

# DUGOUT CHATTER

ELECTRONIC PUBLICATION OF THE GOLDEN SENIORS SOFTBALL CLUB OF SACRAMENTO ([WWW.GSSCS.ORG](http://WWW.GSSCS.ORG)) -- JANUARY 2014

## **VARGO AND KNUTSON ARE NEW VEEPS**

President Tom Sansone's interim appointments of Dave Vargo and Chuck Knutson to serve as club vice presidents were approved by the membership at the Jan. 13 general meeting.

Sansone also announced that due to tournament scheduling, the Board of Directors must rework the club playing schedule which earlier had been set to conclude with championship playoffs at an Oct. 4 picnic.

In other news, it was reported that the club's telephone hotline has been off line while Don Shank works to incorporate an upgrade. Stay tuned.

And player signups appear to be going at a pace to allow a seventh league, which would be played for more competitive 70-plus players following the League 1 games on Monday mornings at Howe Park.

**New VEEPs.** Vargo added the first vice president title to his list of duties, which also include serving as commissioner of two leagues, L2 and L6 on Tuesday mornings. As first vice president, a position he has held before, Vargo is responsible for recruiting and maintaining some 40 team sponsors. He succeeds Dick Latimer, who resigned due to health reasons but is continuing to help recruit more sponsors.

Knutson, a five-year veteran of the club, has agreed to take on the post of second vice president, which was vacated when Jim Wait, elected to the position last August, decided that the duties would be too much in conflict with personal commitments. Pete Ward, who did not seek reelection last summer after serving as second VP for many years, stepped up to make sure that orders were placed for uniform shirts in time for the 2014 season.

All seven positions on the board of directors are subject to elections each August. (See Page 4)

## **SUNSHINE & HEALTH**

### **REST IN PEACE: ERNIE SANTIAGO AND JOHN CHATFIELD**

**Ernest Edward Santiago**, a founding member of the Golden Seniors Softball Club, passed away on Jan. 6, just four days before his 92nd birthday.

Santiago, who died at a nursing home in Galt following a brief illness, was one of the first 14 players who organized for batting and fielding practice on a Land Park field during 1976. (See Page 2)

## **NEXT GENERAL**

### **MEETING:**

**FEB. 10, 2014**

**7:30 p.m. at VFW**

**HALL, 2784**

**STOCKTON**

**BLVD.**

### **IN THIS ISSUE ...**

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**Club Welcomes 13  
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**Safety Report. Terry  
Works to Set CPR/  
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## Sunshine & Health (From Page 1)

John Santiago recalls his grandfather as “one of the originals” of the club, one of the first seven to sign up.

He was known as a strong-hitting first-baseman, according to John and others who knew him. “I attended many of his games as a child. He loved everything about this league. This kept him active during retirement. I’m sure he would have played longer but it hurt his knees too much. He was a great hitter but his knees only allowed for singles and doubles.”

A Golden Seniors life member, Ernie batted cleanup until 1994 when he could no longer play ball due to his knees. He also played hardball and was known as a great fan of Notre Dame athletics, though he never attended the Indiana university.

“He is well-remembered and was well-liked by everybody. He was a true gentleman,” recalled George Hodsdon, veteran club member.

In 1976, according to a published club history, Ted Larson, then 72 and generally recognized as the lead organizer of the group, responded to a notice from the city recreation department inquiring if there was interest among 50-and-over players to form a team for senior citizens. They began with batting and fielding practices at Land Park. It was described as a great year as there were no club officers, no minutes of meetings, “some arguments and a lot of fun.”

Fourteen men participated in those 1976 practices, including Ernie Santiago.

Volume 1 of the club newsletter, dated April 1983, included a brief organizational history and listed Santiago among 37 charter members in 1979 when the club was officially incorporated as a non-profit organization. In that first year, pick-up teams were formed among those who showed up for practices. A traveling all-star squad, including Santiago, went to Las Vegas and Florida for tournaments. In 1980, as membership grew, regular teams were formed and league play began under the lights at Tahoe Park.

In 1979, the Golden Seniors helped inaugurate the first National Senior Citizens Softball Tournament in Las Vegas, and Santiago was among 15 players representing the club. John said that his grandfather’s scrapbook noted that he was a team tournament MVP.

A Golden Senior poem about that 1979 team, by fellow founding member Milo Gates, was printed in the Golden Seniors History, Volume One, in January 1984, describing the 1979 road trips. To wit: “Then there was Ernie the Kid; Nobody knows what he did; He dressed up in style; And wore a big smile; But the girls ran off and hid.”

Ernie graduated from high school in Hawaii and, starting in 1940 worked as a civilian for the navy on Ford Island, Pearl Harbor. He was there when the Japanese attacked in 1941. He served from 1943 to 1945 in the “Pineapple Army.” After the war, he returned to work as a civilian for the U.S. government and wound up at McClellan AFB, retiring in 1974.

*Was Santiago the last living charter member? According to the January 1984 Golden Seniors history, the following 37 men held membership cards as of July 1979 and were declared charter members at a club meeting: Joe Bettencourt, C.B. Brady, Frank Chico, Alden Clark, Bill Clark, Wayne Crary, Bud Ehlers, Fir Galli, Milo Gates, Lyle Hummel, Ed Jagla, Glenn Kelly, Jim Knoble, Ted Larson, Larry Lawston, Charles Lee, Russ Menke, Harold Moos, Joe Moreno, Adron Murphy, Don McPherson, Phil Nasca, Sam Patti, Pete Pina, Tony Pina, Fred Rainey, Gear Rockhill, Ernie Santiago, Charles Sass, Cliff Shirk, George Smith, Deni Treaster, Joe Virgen, Bud Weygandt, Dave Williams, Tom Witcher, Steve Zupan. Anyone who knows whether any of these 37 men still survive can contact Ron Roach at 422-2500 or George Hodsdon at 481-9304. (See Page 3)*

## Sunshine & Health, from Page 2)

**Rest in Peace: John Chatfield.** Life Member John Chatfield, 82, passed away on Dec. 14. He joined the Golden Seniors in 1996 and played on travel teams, Wednesdays at Carmichael Park and Monday mornings at Howe Park. For the last several years, John was a Golden Seniors team manager on Monday mornings, winning league championships in 2008, 2009 and 2012. John also was an excellent photographer, visiting all seven continents and selling wildlife photos taken in Africa and India to National Geographic magazine.

**Dean Price**, 87, a L-1 player who also plays Thursdays at Carmichael Park, has suffered a stroke, according to Trudy Smartt, club Sunshine and Health chair.

**Rathkamp Donation.** In memory of Harry Rathkamp, whose Sept. 24 passing at the age of 91 was noted in the November-December Dugout Chatter, Barbara Wheat offered a \$150 donation to the club. She said Harry joined the Golden Seniors in May 1985 and was an active player until 2002. He coached a 2003 team that won the seventies championship. #



*John Santiago sent this 1979 photo to the Golden Seniors after his grand-dad's passing. John stands next to Ernie (front row, left) in the tournament team photo.*

## SAFETY REPORT -- TRAINING SESSION PLANNING

*From J.C. Terry, Club Safety Coordinator*

Club Safety Coordinator J.C. Terry reports that he hopes to have enough signups to schedule a CPR/AED training session as soon as possible. He is contacting a number of members whose Red Cross certification has expired. Stay tuned for developments on this front. Anyone interested in training should contact Terry at 457-3393.

Also, the University of Arizona has produced a CPR video that notes mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is no longer advised, except for infants or small children or someone who is drowning. You can see the video promoting "continuous chest compressions CPR" at <http://heart.arizona.edu/cpr-video>.

Especially for those who have not been working out over the winter, it is time to begin stretching exercises and other activity that will help you avoid straining or pulling muscles on the playing fields.

Staying hydrated is very important the older we get. Even when the weather is cold and damp, and you may not feel thirsty, the importance of drinking water cannot be overstated. #

## NEWS FROM JAN. 13 MEETING (FROM PAGE 1

**2014 Playing Schedule.** Sansone and the board had focused on an Oct. 4 season-ending picnic but now must consider changes to avoid conflicts with major non-club tournaments. The board noted that the Oct. 4 date conflicts with the Senior Softball USA World Masters in Las Vegas. There also is a SSUSA "last-chance" qualifier Sept. 20-21 in Yuba City. And the World Senior Games in St. George, Utah also are in early October, followed by another SSUSA national tourney in Phoenix.

If the club decides again to end the season earlier in September, complaints could be expected from those who are not on tournament teams. Another option is to start the regular season earlier. Last year's schedule limited L-1 players on Monday mornings to as few as 16 games, prompting considerable grumpiness.

**Picnic Site.** There continues to be support to move the picnic back to the Complex where there are more fields available for playoff games -- as long as the club can negotiate reasonable terms and the dates are available.

**Sponsorships.** Vargo reported 29 paid sponsorships -- one of them (Yancy Company) being new -- and many of those yet to send in their checks are sponsorships from individual club members. Most of the businesses are paid up.

**Balls.** Knutson said the club will order the same type of ball (Trump "Evil") that have been used in recent years. Additional, smaller balls, will be used in L-3 (Tuesday nights) when women are batting.

**Signups.** Player Agent Myron Dahl reported 24 new members -- only one of them being a woman -- so far. This is somewhat surprising since the board has lowered the age requirement for women starting this season so they can be five years younger than the threshold for men.

Dahl said L-1 had 96 signups, followed by 76 for L-2, 72 for L-6, and 41 for L-7. Those are day leagues -- Mondays at Howe Park for L-1 and the new L-7; Tuesday mornings for L-2 and L-6. Night league signups: 49 for Tuesday night, 42 for Wednesday night, 49 for Thursday night.

**League Commissioners.** Club Commissioner Curtis Holcomb said Russ Barnes has been appointed commissioner of L-4, succeeding Bud DeSouza, and Dave Vargo will be commissioner of both L-2 and L-6 on Tuesday mornings, continuing in one league while succeeding Bill Greene in L-6. Other commissioners are Mel Tennyson in L-3 and Allen Riker in L-5.

L-1 Commissioner Henry Low said the L-7 commissioner has yet to be determined.

**Drafts.** Managers will draft teams for the day leagues at Howe Park on Feb. 18. L-1 at 9 a.m., L-2 at 11 a.m. and L-6 at 1 p.m. No time has been set for L-7, which is expected to have only four teams. Night league drafts have not yet been scheduled.

#

## THIRTEEN LIFE MEMBERS ARE HONORED

Life membership honors were bestowed on 13 Golden Seniors at the January general meeting as the program's emcee, Jim Lortz, noted that the group has grown from 11 in 1996 to 153 today.

Lortz, sporting a tuxedo as the emcee of the Life Member program for the 13th straight year, opened by saying, "As I said last year, and I'll say it every year, being a life member in clubs like this usually means only the *few* and the *lucky*. But these ballplayers here this evening have proven to be the exceptions!"

To be eligible for life membership, you have to have 15 years of continuous service and be at least 75, or 10 years at age 80.

This year's inductees: Guy Anderson, Larry Campbell, Bill Enos, Hank Fontes, Don Maciel, Darrel McRorie, Mervin Mill, Wil Nishina, Don Pooler, George Rupp, Joe Saiz, Bob South, Larry Utberg.

Anderson, legendary Cordova High School coach, is turning 82 this year and is in his 10th GSSCS season. He said the club "has given me the enjoyment of reuniting with former fast pitch softball players and the fun of playing with umpires (John and Norm Blackwell) who had called many Cordova games that I coached. This will be his 44th season as baseball coach at Cordova and he said he needs six wins to reach 900 for his career. "No matter how old you get, you never lose that desire to play," he said.

Campbell, 80, joined the club in 2005, and did not attend the meeting. Lortz noted that he has played with and against Larry and "we have also shared some thoughts and attitudes together on several different occasions ... " Larry has been an outspoken and sometimes tenacious advocate for additional playing opportunities for players as they grow older, creating a Thursday morning league at Carmichael Park and touting Hooters as a team sponsor.

Enos, who joins Anderson as a member of the LaSalle Baseball Hall of Fame, will be 75 this year, his 25th in the club. He also has played tournament ball for 23 years, currently with the national powerhouse San Francisco Seals. He joined the Golden Seniors playing with Norm Blackwell's team and added that he has had "nothing but fun ever since. Thank you very much."

Fontes, 75, is a 25-year member who said he thanks God that "we can play the game we love so much" and also to thank his wife, Rachel, "because she said, 'You can go play ball.'" Hank, addressing the members attending the meeting, added, "Keep playing, guys, because, I'll tell you what, there's not another game like this in the world." Hank also has worked as an umpire and on the club's annual picnic. He was the club's Man of the Year in 2006.

Maciel, 81, a 10-year member: "I enjoy playing with everybody here, and I've paid my (2014) dues. I am ready to go!"

Mill, 75, joined the club 22 years ago. He also stated that playing at his age "is such a blessing!" He won a national championship ring in 2009, playing with the Renegades. Mill said he couldn't think of any funny stories, but "some people could say just watching us play at times is humorous enough."

Nishina, 75, is a 17-year member. was asked how many teams he has played for, and he deadpanned: "That's a trick question." My best team? "It is just amazing to be playing at this age" and to all the team managers and club leaders, he said he is grateful to "play ball with all of you."

Rupp, 83, an 11-year member, said he "thoroughly enjoys" playing ball and his biggest hero is Bill Riehl. "He's 92 and still playing." (See Page 6)

## Life Members (From Page 5)

South, 81 this year and a 10-year member, has spent 44 years in the service of the Air Force, 27 on active duty and 17 in civil service at McClellan AFB. He has been on three championship teams in his 10 years of playing Monday mornings.

Utburg, 82, played 25 years in Placerville, where he became a life member, before “coming down the hill” to civilization. Now he qualifies as a double-dipping life member. He said being 82 isn’t old, it us “un-young,” though in 2014 his footspeed will still have to be timed with a sun dial. He conquered prostate cancer in 1996 and hopes his recent lack of energy will be solved by the blood vessel stent installed last December. (Lortz said that, he, too, has battled prostate cancer and concluded treatment a year ago. His PSA now tests as zero, he said with a big smile.)

Unable to attend due to illness, Saiz, 76, said his “overall experience has been an outstanding fulfillment of good fellowship with my fellow players.” He said he had never played slow-pitch softball until the year he turned 50. “A big thank you to the many Golden Senior officers and board members, past and present. Job well done.” Saiz also is known as the builder of a field of dreams, a diamond on his Citrus Heights property where many a youngster has polished their fielding abilities or used his batting cage.

McRorie, 75, is a 23-year member who could not attend the meeting due to health problems. The former all-conference baseball player at Sacramento State is a retired Naval Reserve officer with two combat tours of Vietnam, a secret tour in Area 51 (Nevada), and service on ships and on an admiral’s staff. He also is a retired business and computer teacher. Darrel has battled serious health issues to continue playing at a quality defender at third base and a dangerous hitter.

Pooler, 75, is a 15-year member. He spends the winter at his summer residence -- in Brazil. #



**LIFE MEMBERS, CLASS OF 2013. Photo by Lou Coppola**



***Newly named club Vice Presidents Dave Vargo (left) and Chuck Knutson get to work coordinating sponsors with leagues and uniform colors soon after their interim appointments were confirmed by club members on Jan. 13. -- Lou Coppola photo.***



***New Life Members Guy Anderson (left) and Hank Fontes, with wife Rachel, at the Jan. 13 general meeting.***

***Photos by Lou Coppola.***

## **GOLDEN SENIORS AWARD OF MERIT RECIPIENTS**

Twenty-eight recipients since 1991:

2013: John Mizerak, Arnold Wilkerson	
2012: Trudy Smartt, Ron Roach	2000: Ernie Kidwell
2011: Henry Low, Tom Sansone	1998: Lou Coppola, George Hodsdon
2010: Bob Havrilla	1997: Benny Benson
2009: Dave Vargo	1995: Dante Ciardella, Bill Sullivan
2008: Dick Seward	1994: Ralph Congdon, Daryl Cook
2007: James Powell Sr., Susan Tucker	1993: Ken Dumont, Jack Pressley
2006: Henry Fontes	1991: Bill Turner
2005: Ed Campini, Doug McCreary	#
2004: Foster Maxwell	
2003: Jim Lortz	
2002: Ken Wollenberg	

## ***SHORT HOPS AND LONG BOUNCES***

### **SOFTBALL PRACTICES HELP SENIORS STAY IN SHAPE IN “OFF-SEASON”**

The 2014 GSSCS season will be here before too long so get those bats out of mothballs and work on your timing. There is opportunity to keep those bat-swinging, ball-throwing muscles in shape over the winter months. Here's how:

L1 Commissioner Henry Low reports batting practices will be scheduled for 12:30 p.m. on Field #3 at Howe Park. Field #3 is the diamond adjacent to the parking area at the rear of the park off of Bell Avenue.

Meanwhile, practice games at Carmichael Park are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m. during the fall-winter “off-season.” Carmichael Park's Ernie Kidwell makes it happen and Ronny Smith preps the field. Contact: Greg Leurgans [gleurgan@yahoo.com](mailto:gleurgan@yahoo.com).

### **THE GLOVEMAN GIVES OLD, WORN FIELDING GLOVES NEW LIFE**

Howard Shaw is the “Glovesman” for new lacing, reconditioning, cleaning and service at reasonable pricing. Howard can also help break in a new glove. Give him a call at 421-6643. His cell is 996-9490. #

### **TPA DINNER-DANCE IS PLANNED FOR MARCH**

The annual Tournament Players Association (TPA) Dinner-Dance is scheduled for Saturday, March 1, at the Lakeview Village clubhouse in Citrus Heights, according to TPA President Bob Lowery. The event is free for TPA members. Guests (including Golden Seniors members), are \$15. Contact Lowery at 275-0953. #

# **GOLDEN SENIORS SPONSORS FOR 2014**

(Paid sponsors as of Jan. 14, 2014)

**AMERICAN MEDEQUIP, LLC**

**ARNOLD PROPERTIES**

**AVALON HEARING AID CENTER, INC.**

**BECKS, IN MEMORY OF BILL AND SHIRLEY BECK**

**BERTOLUCCI BODY & FENDER SHOP, INC.**

**C&C PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES**

**CAPITOL BARRICADE**

**EG THREADS**

**ESPANOL ITALIAN RESTAURANT (TEAM 1)**

**ESPANOL ITALIAN RESTAURANT (TEAM 2)**

**HARPER PROPERTIES**

**JERRY JODICE, IN MEMORY OF**

**SACRAMENTO CATHOLIC FAMILIES -- GEORGE L. KLUMPP CHAPEL**

**OF FLOWERS**

**LIVINGSTON'S CONCRETE SERVICE, INC.**

**L&S SURVEYS**

**MARK E. WHITE, DDS**

**MERRILL BOOKKEEPING AND INCOME TAX (Ray Merrill)**

**R.H. NIELSEN REAL ESTATE/APPRaisal**

**OVERHEAD DOOR COMPANY OF SACRAMENTO, INC.**

**RAMBIT, INC. (Ray Merrill)**

**REINWALD'S HEALTH AND DENTAL INSURANCE**

**SAM'S HOF BRAU**

**SHOW BIZ PRODUCTIONS**

**SPORTS LEISURE VACATIONS**

**TANNER AND ASSOCIATES**

**TRI-C MACHINE CO. OF AUBURN, INC.**

**VFW POST 67**

**RYAN R. WILGUS, DDS**

**\*YANCEY COMPANY**

\* -- New Sponsor for 2014

Anyone who knows of a potential sponsor can help recruitment. The fee is \$300 for the first year, when uniform jerseys are prepared, and \$250 per year thereafter. For more information, contact Dave Vargo at 689-7061. #

## **LEAGUE COMMISSIONERS FOR 2014**

**L-1 Henry Low 391-3938; Asst. George Hodsdon 481-9304**

**L-2 Dave Vargo 689-7061**

**L-3 Mel Tennyson 838-6811**

**L-4 Russ Barnes 332-2832**

**L-5 Allen Riker 873-3779**

**L-6 Dave Vargo 689-7061**

**L-7 Pending**

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS -- 2013-14**

President **Tom Sansone** ... 686-1654

1st Vice President **Dave Vargo** ...  
689-7061 (Responsible for team  
sponsorships.)

2nd Vice President **Chuck Knutson** ...  
441-4144 (Responsible for team  
uniforms and equipment.)

Treasurer **Don Wall** ... 434-8308

Secretary **Dave Tanner** ... 216-1941

Player Agent **Myron Dahl** ... 451-2450  
(Responsible for player applications,  
player substitutes, waiting lists.)

Club Commissioner **Curtis**

**Holcomb** ...600-6065 (Responsible for  
enforcement of playing rules, oversees  
league commissioners.)

### **TELEPHONE HOTLINE**

#### **Club Answering Machine**

(managed by Don Shank)  
491-1721 for meeting news and  
field conditions.

#### **Phone or Address Changes:**

Asst. Secretary Henry Low  
391-3938

**Player Applications:** Myron  
Dahl 451-2450

**Sunshine & Health:** Trudy  
Smartt 973-8269

**GSSC #3912 Blood Bank:**  
456-1500

**Safety Coordinator:** J.C. Terry  
457-3393 Cell: 505-2570

**Entertainment:** Lou Coppola  
444-6138

**Dugout Chatter:** Ron Roach,  
editor 422-2500

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