will be for the year 2021 only and will revert back to the \$25.00 dues per member in the 2022 assessment.

The dues must be paid by March 9, 2021. If not paid by March 9, 2021, anyone paying afterwards will have to pay the \$25.00 amount. (NO EXCEPTIONS)

Please send your dues check to:

Eddie Toews  
Branch 136 Treasurer  
21795 El Coyote Dr.  
Sonora, CA. 95370

You can contact me (Eddie Toews) at 209-532-3970



### Branch 136 Membership Summary

Beginning of December	200
Additions	2
Deletions	(2)
End of December	<b>200</b>

# 2021 Branch 136 Executive Committee



Big Sir  
Gene  
Zanoni  
209-532-1989



Little Sir  
John  
White  
408-355-5991



Secretary  
Bill  
Burnes  
209-533-4334



Asst. Sec.  
Dick  
Aberle  
209-532-4066



Treasurer  
Eddie "Ed"  
Toews  
209-532-3970



Asst. Treas.  
Steve  
Aldridge  
209-770-5287



Director  
Chris  
Methot  
408-218-5221



Director  
Bill  
Guenza  
209-586-7088



Director  
Marty  
Martin  
209-586-1886



Director  
George  
Cocores  
209-456-9814



Director  
Robert  
Morrison  
209-588-0994



Director  
Rex  
Page  
209-533-4501

## Have Something to Share?

I'm always amazed at what comes across my email server from the members of our community, SIRS, family, and friends. This issue of the Bulletin includes many of those stories. If you have something you would like to share, please send it to me for inclusion in our monthly Bulletin. SIRS rules do apply, and not everything may be accepted. But send them anyway to [johnwhitecpa@gmail.com](mailto:johnwhitecpa@gmail.com).

**YOUTUBE Moment** Sometimes when I am feeling down, I go to YOUTUBE for my guaranteed "good feeling picker upper" - babies laughing. It sounds strange I know, but it changes my mood from "down" to "up" every time. So check it out. I hope you will find yourself smiling too!

Laughing Quadruplet Babies! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBay1HrK8WU>

**Branch 136 Branch Executive Committee**

**Big SIR:** Gene Zanoni 532-1989 genevzanoni@gmail.com

**Little SIR:** John White 408-355-5991 johnwhitecpa@gmail.com

**Sec:** Bill Burnes 533-4334 sonorabill401@gmail.com

**Asst. Sec:** Dick Aberle 532-4066 raaberle2@sbcglobal.net

**Treas:** Eddie 'Ed' Toews 532-3970 lcoinlady@aol.com

**Asst. Treas:** Steve Aldridge 770-5287 stevealdr1147@gmail.com

**DIRECTORS**

Bill Guenza (209) 586-7088

Marty Martin (209) 586-1886

George Cocores (209) 456-9814

Rex Page (209) 533-4501

Chris Methot (408) 218-5221

Robert Morrison (209) 588-0994

**Behind the Scenes**

Branch Photographer - Steve Belochi 533-5315

Bulletin - John White 408-355-5991

Internet - Jerry Bellefeuille 533-3630

SIR item sales - Fred Kehr 785-4358

Sunshine Chaplain - Steve Gregory 533-0309

**SIR State Officers**

[www.sirinc.org](http://www.sirinc.org)

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

President - Stu Williams

Vice-President - Rick Kindle

Secretary - Ron Flagel

Treasurer - Roy Hodgkinson

Region 2 Director -Dale Decker

Area 5 Governor - Paul Squeri

**Save the Date  
for the Next BEC Meeting**

The next BEC meeting will be on

**January 19, 2020.** This will be a

virtual meeting using ZOOM. Jerry

Bellefeuille will be sending out

invitations for the ZOOM meeting.

Please contact Jerry if you don't receive

an invite by the meeting date at

209-533-3630 or sirjerry4@gmail.com.

**Recent Past Big Sirs**

Jim Botto - 2019

Paul Squeri - 2018

Danny Laureta - 2017

Dale Decker - 2016

John Bristow - 2014

Phil VanSwoll - 2013

Don Banchemo - 2010

Wil Reich - 2007

Dick Nutting - 2003

Jim Nuzum - 2002

Bob Gibbs - 2000

Al Limon - 1999

**Branch 136**

**Honorary Life Members**

Frank Taylor

Al Limon

**SIR Branch 136 Has A Website!**

**[HTTPS://SONORASIRS.ORG](https://sonorasirs.org)**

Please take a moment to go to the website to get information regarding current and previous month bulletins; group activities and contact information; membership information; minutes of the BEC monthly meetings; golf and bowling schedules; and much, much more.



## Happy Birthday to You!

January is the month of extremes. It is the coldest month in the norther hemisphere and the hottest month in the southern hemisphere. January’s birthstone is garnet, which represents purity, truth, and friendship. The flowers of January are the snowdrop and carnation.

Grimm, Robert (Bob)	01/02
Lobdell, Bill	01/03
Bristow, John E.	01/04*
Molinari, Mo	01/05*
Boll, Edmund (Ed)	01/06*
Payne, Donald (Don)	01/08
Scialabba,Salvadore (Steve)	01/08
Jeppson, David (Dave)	01/10
Botto, James (Jim)	01/12
Bulich, Otto	01/19
Wallace, Jim	01/21*
Robin, Solomon (Sol)	01/25
Dentino, Richard (Dick)	01/26*
Fountain, Jerry	01/27

\*Designates age 80 or older.

## Message from the Editor

**John White (408-355-5991).** As 2020 draws to a close (and I’m sure we are all looking forward to that) its not uncommon to look back at the year in a retrospective way. This Bulletin we added a section to remember our fellow SIRS who are no longer with us. Gene Zanoni, our Big Sir, shared with me a poem he had written to get over the loss of a loved one several years ago. It’s a beautiful poem in which he shared both his heart and the new void in his life. I think we have all felt this way when we have lost a loved one. I encourage everyone to read it and share it with your friends, family, and others that you know who have lost someone special this year.

Last year I wrote an article on How to Be a Gentleman. I wrote this because I was getting frustrated by the way young men are behaving. Apparently, the education I got from my father is not being passed down from father to son any longer. So, it may be time to share this with the next generation of men.

## New Members

We are pleased to have added two new members during the month of **December - Jim Walczak and Robert Bader.** Both members were sponsored by Danny Lauretta.

Jim and his wife Jeanette, live in Sonora, CA. Jim likes to fish, bowl, and golf, so he will fit right in with our Branch. Jim is a veteran of the Vietnam war serving in the United States Air Force. Jim is a transfer from Branch 172 (Twain Harte). Jim is a retired heavy equipment operator constructing highways and the like in California, Nevada, and several other states, and even France!

Robert, who goes by Bob, is a retired Civil Engineer who worked for the US Forest Service. Bob is also a former Captain in the Navy. Bob likes to play cards (cribbage and poker) as well as play golf. Did he ever join the right Branch!



**Robert (Bob) Bader**

## Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

**From the Center for Disease Control (CDC)** We understand that some people may be concerned about getting vaccinated now that COVID-19 vaccines are available in the United States. While more COVID-19 vaccines are being developed as quickly as possible, routine processes and procedures remain in place to [ensure the safety](#) of any vaccine that is authorized or approved for use. Safety is a top priority, and there are many reasons to get vaccinated.

### FACT: COVID-19 vaccines will not give you COVID-19

None of the [COVID-19 vaccines currently in development or in use in the United States](#), contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. There are several different types of vaccines in development. However, the goal for each of them is to teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building immunity.

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. That means it's possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

### FACT: COVID-19 vaccines will not cause you to test positive on COVID-19 viral tests

Neither the recently authorized and recommended vaccines nor the other COVID-19 vaccines currently in clinical trials in the United States cause you to test positive on [viral tests](#), which are used to see if you have a **current infection**.

If your body develops an immune response, which is the goal of vaccination, there is a possibility you may test positive on some [antibody tests](#). Antibody tests indicate you had a **previous infection** and that you may have some level of protection against the virus. Experts are currently looking at how COVID-19 vaccination may affect antibody testing results.

### FACT: People who have gotten sick with COVID-19 may still benefit from getting vaccinated

Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, people may be advised to get a COVID-19 vaccine even if they have been sick with COVID-19 before.

At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The immunity someone gains from having an infection, called natural immunity, varies from person to person. Some early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last very long.

We won't know how long immunity produced by vaccination lasts until we have a vaccine and more data on how well it works.

Both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about, and CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

## FACT: Getting vaccinated can help prevent getting sick with COVID-19

While many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a [severe illness](#) or they may even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you are not at [increased risk of severe complications](#). If you get sick, you also may spread the disease to friends, family, and others around you while you are sick. COVID-19 vaccination helps protect you by creating an antibody response without having to experience sickness.

## Remembering Those No Longer With Us

We lost a lot during 2020. Our freedom to come and go as we please; our ability to travel and visit with others; family gatherings during the holidays, going out to dinner, or shopping, or even to a sporting event or the movies. We also lost much more than our freedom to do these things, we lost several of our beloved SIR brothers during the year. All of whom we will not forget. So as we look forward to 2021, I thought it appropriate to look back at 2020 to recognize and honor our fellow SIR brothers who we will not see again this side of heaven. Beyond the list of names, our Big Sir, Gene Zanoni wrote the following heartfelt poem over the loss of his dear wife several years ago. It is a beautiful tribute to her as well as a way to acknowledge and get through our grief. Enjoy and share this with your loved ones.

Robert Meggers

Roland Camfield

Bill LeLievre

Nuncy Patania

Jack Wells

Maury Leal

Joe Patania

Ray Spruner

Jim Johnson

### *A World Without You*

*Greater than the rest of the world will ever know*

*Exists the personal burden of missing you so*

*Our unfulfilled dreams now shattered*

*I am living a life that is tattered*

*Combating periods of excruciating loneliness*

*Are frequently conquered by recalling your tenderness*

*Deep down inside I sometimes feel like I am courting a disaster*

*Although the mask I occasionally wear awkwardly portrays laughter  
For it is the gentle evening breeze that continuously whispers your name  
That I am painfully reminded life without you will never be the same  
Thoughts of you sparks comfort by rendering life's tribulations light  
Much like an intimate flame glowing in the stillness of the night  
Commanding views of your image appears nearly all the time  
Always unobstructed through the windows in my mind  
The time we shared I surrendered my heart and soul  
Now alone I oftentimes feel less in control  
Even though we are so very far apart  
You continue to reside in my heart  
With each passing day for merely an eternity  
You shall forever remain my most-treasured memory*

## How to be a Gentleman

When I was visiting the Vanderbilt summer home in Hyde Park New York, my wife and I took a walkthrough the bookstore where I noticed this book, “*How to be a Gentleman.*” That, I thought, should provide some interesting reading. The book, by John Bridges, was a second edition providing guidance to common courtesy. According to the author, these were the *10 Eternal Truths of Gentlemanly Life*:

1. A gentleman says “please” and “thank you,” readily and often.
2. A gentleman does not disparage the beliefs of others – whether they relate to matters of faith, politics, or sports teams.
3. A gentleman always carries a handkerchief and is ready to lend it, especially to a weeping lady, should the need arise.
4. A gentleman never allows a door to slam in the face of another person – male or female, young or old, absolute stranger or longtime best friend.
5. A gentleman does not make jokes about race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, neither does he find such jokes amusing.
6. A gentleman knows how to stand in line and how to wait his turn.
7. A gentleman is always ready to offer a hearty handshake.
8. A gentleman keeps his leather shoes polished and his fingernails clean.

9. A gentleman admits when he is wrong.
10. A gentleman does not pick a fight.

You may, after perusing this list, think some of the eternal truths are simply outdated or are not applicable to our modern world. After reading the list I was surprised to find a few items I think are mandatory for being a gentleman that were excluded. For example, my mother always told me to open a door for a lady and to let a lady exit the room first (perhaps this was the intention of number 4). My father insisted that we address a man as “sir” and to be always polite and respectful to any elder. Standing when an elder entered the room was always a sign of respect. Surprisingly, number 8 on the list reminds me of my sister Jonnie, who told me when I was a very young man that she would never date a man who had unpolished shoes. So, I make it a point to this very day to have polished shoes! What man has ever attended a wedding or funeral and not brought a handkerchief with him?

Does it matter today that a man even act like a gentleman? I would say more so than ever. How we as men conduct ourselves matters a great deal to those around us, those looking to us, and to those who follow us. So, if you are not going to act like a gentleman, what are you going to act like? Regardless of the world around you, you are a man and as such the world expects more from you. My desire for you is that you become a man of your word; that what you do and say become inseparable with each other; that you be trustworthy and dependable; and that in all things, you act like a gentleman.

Sadly, acting like a gentleman and chivalry has been downplayed by our culture as we attempt to be “politically correct.” Fathers are not teaching their sons how to be gentleman; and daughters are being courted by young boys who are definitely not a gentleman. So I hope you will enjoy these thoughts on being a gentleman and share them with your men friends.

## Cell Phones

The first chapter of *How to be a Gentleman* address how a gentleman uses his cell phone. Cell phones are everywhere today and can do almost everything a computer can do (and possible more)! We live in a world of immediate communication and it is our cell phones that keep us tied to that world. Make or receive a call, text a note, send an email, and take a picture and share it with someone can now all be done quickly and easily on a cell phone. Everyone seems to have a cell phone and the age to which someone gets their first phone is getting younger and younger. Pay phones and phone booths have almost entirely been vanquished in our world. When I was a young man it was common sense to carry some change in your pocket, at least a dime, in order to make a phone call in an emergency. Calling collect was also an option. Today, young people would never think to leave home without their cell phone charged and ready to go. So how does a gentleman use his cell phone. Some thoughts for you to put into practice.

1. A gentleman knows that, while many may consider a cell phone a necessity, there is no reason he should be obnoxious when using one. He need not flaunt his newest gadgets, no matter how advanced or expensive they may be, in hopes of impressing others with his social or professional status.

2. A gentleman knows that the incessant use of his cell phone can only make it clear that he values the person on the other end of the telephone conversation far more highly than the persons who are in his company. Such behavior is ill mannered and irritating.
3. A gentleman's telephone calls – whether they concern business or private matters – are still his personal affairs and should be conducted in private. A gentleman does not force others to listen to his affairs.
4. If a gentleman finds that he truly must initiate or receive a call while he is in public, he should excuse himself and move to a secluded place where he is less likely to become a nuisance to others. "Excuse me" should always precede answering or making a call. A gentleman would never be so rude or self-important, as to cover the phone with his hand, turn his head away from the rest of the table, and mutter.
5. Use of a cell phone should never be done while driving a car; attendance in a theatre; in any waiting room; at a restaurant; standing in line at the post office; in an elevator; in an airplane or gym. Unless you are alone and not otherwise engaged or distracted, use of your cell phone should be prohibited as a means to take a phone call, send a text or answer an email.

## Texts and Emails

As a general rule, the method in which you receive communication is the method you should use to return the communication. A letter deserves a response letter; a text a response text; and an email a response email. Because of the immediacy of communication today, some general rules about using texts and emails are absolutely necessary.

1. As a quick rule of thumb, a gentleman will never send a text or email to handle any communication that he might otherwise take care of by means of a phone call or meeting. Some exceptions do apply. For example, expressing his joy upon the news of a happy occasion or his sadness at a friend's loss by sending a brief, but scrupulously worded email is appropriate. He may say, "Glad to hear about the impending nuptials" or "I've just heard about your mother's death. Please know you are in my thoughts." Once again, in such cases an email may actually trump a phone call since it does not intrude into the life of the friend who may either be tied up in wedding plans or disconcerted with grief. However, a gentleman knows that a quick responsive e-mail does not complete his to-do-list and that he must follow-up with a handwritten note or phone call as soon as he possibly can.
2. Without exception, a gentleman should never send a negative or nasty e-mail. An e-mail written in haste, anger, or frustration should never be sent. A gentleman thinks before he speaks. He should also think before he writes.
3. Humor may not be adequately conveyed in a text or e-mail and should be avoided.
4. A gentleman never says, "Please let me know if there is anything I can do," leaving it up to the grieving person to ask for help. Instead he offers to supply a meal for the family, run an errand, or to watch the house while the family is away. Giving money to a family suffering from a death and having to face unplanned burial expenses is a gentlemanly thing to do.

5. Typing your e-mail or text in all capital letters means that you are screaming at the recipient. Accordingly, avoid using capital letters and abbreviations that the recipient may be unfamiliar with, for example “LOL.”
6. A gentleman should never expect the recipient of an e-mail or text to immediately respond or be immediately informed. Once you press the send button you must permit the reader to get the message on their time and not yours. Should you desire an immediate response, then politely request it and follow-up with a timely phone call. A gentleman would never say, “did you not get my text?” Rather, a gentleman would say, “I’m following up on a text that I had sent and hoped you received.”
7. No matter what a gentleman’s age or background is, he can always polish his grammar and his pronunciation. If you are going to say anything worth remembering, it’s important to say it right. Today, many programs automatically correct grammar and spelling which may lead you to be embarrassed by what the computer thought you wanted to say. Proofread and give the process time. In my office we found that the computer would occasionally replace the word “sign” with “sing” leading us to be chastised on occasion when we would inadvertently write “sing here.” Some, if not most of this, can be corrected by giving the process some time to rest and going back and doing a good proofreading. The comedian Norm Crosby made a career out of mispronouncing or using similar words in error. For example, take a look at this “pitcher” instead of “picture.” So let us not be a comedian.
8. When leaving a voicemail, a gentleman never assumes that anyone recognizes his voice when he leaves a message. He should speak slowly, clearly, identify himself and give a return number as least twice. Unless he has absolutely no other alternative, a gentleman never breaks a date by leaving a voicemail message or e-mail. Unless he must cancel because of a last-minute emergency, he considers such behavior the coward’s way out.

## Always a Gentleman

Over my lifetime, I have observed (and done) some manly behaviors which do not bring out the best of a man and can lead one to think what is this man is all about. So, let’s get these addressed now.

1. A gentleman should avoid vulgar or distasteful language. Swearing and disparaging remarks should always be avoided.
2. A gentleman should always carry \$1 bills for use as tips, etc. A tip of 15 to 20% for attentive service is considered reasonable. Doorman, baggage handlers, and bartenders should be tipped from \$1 to \$5 for the service they have provided.
3. A gentleman should always put down the toilet seat.
4. A gentleman always waits for a woman to initiate a social kiss. If she leans towards him, he turns his cheek towards her lips, and she graces him with a light brushing kiss.
5. A gentleman should expect to pay for the dinner for someone he has invited to dine with him. Make sure the waiter knows who is going to pay for the meal before the check is presented.
6. A gentleman always pays close attention to his personal hygiene and always wears the appropriate attire. Worn or non-fitting clothing, no matter how comfortable, should be discarded. When a

gentleman outgrows his clothes, he gives them to charity. He does not pretend that someday he will lose weight. When, and if, he does lose weight, he certainly will not want to celebrate by wearing out-of-date coats and trousers.

7. When introduced to an older person or dignitary, a gentleman waits until a hand is extended. He does not extend his hand first. Then, he grasps the extended hand just below the knuckles and gives it a couple of modest pumps. He uses a light, painless grip and lets go immediately after the handshake is finished. When introduced to a younger male, a gentleman initiates the handshake. A gentleman never extends his hand to a woman first. A gentleman never refuses to shake a hand that is extended to him. Such a refusal is the most blatant insult possible.

8. Should a gentleman borrow an object, he does so with a planned return date and always returns the object in good working order.

9. A gentleman knows that “please” and “thank you” are still the magic words to use on all occasions.

10. A gentleman recognizes that other people’s beliefs are valid. He argues only over an issue that could save a life. Otherwise, his constant comments and chants are insulting to other people whom share a different point of view. A gentleman should concentrate of those topics that bring people together and not tear them apart.

11. A gentleman knows the difference between “me” and “I”; “who” and “whom.”

12. A gentleman knows that although he attempts at all times to be considerate of others, he may sometimes make mistakes. In such instances, he owns up to his failings and attempts to rectify the wrongdoing before matters grow any worse. Apologies should be direct and to the point. A gentleman should not try to downplay his error. Nor should he dramatize it. All apologies should be sincere, if not, they are an insult in and of itself.

13. A gentleman knows how to use a dinner napkin. When seated at a dining table, a gentleman places the napkin across his lap. He never tucks the napkin into his belt or under his chin. Neither does he wait for the server to handle his napkin for him. Should he be required to briefly leave the table, he places the napkin neatly in his chair. Only when he has completed his meal would he place the napkin alongside his plate.

14. A gentleman does not speak with food in his mouth; neither does he attempt to use his cell phone at the dining table. A gentleman should wait until all guests have been served before starting his meal.

15. A gentleman is always willing to lend a hand and be of service to others. A gentleman is always willing to give up his seat for a lady and to assist a lady with her luggage, baggage or other items.

16. A gentleman always respects the privacy of others. A gentleman does not force anyone to carry on a conversation with him. A cordial “Hello, how are you?” is all he really needs to say. If the other person seems interested in pursuing a conversation, he may continue to make pleasant small talk keeping in mind the privacy of those around him.



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