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# DUGOUT CHATTER

## ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN SENIORS SOFTBALL CLUB OF SACRAMENTO — JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2017

### LEAGUE TITLE GAMES, PICNIC RETURN TO THE SACRAMENTO SOFTBALL COMPLEX IN 2017

**League Championship Playoffs and Picnic Date and Place:** Regular season play commences the week of March 13 for the club's eight leagues and concludes with the league championship games on Saturday, Sept. 16.

Those dates were announced by Club Commissioner Bobby Ellison at the Jan. 9 general meeting, when the board of directors also declared that the club season-ending picnic on Sept. 16 was moving back to the Sacramento Softball Complex.

All of the club's league championship playoff games will be held on the same day, beginning at 8 a.m., and for the first time in recent years they will be at the four-field complex. In recent years, due to a switch of the picnic to Howe Park, the league championship games for the day leagues also have been at Howe Park. The night league championship games have been conducted on the nights the leagues regularly play.

It was felt that having night leagues not be part of the picnic and playoffs day has been detrimental to club unity. Club President Bill Hill credited Club Secretary Deanna Sesso for working with the Complex and concessionaire to achieve a workable contract. She also is the club's picnic chairperson.

At the Feb. 13 general meeting, it was noted that during the season there are five weeks when the Complex will be unavailable for GSSCS league play. Those games will be moved to Freedom Softball Fields at McClellan Park, which is a short drive from the softball complex.

The board also is diligently working on schedules to ensure that no one team plays more than others at 6:30 p.m. on fields #2 and #4 at the Complex. Field 2 is known for the sun literally blinding batters and, on Field 4, pitchers and fielders on the right side of the diamond have to deal with sun issues. (SEE PAGE 2)

***INSIDE THIS ISSUE: New Life Members; Sunshine & Health: Rest in Peace Larry Windham, Bill Sullivan, Dick Horkey; Safety Report; List of Sponsors.***

**Next General Meeting: 7 p.m. March 13, VFW Hall on Stockton Boulevard.**

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## GENERAL MEETING NEWS (FROM PAGE 1)

Other news from Jan. 9 and Feb. 13 general meetings:

**League Commissioners:** Ellison said new league commissioners include Guy Anderson (L1), succeeding Henry Low, who stepped down due to health issues. Ken Taylor will be the commissioner of L6 and Dave Vargo will be assistant commissioner of L5. A complete listing of league commissioners is elsewhere in this newsletter.

**League Drafts:** League team drafts will begin in the last two weeks of February. The day leagues were scheduled to conduct drafts on Feb. 20.

**Signups:** Player Agent Dave Tanner said the club's day leagues were attracting enough signups that they were expected to be good to go for drafting six 12-player teams, except L7 and L8 were expected to have four teams of 12 or 13 or, in the case of 75-and-over L8, 14 players. The night leagues continue to struggle for adequate signups. Leagues 3, 4 and 5 commissioners and team managers were busy calling 2016 roster players who have not signed up for 2017. It takes 72 players for six 12-player teams, and all three night leagues were well short of that. Meanwhile, Tuesday Day L2 and L6 at the Complex were going to have more than enough for the draft and would appear to require waiting lists.

**Umpires:** Ellison said he has taken action to hold organizational meetings with umpires so they can be brought up to date with any changes in club rules. Chief Umpire Tom Bussey said he is planning to conduct training for new umpires so they are better able to interpret GSSCS rules.

**Rules:** Ellison set up a meeting of representatives from various leagues to discuss proposed changes in league rules that could be considered by the Board of Directors before the season starts. New rule books were to be printed.

**Bats:** A somewhat heated discussion of whether L7 (70 and older) would be able to use better bats (as are used in the younger leagues at the Complex) occurred when it was announced by the board that a board-designed survey is to be done this year, and the hotter bats would not be allowed in 2017. A survey initiated by a player during last season indicated that most L7 players prefer better bats.

Meantime, for Leagues 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, at the Complex, a list of bats not allowed in senior play can be found at the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) website. Hotter bats, at least for now, are not allowed in the 70-and-over leagues. The discussion for allowing better bats has been limited to L7 and would not apply to L1 or L8.

**Gender Age Differential:** The board may be asked to consider amending rules or bylaws to allow women to play in leagues when they more than five years younger. Currently, for example, women can play in the night leagues when they are 45; 55 when playing Tuesday L2 and 6, and 65 when playing L1 and L7. Making the change to a suggested 10 year differential for L3 and L5 would be tough for 2017 because it would require a by-law change, which normally takes at least two months to bring to a final vote at a club general meeting.

**Budget:** Treasurer Don Wall said the club is operating with a deficit budget in 2016 and 2017 to draw down a surplus that had at one time been over \$100,000. The deficit in 2017 is \$27,000 and, as of January, the club had \$50,000 in the bank. (See Page 3)

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## GENERAL MEETING NEWS FROM PAGE 2

**Safety News:** Hill said the club is buying new AEDs (defibrillators) and restocking the red safety carts that are rolled out at the Complex and at Howe Park before all GSSCS games. Team managers need to know what their responsibilities are with regard to getting the so-called crash cart near the fields and put away in the Complex or Howe Park offices. Getting them put away is the responsibility of the home-team manager after the final game of the day or night.

**Life Membership:** The board said criteria for qualifying to become a Life Member should be published in the Dugout Chatter. If a member turns 80 with 10 years of continuous club membership, he or she can become a life member (no longer having to pay club dues — currently \$20 a year. Or the life member can qualify with 15 years and age 75. One possible change that may be considered by the board is waiving the continuous years of membership so that a player who has played 15 or 20 years, but not necessarily consecutively, might qualify. Otherwise, a member can petition the board for a waiver. Members who have to sit out a season, due to illness or injury in most cases — can choose to protect their continuous service status by going into non-playing membership status. They are encouraged to continue paying their annual dues to avoid a break in service time. Thus they also continue to receive the Dugout Chatter and would not be dropped from the membership computer base.

**Uniforms:** Bob Smartt, 2nd VP, said he has ordered balls and caps. One change this season is the board has decided that a player who does not want to wear a hat can do so, but if he or she is wearing a hat, it must have a GSSCS logo, or a player, due to a medical need that requires extra protection, can wear a floppy hat.

**Sponsors:** Rocky Wilkerson (1st VP) said he needed just two more sponsors to have enough for 45 teams in the eight leagues. So far he said the club has collected \$6,810 in sponsor funding. Wilkerson also said the membership needs to patronize sponsoring businesses, letting them know that members appreciate their support. He said the club “lost a couple” sponsors from 2016 because the businesses did not feel appreciated. Need a garage door fixed? A good restaurant? Check out the list of sponsors in this newsletter. #

***Errata: Apologies to John Shintaku for misspelling his name in the November-December Dugout Chatter list of leading L2 hitters (.814 in 2015).***

**NEW LIFE MEMBERS ARE HONORED**

Six veteran Golden Seniors were honored as new life members at the February general meeting: Vidal Franco, Doug Lopez, John Mizerak, Ron Peck, Ron Rienks and Vic Torres. They combine for 126 years of membership.

As has been tradition, friends and family members joined club members in applause for the honorees who were introduced by emcee Jim Lortz, a former GSSCS president who wears his tuxedo with tennis shoes for the occasion to honor those he calls “only the few and the lucky” who get to play a sport they love for as long as they have done so.

To qualify for life membership, a member must belong to the club for 15 consecutive years and be at least 75, or have at least 10 consecutive years in the club and be in their 80th year of age. Life membership makes the member exempt from \$20 annual dues.

Franco, who will be 75 in August, is an 18-year member. He said he has found the GSSCS to be a “fun club to be in” and has many great memories.

Lopez, who will be 75 in May, is starting his 26th year in the club. He shared memories of softball but also details about how he and his family (father, uncles) served in the U.S. military, including on the staff of Gen. Douglas MacArthur in the Philippines. He was named after the famous general.

Mizerak, 75 on Feb. 10, is a 22-year member who said he best remembers being on three league championship teams. John also helped the club for many years as chair of the committee recruiting members to seek election to the club’s board of directors.

Peck, whose 75th birthday was Feb. 2, is a 17-year member who said his fondest memory was helping to save the life of Ray Merrill, who had a heart attack during a game. Peck, a former police officer, joined with Gil Mashburn, who was a fireman, to provide CPR for 18 minutes until paramedics arrived to complete resuscitation efforts.

Rienks, 75 in June, is a 21-year member who said he recalled noticing when he came out for senior softball at the ripe old age of 54 that “these guys are really old.” He learned that most could really play and enjoy the game.

Torres, 75 in June, has been in the club 22 years, and has been a manager of teams in the Tuesday day leagues. He was not present for the ceremony.

Members received a framed certificate prepared by Henry Low and Deanna Sesso. After the ceremony, everyone enjoyed cake or cupcakes, and coffee, thanks to efforts of Trudy and Bob Smartt. #



*Life Members Class of 2017, L-R, Doug Lopez, Ron Rienks, (emcee Jim Lortz), Vidal Franco, Ron Peck and John Mizerak. (Not Pictured: Vic Torres)*

**LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE GOLD!**

The Sacramento Gold 80-and-over traveling tournament team triumphed in the AAA Division World Masters last fall in Las Vegas, topping off an incredible year of success that included the Triple Crown. Coached and led by Norm Blackwell Sr., who has been with the team since they played in the 60s bracket, the team also won Rock 'n Reno, the Western Nationals and the NorCal Cup.

The Gold has a strong Golden Seniors Softball Club core of players and has been sponsored for the past five years by Bob Nielsen.

Dave Fairchild was the MVP in Las Vegas as the team went 6-0 in late September, beating teams from Florida, Hawaii, Colorado and California. Fairchild was joined on the All-Tournament team by Blackwell (who hit over .800), Ray Newman, Roland Stiarwalt and Howard Smith. Defensive stars included Newman in LCF, Fairchild in LF and Lou Velaz at 3B. Gold stalwarts include infielder Guy Anderson, legendary high school baseball coach.

Blackwell said the winning edge was sound fundamental defense, avoiding errors, turning double plays and making the routine plays.

The Gold is one of the most venerable traveling senior softball teams in the world, according to Blackwell. Now 83, Norm began playing for the Gold when he was in his sixties, and manages Nielsen-sponsored GSSCS teams in L1 and L8. #

**2017 LEAGUE COMMISSIONERS**

**Appointed by Club Commissioner Bob Ellison, the following league commissioners are serving for the 2017 season:**

- L1 — Guy Anderson 916 858-1646**
- L2 — Bob Smartt 916 973-8269**
- L3 — Mel Tennyson 916 838-6811**
- L4 — Dick Reisinger 916 718-5671**
- L5 — Bob Ellison 916 212-7498**
- L6 — Ken Taylor 916 217-3654**
- L7 — Jim Stinson 916 397-3012**
- L8 — Cloicec Wade 916 393-5809**

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**SAFETY REPORT — EVER SAVED A LIFE?**

If you are in the position to save a life, will you be ready? Do you have the skills and knowledge it takes? The Golden Seniors Softball Club encourages you to take advantage of club-financed training.

Each year, the club sponsors CPR/AED (defibrillator) training for club members who want to "be prepared." The club is so committed to this program, begun way back under the late Jerry Jodice's tenure as club president/safety chairman, that the club pays the approximately \$75 cost per member.

Sign up and spend most of a day (9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with a break for lunch for the Adult, Children and Infant CPR) learning how to respond to medical emergencies, learning how to save a life, not only on the playing field but at home or work.

Over the years about 100 Golden Seniors have taken advantage of this program. More than one GSSCS member is alive today because of quick reactions by teammates and umpires using the club's equipment.

Safety Chairman Glenn Cummings has arranged with the Red Cross to offer two classes: March 11 or March 18 — just before the new season begins. To enroll to take the class and be certified by the Red Cross, contact Cummings for details and sign up for one of the classes. You can contact Glenn at [cummingsglenn@gmail.com](mailto:cummingsglenn@gmail.com) or (916) 276-9530. #

## SUNSHINE AND HEALTH REPORT

**Rest in Peace: Larry Windham, Bill Sullivan, Dick Horkey**

Longtime Golden Senior **Larry Windham**, 85, died on Dec. 12, hours after he was beaten by a 21-year-old man who was later arrested and faces charges stemming from the violent assault at an AM/PM gasoline station on Watt Avenue.

According to the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department, as reported in the Sacramento Bee, Windham suffered multiple injuries to his face, but refused medical attention as he said he was on his way to see his doctor. He died later that night.

Larry Ray Richey of Rio Linda was arrested about a week later and booked on suspicion of elder abuse and battery causing great bodily harm. He was released on \$150,000 bail. The cause of death was under investigation by the county coroner. If the coroner's report links Windham's death to the beating, additional charges may be filed, as well as an increased bail. A Jan. 11 arraignment hearing in Sacramento County Superior Court was continued to Feb. 8.

The Bee reported that Windham had just finished pumping gas when confronted by Richey, who thought Windham parked too close to his vehicle at the gas pumps.

Windham joined the Golden Seniors in 1987 and became a life member. Last year, he played on Monday mornings in the 70-and-over leagues. He batted over .400 in his 29th year as a member of the Golden Seniors Softball Club of Sacramento. Club President Bill Hill called Larry's wife to offer condolences on behalf of the club.

**Bill Sullivan**, a pioneer member of the Golden Seniors who joined the club 36 years ago, in 1981, passed away on Jan. 8. The life member was 94. Bill was a recipient of the club's Award of Merit for outstanding service.

**Dick Horkey**, a 30-year Golden Seniors life member, passed away in December. He was 82. Arnold Disney, who co-managed a GSSCS night league team with Horkey for many years and whose friendship dates back to their teaching days at Rio Linda High School, said Dick "went to bed and didn't wake up." Horkey had seen his doctor who told him his pacemaker was good for "another nine years." Sadly, Disney said, "When your time is up, your time is up." Over 40 years, he said, Dick "never complained about anything."

**Jack Tibbetts**, a top hitter in the club's Monday morning leagues, reported that he expects to be sidelined for several months as a result of shoulder surgery. He said he has a tear of about three inches in the shoulder, an injury that prevented him from throwing for the entire 2016 season. The injury did not stop him from swinging the bat. He paced L7 with a .750 batting average.

Life Member **George Gross**, 85, was reported to be home recovering after hospitalization and time in a convalescent home. He joined the club in 1991. #

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS** -- 2016-17 -- President: **Bill Hill** 916 804-2243. 1st VP: **Rocky Wilkerson** 916 595-2541. 2nd VP: **Bob Smartt** 916 973-8269. Treasurer: **Don Wall** 916 434-8308 Secretary: **Deanna Sesso** 916 955-8195 Player Agent: **Dave Tanner** 916 216-1941. Club Commissioner: **Bobby Ellison** 916 212-7498.

***TELEPHONE HOTLINE***

**Club Answering Machine** (managed by Deanna Sesso) 491-1721 for meeting news and field conditions.

**Phone or Address Changes:** Dave Tanner 216-1941

**Player Applications:** Dave Tanner 216-1941

**ONLINE AT** [WWW.GSSCS.ORG](http://WWW.GSSCS.ORG)

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

**Rules:** Bobby Ellison 212-7498

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

**Entertainment:** Lou Coppola

**Safety:** Glenn Cummings 276-9530  
**Dugout Chatter:** Ron Roach, editor 422-2500 ([coachrwr@comcast.net](mailto:coachrwr@comcast.net))

Still getting your Dugout Chatter via the U.S. Mail? Most Golden Seniors have opted to see their Dugout Chatter online ([www.gsscs.org](http://www.gsscs.org)), which saves the club hundreds of dollars in postage alone. You can help by calling Dave Tanner 216-1941 and asking to take your name off the Dugout Chatter mailing list. Plus the online edition often contains more news and features, and pictures. Check it out!!!

## ***SUPPORT YOUR SPONSORS!!!***

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AVALON HEARING AID  
CENTER, INC. (2 TEAMS)  
IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
BILL AND SHIRLEY BECK  
BERTOLUCCI'S BODY &  
FENDER SHOP, INC.  
Dibos (TONY DIBERNARDO)  
JOHN BRENDLE  
CONSULTING  
\*COOL KETTLE CORN  
EG THREADS  
ELK GROVE LOCK & SAFE  
ESPANOL ITALIAN  
RESTAURANT (2 TEAMS)  
GEREMIA POOLS, INC.  
GREATER SACRAMENTO  
SOFTBALL ASSN. (GSSA)  
LAURIE HANSCHU, DDS  
LA ROSA'S SPORTS CAFE  
HARPER PROPERTIES  
BILL HILL (2 TEAMS)  
IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
JERRY JODICE  
JOLLY ROGERS  
L&S SURVEYS (2 TEAMS)  
LIVINGSTON CONCRETE  
SERVICE  
MARK E. WHITE, DDS  
MERRILL BOOKKEEPING  
R.H. NIELSEN REAL  
ESTATE/APPRAISAL (2  
TEAMS)

OVERHEAD DOOR  
COMPANY OF  
SACRAMENTO, INC.  
RAMBIT, INC. (Ray Merrill)  
REINWALD'S HEALTH &  
DENTAL INSURANCE  
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SERVICES --  
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SACRAMENTO AREA  
FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL  
522  
SAM'S HOF BRAU  
SHOW BIZ PRODUCTIONS  
SPORTS LEISURE  
VACATIONS  
TANNER & ASSOCIATES  
TRI-C MACHINE CO. OF  
AUBURN, INC.(2 TEAMS)  
VFW POST 67  
WURM AND FRYE  
WEALTH MANAGEMENT  
WENELLI'S PIZZA  
YANCEY COMPANY

\*New sponsor in 2017  
For information on how to  
become a sponsor for 2017  
or take advantage of two-  
year sponsorship terms,  
contact Rocky Wilkerson,  
first vice president, at

*THANKS FOR THE GREAT WORK OF CHIEF SCOREKEEPER COLETTE BARNES, SCOREKEEPERS DAWN MARIE GERLACH AND VENUS GERLACH, AND THE SPECIAL ASSIST BY RUSS BARNES WHO PUT THE COMPUTERIZED SCOREKEEPING PROGRAM TOGETHER. PLEASE NOTE THAT DURING THE SEASON YOUR MANAGER WILL HAVE YOUR TEAM'S BATTING STATISTICS.*