

DUGOUT CHATTER

ONLINE PUBLICATION OF THE GOLDEN SENIORS SOFTBALL CLUB (WWW.GSSCS.ORG)

CLUB LEADERS URGE MORE NIGHT LEAGUE PLAYERS TO SIGN UP

Leaders of the Golden Seniors Softball Club marked the first general meeting of the year Jan. 11 with an all-too-familiar message: If you want to play senior slow-pitch softball on Wednesday or Thursday nights, get your application filed sooner rather than later.

Four weeks before the customary draft dates for the eight GSSCS leagues, President Bill Hill issued a call for more signups, which will dictate how many teams can be formed.

Once they know how many players, Club Commissioner Bobby Ellison and league commissioners can finalize team managers, and Club Player Agent Dave Tanner can produce draft lists.

All this while league leaders are working with the Sacramento Softball Complex to schedule the first games in late March or April, and look ahead to set a date for the annual picnic with league championship games, etc. In response to a question, Hill agreed that every effort will be made to avoid a repeat of the 2015 club picnic date that coincided with the Labor Day holiday weekend.

General meeting news:

Signups. Tanner said the night leagues, as usual, have the greatest need for additional players. Thursday night L5, which had only 29 players signed up. A six-team league needs 72 if each team has 12 players. L4 Wednesday night

**THE NEXT GENERAL MEETING
IS SCHEDULED FOR 7 p.m.
MONDAY, FEB. 8, AT THE VFW
HALL ON STOCKTON BOULEVARD.**

IN THIS ISSUE ...

January meeting news.

***Sunshine & Health. Rest
in Peace: Don Quinn,
Hannah Rose Seufert.***

***Meet the club's dozen
new life members.***

***League commissioners
for 2016.***

***Short Hops, Long
Bounces: Winter
practices; glove
conditioning.***

List of Sponsors.

Club Contacts.

(Club Meeting News, From Page 1)

had 50 signups. L3 Tuesday night had 49. The age requirement is different this year as the board decided to try for a 60-year threshold for men in L4. The minimum age is 50 for men for Tuesday and Thursday nights, with women allowed to join all leagues when they are five years younger.

The days leagues (70-and-over) were in better shape. L1 on Mondays at 9 a.m. had 72; L7 on Mondays at 11 a.m. had 45 — enough for four teams, and the four-team L8 for 75-and older, playing Tuesdays, at Howe Park, could field four teams with 60 signups (teams with the older players need larger rosters). The Tuesday morning leagues at the Complex were in pretty good shape with the 60-and-over leagues attracting at least 68 signups.

Tanner said that the 2016 roster has 15 new members as of Jan. 11.

Safety. Hill announced that J.C. Terry has stepped down as club safety coordinator. Interested in the position? Contact Hill or any board member. The position mainly involves working with the Red Cross to schedule AED-CPR training for club members, with the club paying the cost and issuing red hats so those who are Red Cross-certified are easily recognized in the event of an emergency. The coordinator also makes sure the club's defibrillators are available in "crash carts" at Howe Park and the Complex.

Elections. Hill said the club also needs a new elections committee chair to recruit members to serve on the board of directors once elected to the seven board officers in August, with nominations in July. John Mizerak, who has done that job for many years, is no longer in the club.

Competition. The president said he wants to form two committees, one for night leagues and one for day leagues, to promote the recreational style of softball and the "fair play" opportunities for all team members. Players who are highly competitive can satisfy that desire on tournament teams that usually play on weekends while still having fun playing ball with the Golden Seniors. "This is a club for all skill levels," he said. That is how the league was formed 40 years ago and "we want to keep it that way."

He also said he would like to see a committee take on the challenge of recruiting more players, particularly for night leagues.

Equipment. 2nd VP Chuck Knutson said he has ordered sweatshirts, navy blue in color. His initial order is sweatshirts with zippers for \$30; pullovers for \$25. He also has ordered a dozen wide-brim hats. There also will be new hats that say Golden Seniors Softball Club, Sacramento, CA, instead of GSSCS. He softballs have been ordered through Senior Softball USA and EG Thread is providing some new jerseys.

Sponsors. 1st VP Rocky Wilkerson said he has 29 paid sponsors for 2016 and about seven more committed, for 36. Also, he said "a lot of new people have expressed interest in being sponsors."

Rules. Ellison reported that the Rules Committee has cleaned up the Rule Book, which will be posted on the Web Site, by catching typos and making minor changes. League commissioners have been appointed and approved by the board. In the future, he hopes to have people step up for league commissioner or team managerial posts in the fall so he can schedule some meetings to explain responsibilities of a team or league leader.

Budget. Members approved a budget that appropriates \$83,000 with income of \$62,000 and works down a surplus by about \$20,000. As a charitable organization, the GSSCS is not supposed to have too large a surplus. Thus the board has reduced club dues. Treasurer Don Wall said \$35,000 is budgeted for field fees, \$6,000 for the annual picnic, \$6,000 for scorekeepers, and \$12,500 for umpires. There is a \$10,000 uniform expense. Members also authorized a donation of \$100 to the Oak Park Little League, led by Norm Blackwell. #

SUNSHINE & HEALTH REPORT

REST IN PEACE: DON QUINN, HANNAH SEUFERT

Diagnosed with cancer late in the 2015 season, the December passing of **Don Quinn** shocked the Golden Seniors softball community. Quinn, whose aggressive form of liver cancer claimed his life on Dec. 17, was 63. He was a good friend of the game and the Golden Seniors Softball Club, said Tom Sansone. He played in both Tuesday morning leagues and Tuesday night during 2015.

Life Member **Jules Morganstern** is taking the 2016 season off to battle cancer. He initially had an extremely elevated PSA and it was found that the cancer had spread from his prostate to his leg. Jules, 83, joined the club 32 years ago and continues as a non-playing member for 2016.

Life Member **George Crowl** had cancer surgery in November and will begin 2016 as a non-playing member until he recovers. George, 80, is a 30-year member who played in the new L8 in 2015.

Sunshine & Health Chair Trudy Smartt noted that Life Member **Al Hegelein** is recovering from an illness, and was attending the Jan. 11 meeting with his wife, Sylvia.

Life Member **Henry Low** has returned to his home to continue rehabilitation from a stroke suffered in December soon after hip replacement surgery. President Bill Hill noted that Henry produced the certificates for new life members in time for the Jan. 11 meeting. "I'm doing OK," Henry said in an email. "I don't think I will be playing ball at all this season, but that remains to be seen." Henry said he had his first outpatient therapy on Jan. 6 and gets around with a wheelchair, walker, and cane in a progression to walking only with a cane, then without assistance. "Considering what I have had to work with/against: the hip surgery, the stroke, my back problems and knee problems, I believe that my recovery has been quite remarkable. This is also the opinion of the doctors and therapists I have worked with. Henry has served the club well as a board member (secretary), assistant secretary and a league commissioner. Club members wish him well on his road to recovery. He plans to continue serving as L1 commissioner this season.

Hannah Rose Seufert passed away in early January, joining her husband, of 69 years, Harold, who was a longtime Golden Senior. Hannah enjoyed going to his softball games and keeping score. Among her children, grandchildren and great-grandchild is the couple's foster son, Noel Maldonado, a veteran Golden Senior player and manager. #



GSSCS BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2016: (L-R) 2ND VP CHUCK KNUTSON, CLUB COMMISSIONER BOBBY ELLISON, SECRETARY DEANNA SESSO, 1ST VP ROCKY WILKERSON, TREASURER DON WALL, PLAYER AGENT DAVE TANNER AND PRESIDENT BILL HILL.



TWELVE NEW LIFE MEMBERS WERE RECOGNIZED AT THE JANUARY MEETING: ED CALUZA, M.R. EVANS, FRED FISCHER, BILL HOOPER, BOB NIELSEN, RON ROACH, HARVEY SWENSON, DAVE TANNER, RON THOMAS, DON WALL EMCEE JIM LORTZ IS IN THE TUX, BACK ROW. (NOT PICTURED: DON LONG AND CLYDE WHITAKER) .

MEET THE NEW LIFE MEMBERS

The first order of business on the first meeting of the year brought out Jim Lortz in his tuxedo and tennis shoes for the annual induction of life members — those who have played at least 15 consecutive years in the club and reaching the age of 75, or 80 and 10. They no longer pay club dues (but still pay league fees).

With friends and family looking on, and hot dogs and cake and coffee provided, Lortz announced the 12 members of the Life Member Club for 2016:

Ed Caluza, 75 and 20 years: “It is truly an honor for me to be recognized for something I really enjoy doing!” He noted that when he first joined the club he noticed the older guys wore “extra gear” to protect against bad hops, but he just put on his cleats and that was that. Now I’m also putting on extra gear.”

M.R. Evans, 75 and 15 years. He played a number of years before cataract surgery on both eyes, about eight years ago. He found he could once again see well enough to play in the outfield. His first GSSCS manager and later a teammate with the Sacramento Blues, Ron Roach, recalls M.R. took a fly ball to his noggin in a first Golden Seniors practice. He wound up playing catcher until he regained his depth perception. He also could hit homers over the scoreboard — with a wooden bat. He has been troubled with shoulder and knee issues in recent years but, when healthy, his long legs seem to move him from base to base in about five strides. Evans has been among league leaders as a run-producer.

Fred Fischer, 75 and 20. “Achieving status as a Life Member simply means I am now officially “old.” Fred, who has managed teams and served on the club board of directors as first vice president, said his “memories of a lifetime on the ball field are never ending and bring great pleasure but the best memories are of the people I’ve met, the friends I’ve made, and the stories I’ve heard (some of which might even be true).” He concluded by thanking “those who founded the club and maintained it through the years, thus allowing the young at heart to continue to realize our childhood fantasies despite infirmity and advancing years.” He has served as club 1st VP.

Bill Hooper, 75 and 24 years. “I have been assistant manager, manager and league commissioner along the way and enjoyed being on a few championship teams. But, win or lose, it has always been great fun and comradeship. You forget how old you are when you are on the field or talking after the game.” He said his Golden Senior experience enabled him to find traveling teams and the chance to play for Al Tirapelli and Dante Ciardella. “I now have a new knee and enjoy playing with the 70-plus guys.” He concluded, “What a great organization we have that allows us to enjoy athletic competition at our ages.”

Don Long, 80 and 10. Don was unable to attend as he said he is now his wife’s caretaker. Thus he said he probably will be unable to play softball this year. Henry Low recalled playing with Don in the Sierra Valley League. “He was a good third baseman back in the day.” Lortz said anyone who knows Don should check in on him. Say hi, and maybe give him some relief on occasion. That’s what this club is about.”

Bob Nielsen, 80 and 10. Bob's business, Nielsen Real Estate Appraisals, has sponsored two teams in the club, now L1 and L8, both managed by Norm Blackwell Sr. and both winners of league championships in 2015. He has teamed with Norm to win five championships and also sponsors the California Gold, also managed by Blackwell. For 35 years, Nielsen sponsored fast-pitch teams, and in 2016 he plans on playing four days a week, including Wednesday and Thursday in Carmichael. He also competes in horseshoes, bowling and golf.

Ron Roach, 75 and 20. Retired journalist has edited the Dugout Chatter for the past eight or nine years. "I was recruited by the late Jim Powell, joining the Golden Seniors in when I was 55. I first played on Golden Seniors teams led by Cloice Wade (later a teammate with the Sacramento Blues), Jerry Nevis and Dick Horkey. Won a Wednesday night title with then-rookie manager Alan Afill (East Lawn). Teamed with Bill McMahon (advised me to wear kayak shorts to protect against pulled groin muscles on cold nights) to manage successful teams on Tuesday nights. Drafted Bob and Trudy Smartt when they were "rookies"; recruited a rec league Muckrakers teammate and current GSSCS club commissioner, Bobby Ellison, when he turned 50. "I feel fortunate to have played with and against some really good people. The older I get, the more fun it is to play this great game."

Harvey Swenson, 79 and 15. He said he played church-league softball in the mid-1980s but had to quit when he got a new job that required a lot of travel. Then he sort of retired and read about the Golden Seniors in the Sacramento Bee, and he joined teams as an injury replacement, on a team that won a league championship. "Hey, this is easy ... " Over the years he has won a number of championships but then, in 2014, was on a team that went 0-24. He blames the dumb rule that makes a force out of someone stretching a single into a double for loss #24. He said he couldn't play last year because of a sore back but plans on playing in 2016. Oh, Harvey wrote that while his back hurt, he sat out 2015 because the "ghost of Alexander Cartwright, the inventor of baseball (not Abner Doubleday) visited me one night after the end of the 0-24 season and asked me to stop playing because I was ruining the game."

Dave Tanner, 75 and 16. Veteran real estate industry executive, Dave first played senior softball with the Vintage club in San Jose in 1992, after playing more than 20 years in church, club and city leagues. Dave and Michelle were married on a Friday evening in 1994, and he played second base in a Vintage league game the next morning. "It was clear the priorities were established," he added. He told his Vintage teammates that he was moving to Sacramento and would hook up with the Golden Seniors. They responded that he was headed to the granddaddy of senior softball. Tanner has sponsored a team in L3 for 10 years and managed the team for seven of those years. He now plays in L1 and L7 as well. He is currently in his second year as club player agent after two years as club secretary.

Ron Thomas, 80 and 14 years. Joined the Coast Guard and, over 28 years, played softball in Alaska, Hawaii, Texas and California. First played with the Golden Seniors in 1987 when the club played at Tahoe Park and had just two leagues. Plans to play this year on Mondays (L1) and Tuesdays (L8) as well as at Carmichael Park on Thursdays. "We have come a long way baby!!!" (See Page 7)

Don Wall, 78 and 16 years. The club's current treasurer, Don served as a L5 commissioner for two years and for several years was on the Audit Committee. Played on several L3 championship teams and played in the day leagues at the Complex, winning a few titles. He moved to L1 at Howe Park around 2013. When L7 was re-established in 2014, he played on Tom Watwood's championship teams in 2014 and 2015. Played in L8's inaugural season in 2015.

Clyde Whitaker, 86 and 10. Did not attend the meeting. George Hodsdon remembers that Clyde started senior ball with Ernie Kidwell at Carmichael Park before coming over to the Golden Seniors, playing catcher and outfield. "Heckuva nice guy and a pretty good ballplayer," according to Kidwell.

#

2016 LEAGUE COMMISSIONERS

As approved by the board, Club Commissioner Bobby Ellison announced the following GSSCS league commissioners for 2016:

- L1 Henry Low 391-3939**
- L2 Bob Smartt 973-8269**
- L3 Mel Tennyson 838-6811**
- L4 Brian Pearson 947-4384**
- L5 Larry Lagomarsino 600-5854**
- L6 Ray Lucas 718-3348**
- L7 Jim Stinson 397-3012**
- L8 Cloicec Wade 393-5809**

SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

Sponsors Paid for 2016 as
of January 11:

AMERICAN MEDEQUIP,
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AVALON HEARING AID
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JOHN BRENDLE
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EG THREADS
ELK GROVE LOCK & SAFE
ESPAÑOL ITALIAN
RESTAURANT (2 TEAMS)
GREATER SACRAMENTO
SOFTBALL ASSN.
*LAURIE HANSCHU, DDS
HARPER PROPERTIES
BILL HILL (2 TEAMS)
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SERVICE
MARK E. WHITE, DDS
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ESTATE/APPRaisal (2
TEAMS)

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SACRAMENTO AREA
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TRI-C MACHINE CO. OF
AUBURN, INC.(2 TEAMS)
VFW POST 67
WENELLI'S PIZZA
YANCEY COMPANY

* — NEW IN 2016

For information on how to
become a sponsor for 2016
or take advantage of two-
year sponsorship terms,
contact Rocky Wilkerson,
first vice president, at
595-2941

SHORT HOPS AND LONG BOUNCES

GLOVE NEED FIXING?

Howard Shaw, also known as The Gloveman, says he can fix fielding gloves “better than anyone we both know.” His service includes lacing, cleaning and reconditioning. He can be reached at: 421-6643 or his cell: 996-9490

PRACTICES ON TUESDAYS AND THURSDAY

Batting practice and practice gamers continue through the off-season at Carmichael Park on Tuesdays and Thursdays, starting at 9 a.m. Get there early to sign the clipboard as teams for the first game are based on order of signups. Contract: Greg Leurgans, 332-7953. #

BOARD OF DIRECTORS -- 2016

President **Bill Hill** ... 804-2243

1st Vice President **Rocky Wilkerson** ...
595-2941 (Responsible for team
sponsorships.)

2nd Vice President **Chuck Knutson** ...
524-9763 (Responsible for uniforms and
equipment.)

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

Secretary **Deanna Sesso** ... 955-8195

Player Agent **Dave Tanner** ... 216-1941
(Responsible for player applications,
player substitutes, waiting lists.)

Club Commissioner **Bobby Ellison** ...
212-7498 (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:

Dave Tanner 216-1941

Player Applications: Dave
Tanner 216-1941

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
(coachrwr@comcast.net)