

# **DUGOUT CHATTER**

ELECTRONIC PUBLICATION OF THE GOLDEN SENIORS SOFTBALL CLUB OF SACRAMENTO ([WWW.GSSCS.ORG](http://WWW.GSSCS.ORG)) -- NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2010

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: HAPPY HOLIDAYS ... AND SIGN UP!**

The Board of Directors and I would like to wish the club members and their families a joyous holiday season. Remember to get your applications in for next year and be on the lookout for new club members. At the Jan. 10, 2011 general meeting I will make an announcement regarding the new ball we will be using for the 2011 season.

Any comments or suggestions? Please e-mail me at [ceshill@aol.com](mailto:ceshill@aol.com). -- Bill Hill

**NEXT  
GENERAL  
MEETING:  
MONDAY, JAN.  
10, 7:30 P.M. AT  
THE VFW POST  
67 HALL ON  
STOCKTON  
BOULEVARD**

## **2011 SIGNUPS: "DON'T BE LATE!!!"**

Get your 2011 membership renewals in by Dec. 15 or risk losing seniority status, exhorts club Player Agent Linda McCollum-Greene. "Don't be delinquent and jeopardize your seniority status for the league or leagues of your choice." She also warns that those who sign up after Jan. 15 are subject to a \$20 late fee.

As of Nov. 15, she reported these signups: L-1 60; L-2 31; L-3 37; L-4 31; L-5 28; L-6 21; L-7 12. At the Nov. 15 board meeting, President Bill Hill said players who haven't renewed by Dec. 15 can expect to hear from him or other club leaders. The club has taken steps (the mid-December deadline and mid-January late fee) designed to avoid a repeat of 2010 when late signups threatened the viability of some night leagues. #

## **SUNSHINE REPORT: BOB MITCHELL SR.**

Life Member Bob Mitchell Sr., a major figure in senior softball who worked to spread the game throughout the nation and in goodwill trips abroad, passed away on Nov. 7. Complications from a blood disorder took his life at the age of 80, according to the Sacramento Bee's obituary on Nov. 12.

Fellow Golden Senior George Hodsdon described Bob as a "great ballplayer, friend and a person who made a difference."

Spending 30 years in law enforcement, Bob retired as a California Highway Patrol lieutenant in 1984. He joined the Golden Seniors in 1983. Five years later, he founded Senior Softball USA -- the world's biggest senior softball organization -- and the following year started international goodwill games to promote senior softball around the world. Travels included England, Australia, Italy, Spain, Hawaii, Russia and Ireland. At the Japanese world games, Bob was MVP as the USA took the blue ribbon. Mitchell was inducted into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame in 1999. He retired from running Senior Softball-USA 10 years ago.

As a CHP officer, Bob was among the first on the scene at the Watts riots in 1965, and was accidentally shot by a Los Angeles policeman.

He also was a leader of the fight against drunken driving, authoring the book, "Drunk Driving and Why the Carnage Continues," which was published this year. As a motorcycle officer in Southern California, Bob set a record for DUI arrests, strictly enforcing the laws, according to his son, Bob Jr., who said in The Bee that his father "didn't care who he stopped; if they were DUI, he took them in. Honestly and integrity were utmost with him." Private services were held. #

# **CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON IS PLANNED**

Retirees, Monday L-1 players and friends interested in a Christmas Holidays luncheon need to RSVP to George Hodsdon (481-9304). This year's luncheon is scheduled for 11:30 a.m., Dec. 6, at Luau Gardens, 1890 Arden Way. #

## **SAFETY NEWS**

From Safety Coordinator Curtis Holcomb

On behalf of the late Jerry Jodice and myself, I would like to thank everyone who wears a red hat and all umpires for all their help in keeping the 2010 season safe and successful. Also, I want to acknowledge everyone who took on the added responsibility of rolling out and checking the club safety cart (AED equipment) to make sure it was ready for use.

I ask all "Red Hats" to call me with any concerns or suggestions. I want names and phone numbers. I am hoping to get everyone AED-certified, with at least two players in each league qualified through Red Cross training to administer CPR and AED. I can be reached at 600-6065 (cell) and 927-0519 (home).

Holcomb said he is working to schedule Red Cross training sessions for Golden Senior members during the winter months. Again, call Curtis to see how you can qualify to wear a red hat and get on his list of members who desire the training and Red Cross certification or re-certification. The club pays the expense. "Sign me up!" declared Club President Bill Hill at the Nov. 15 board meeting. #

## **BECK DONATES TO CLUB**

Billy Beck, a life member and L-1 player, has donated \$160 -- the proceeds from the sale of his golf clubs -- to the Golden Seniors. Beck, who turns 83 on Christmas Eve, has been a GSSCS member since 1995. He gave the check to Benny Benson on Picnic Day and it was presented to new President Bill Hill at the October general meeting. #

## **FONTES CO-CHAIRS PICNIC COMMITTEE**

Henry "Hank" Fontes has joined Dante Ciardella as co-chairs of the club's Picnic Committee. Hank succeeds Enoch "Benny" Benson, who has helped put on the annual picnic since "about 1993." Benny, a L-1 player, is a life member who joined the club in 1983. Thank you, Benny, for your long record of service to the club. Meanwhile, it's never too early to recruit volunteers for the 2011 picnic in September. Hank can be reached at 381-2455. Dante: 453-1921. #

## **RULES COMMITTEE IS FORMED**

Club Commissioner Bruce Gilmore has named members of the Rules Committee to consider changes for 2011: Night Leagues -- Bill McMahon, Ed Frantz and Bill Greene. Day Leagues -- Bob Havrilla, Curtis Holcomb, Larry Campbell and McMahon. Chief Umpire Freddie Miller will provide technical advice. The first meeting was scheduled for Nov. 16 and was expected to focus on base-running safety issues.

L-1 Assistant Commissioner George Hodsdon reports that George Langan is replacing Ken Cramer as Monday Day L-1 rules chairman. #

# BLACKWELL IS HALL OF FAMER -- AGAIN

Norm Blackwell Sr. is a 2010 inductee into the Northern California Senior Softball Association Hall of Fame. He receives his HOF jacket in December, having been included in the select group last summer.

This is the seventh HOF honor for Blackwell, who has been active in the GSSCS since 1985. He turned 77 this November. His past honors include the La Salle Baseball Hall of Fame, the Optimist Hall of Fame and the March of Dimes Hall of Fame. He has been honored for his play on the field and his work as a basketball referee.

Blackwell, who twice passed on professional baseball contract offers, is among the original members of the area's Tournament Players Association. He manages and plays on the Sacramento Gold tournament team, which has been highly regarded under his leadership for more than two decades. Norm's 1999 team won a world championship, one of many impressive trophies that he has collected over the years -- so many that his wife, Peaches, demanded that he add a room to their Oak Park home. where the walls are covered with countless plaques; shelves are loaded with trophies, both individual and team honors. His teams have won three world championship rings in senior softball.

(The plaques and trophies at his home are so numerous that he had difficulty finding his NCSSA Hall of Fame plaque, the latest addition to the collection, when this writer visited him recently and took some photos, see below.) Folks at the community center near his home thought they'd display his awards. They didn't have enough room.

The Golden Seniors life member also was recognized by the Observer newspaper in 2008 as a Medallion of Honor Recipient, feted for his activities that included coaching youth baseball and providing food for needy in his Oak Park community. He and Peaches have nine children (including sons Juan and Orlando who played professional baseball, and Norm Jr., who played in college and now plays with the Golden Seniors), and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Senior Softball-USA News has reported how Norm was both a legend on and off the field, including his work with Oak Park youth as a Little League leader and his leadership in community affairs. He works with Glory Bound Church and Senior Gleaners to distribute food to the needy.



He is particularly proud of being honored as a bearer of the Olympic Torch through Sacramento in 1996, having been selected from more than 4,000 nominees.

Norm credits his ability to continue playing softball to knee replacement surgeries in the late 1990s and early 2000s, as well as medication to treat a once life-threatening B-12 deficiency that forced his retirement from his civilian job of 36 years at McClellan AFB. He is delighted to pronounce himself "free of pain" in his knees. He has no thoughts of ever quitting softball, noting that his participation in the sport helps keep him active -- and healthy. #

*Norm holds 1999 World Championship trophy, one of many softball and community service awards displayed in his special "trophy room."*

# **BOARD APPROVES 2011 LEAGUE COMMISSIONERS**

Meeting in October, the club's Board of Directors approved Club Commissioner Bruce Gilmore's nominees for commissioners of the seven leagues. They are:

League 1 Monday Day, 70 and older: Bob Havrilla -- 285-5413 (George Hodsdon, assistant)

L-2 Tuesday Day 9 a.m., 60 and older: Curtis Holcomb -- 600-6065 (Jim Wait, assistant)

L-3 Tuesday Night, 50 and older: Jerry Toenyas -- 354-4126 (Brent Korff, assistant)

L-4 Wednesday Night, 50 and older: Bill Greene -- 391-5559

L-5 Thursday Night, 50 and older: Allen Riker -- 485-9567

L-6 Tuesday Day 10:30 a.m. Select, 60 and older: Rich Edwards -- 483-1293

L-7 Tuesday Day 10:30 a.m. Select, 70 and older: Larry Campbell -- 485-4843 #

## **OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING REPORT**

From Dave Vargo

The five board members present at the Oct. 4 general meeting strongly favor putting the by-laws, standing rules and playing rules on the club website to ensure consistent access. Club Commissioner Bruce Gilmore announced that he will break out the club-wide rules committee into day and night league sub-groups.

The board approved Gilmore's selection of two new league commissioners -- Bob Havrilla for L-1 and Allen Riker for L-5. The board also approved reappointment of the other five incumbent league commissioners, pending their agreements to continue.

1st VP Dick Latimer announced receipt of three new and four renewed sponsorships as well as a partial payment check donation from Teichert construction. He also said he will follow up on efforts to get non-paying sponsors to renew for 2011.

Player Agent Linda McCollum-Greene announced receipt of 109 checks along with renewal applications. Monday day L-1 (as usual) leads the way with over 30 renewals. (By Nov. 15, L-1 had produced 60 renewals, nearly double any other league.)

Entertainment Chair Lou Coppola announced some marketing ventures with the RiverCats are under way, and expressed hope that the club will be featured in the Pacific Coast League team's magazine and website. He said the club may be allowed to have a booth with a banner at a RiverCats game.

There was favorable reaction to George Hodsdon's suggestion that the club schedule a silent auction-style fundraiser for a winter general meeting to allow players to donate unwanted bats, gloves, etc. Several members said they desire to participate. #

## **LOST & FOUND**

Dante Ciardella (453-1921) reports that he has a key chain with an apparent house key that was found at the club's September picnic. It has a "Fitzgerald" figurine with "Mr. O' Lucky" on the back, from a Las Vegas/Reno casino. #

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE NEWS**

President Bill Hill said at the Nov. 15 board meeting that the Planning Committee remains intact for 2011 and Merritt Davis agreed to lead the group until a new chairperson can be selected. Dave Vargo continues to serve on the committee and is its "point of contact" for members who have ideas or suggestions for the good of the club, and to present committee recommendations to the Board of Directors. Dave can be reached at [dvargo@frontiernet.net](mailto:dvargo@frontiernet.net) or 689-7061. #

# ATTENTION PROSPECTIVE SELECT LEAGUE

## PLAYERS: SIGN UP!

Larry Campbell, commissioner of 70+ Select League 7, aims this notice at prospective players for both 60+ L-6 and 70+ L-7 (which possibly might lower its age limit to 68 if necessary to field four teams). Point number one: Prospects are reminded NOT to wait to be recruited or selected -- they should sign up now, the earlier, the better. Pre-selection by managers MAY become an option, but all prospects must be prepared for all players to be draft-eligible for any team. Point number two: managers and players who desire to maintain a highly competitive league are encouraged to actively recruit top-level players and get them registered. Point number three: A reminder that it is likely that an even number of players (e.g. 4 teams of 12 = 48, or 4 teams of 13 = 52 for League 7) will be selected/drafted and those not drafted may wish to consider switching to another league as it is unlikely that an undrafted player will have much chance to be assigned as a substitute or replacement player. #

## WHAT IS A GOLDEN SENIORS LIFE MEMBER?

From Life Member George Hodsdon

Every year, as we receive our renewal applications, there are calls from those wanting to know if they are a life member or qualify to be a life member.

Life membership: If you are 75 or older and have COMPLETED 15 years continued membership OR 80 years or older and completed 10 years of continuous membership, your name will be submitted to the Board of Directors for life membership consideration. If approved, you will be presented for membership approval at the next club general meeting.

On rare occasions, when a long-time member has severe health problems, the member may be considered for honorary life membership. Life members have an LM after their names on the general roster and receive a plaque presented to them at a general meeting ceremony. They also pay reduced dues.

Life membership was originally created to honor our long-time players with the thought that they would not be able to actively play the game much longer. This assumption was totally in error. Those who stay active have proven that exercise and social activity greatly extend their quality of life, with resultant life-spans exceeding normal actuarial statistics. Monday morning last year, in League One, we had over 40 players over 80 and seven over 85. In 2011, Dinny Watson will be playing at 91, proving that physical exercise and mental happiness do increase quality of life and longevity. #

**ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS: Lou Coppola reports that \$30 Entertainment Books (\$10 cheaper than last year) are available until Dec. 15. Call him at 444-6138.**

**NEXT DUGOUT CHATTER: JANUARY 2011.** IMPORTANT DATES: FEBRUARY TRYOUTS FOR NEW MEMBERS; LATE FEBRUARY-MARCH: LEAGUE PLAYER DRAFTS. LOOK FOR SPECIFIC DATES ON THE CLUB WEBSITE AND/OR IN THE JANUARY DUGOUT CHATTER.

READ THE DUGOUT CHATTER ONLINE AT [WWW.GSSCS.ORG](http://WWW.GSSCS.ORG) WHERE NEWS UPDATES AND PHOTOS ARE PUBLISHED AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. FOR THOSE WHO HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE SO, YOU CAN REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM THE DUGOUT CHATTER MAILING LIST AND READ THE NEWSLETTER ONLINE, SAVING THE CLUB POSTAGE, PAPER AND INK. TO GET OFF THE SNAIL-MAIL LIST, CALL HENRY LOW AT 391-3938. #



Outgoing President Ray Mendonsa introduces (from left) new Player Agent Linda McCollum-Greene, Club Commissioner Bruce Gilmore and incoming President Bill Hill at the September Picnic.



Lou Mahinay waves to the crowd. Umpire Tom Bussey and teammates are credited with saving his life after Aug. 11 heart attack (see August Dugout Chatter). Picnic co-chair Dante Ciardella introduces the club's "batman," Danny Viegas, who has been with club almost 20 years.





Jim McNamara, L-1 commissioner, receives Award of Merit from former club president Ken Wallenberg. New 2nd VP Dick Latimer addresses the picnic.



## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS -- 2010-2011**

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

First Vice President ... **Dick Latimer**  
363-9555 (Responsible for team sponsorships.)

Second Vice President **Pete Ward** ...  
989-4722 (Responsible for team uniforms.)

Treasurer **Glen Cole** ... 966-4561

Secretary **George Lamb** ... (530)  
681-8070

Player Agent **Linda McCollum-Greene** ... 391-5559 (Responsible for player applications, player substitutes, waiting lists.)

Club Commissioner **Bruce Gilmore** ...  
424-0920 (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:**

Henry Low 391-3938

**Player Applications:** Linda  
McCollum-Greene 391-5559

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

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

**Safety:** Curtis Holcomb  
600-6065

**Entertainment:** Lou Coppola  
444-6138

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

**Planning:** Dave Vargo, contact,  
[dvargo@frontiernet.net](mailto:dvargo@frontiernet.net)  
689-7061