

DUGOUT CHATTER

ELECTRONIC PUBLICATION OF THE GOLDEN SENIORS SOFTBALL CLUB OF SACRAMENTO (WWW.GSSCS.ORG) CLUB HOTLINE: 491-1721

AQUANETTA SPARKLES AS GOLDEN SENIOR PLAYER AND AUTHOR

Aquanetta Gordon, a relatively newcomer to the Golden Seniors Softball Club, missed a game in April because she had a book-signing event. She loves softball. But she really loves her family and the all-too-brief life of her amazing son who was able to “see” by bouncing sound waves off objects.

The memoir is entitled “Echoes of an Angel: The Miraculous True Story of a Boy Who Lost His Eyes But Could Still See.”

Besides buying the book, Golden Seniors can also go to U-Tube and see a video of the amazing Ben Underwood, and how he used human echolocation, bouncing clicking sounds made with his tongue, to “see” objects. He could reflect the click off the floor of a room to locate all objects in a room. Bats and dolphins navigate in the same way.

Ben lost his sight to retinal cancer when he was 2. He died at the age of 16, when cancer returned. The book is co-written with Chris Macias, who wrote a Sacramento Bee series about Ben from May 2006 to January 2009. It was The Bee’s Book Club choice for April.

Over time, Ben developed an ultra acute sense of hearing. With support from his mom and four siblings, Ben went to public school in Elk Grove, riding his bike alone. No one, even Ben himself, was allowed to define him as blind. Once, when he was feeling sorry for himself, he said, “Momma, I wish I could see.” His mom told him that if there was a blackout, everyone would be following him to safety.

Ben was very intelligent. Before a trip to Japan, she found him in his room studying Japanese. And he was competitive playing (SEE PAGE 2)



Aquanetta Gordon is a GSSCS two-league player. (Photo by Mary Gray)

IN THIS ISSUE ... Bill Hill’s great story has happy ending ... Members step up to sponsor teams ... Sunshine & Health ... Report on May 12 meeting includes safety concerns ... Monday morning leagues get under way ... Standings from Tuesday day and night leagues ... Photos... List of sponsors ... Club contacts.

AQUANETTA (FROM PAGE 1)

games, including basketball. After some practice, he was able to really bash a ball with a bat. He didn't like playing softball with bases and balls that beeped, she said, considering that type of game too easy.

For the past three or four years, Aquanetta has been playing a lot of softball. Her four other children are grown. She has eight grandchildren. After working two jobs for 11 years, she said it was time for her to have some fun.

Now she plays five days a week, including Tuesday and Thursday nights with the Golden Seniors, joining the club when she turned 50 in 2013. She plays with the Silver Cats on Tuesday nights and with the Tri-C team on Thursday nights.

She said she is considered a "spark plug" on her teams because she is such a high-energy player who loves the game. On weekends, she plays for the over-40s tournament team called "Old Nasty Curves." ("I didn't name the team, I just play on it.") She is looking forward to the upcoming Rock 'n' Reno senior softball tournament just after Memorial Day.

"I have always been very, very athletic," Aquanetta said, so at this stage of her life, she has decided to return to a game she excelled at many years ago. Can she hit? There are some GSSCS Tuesday night women who can reach the 300-foot fences at the Sacramento Softball Complex. Aquanetta says she is among them.

There has been some discussion of a movie based on the book, and she said, "If it comes to be, it must be true to my son. It has to be right and proper. It is a story that has to be told."

Like the neighbor kid who rode on the handlebars of Ben's bike. Wasn't he afraid? Nope, he said, because he was with Ben.

As The Bee reported, Aquanetta's intent in writing the book is to "give people hope for every situation in their lives." #

BILL HILL'S GREAT STORY HAS A VERY HAPPY ENDING

Bill Hill had plenty to smile about as he credits the late arrival of a star player on his Thursday night team for helping him discover that he was a heart attack waiting to happen.

This mid-April episode in a Golden Seniors game requires further detail, which Hill provided at the May 13 GSSCS general meeting.

Hill, whose roofing and siding business sponsors the L5 team, said he had just scored from first base on a teammate's triple when he served as a courtesy runner for the following batter who had reached first base. Arriving late, DeMontro Davis was at the bottom of Hill's lineup instead of his usual power slot. He promptly chased his team manager home with a booming triple.

Twice scoring from first on triples in the same inning doesn't happen very often. Hill said he was winded and thought he was just having a heartburn episode. He continued to pitch for his team.

Hill, 62, said he drove himself to a hospital where he was kept overnight. He said the doctor told him that his nearly back-to-back, 210-foot sprints from first to home could substitute for a treadmill test. An angioplasty was administered. One artery was 80 percent closed. There was narrowing in another. Two stents were inserted.

He was back in action after sitting out a week.

This, Hill concluded, is a "great story because it all ended well." He didn't mention who won the game. He wasn't asked. It didn't really matter. #

MANY CLUB MEMBERS STEP UP TO SPONSOR TEAMS

*From Dave Vargo,
club 1st vice
president*

Golden Seniors members continue to support the club through sponsorships.

2012 Sponsor-of-the-year and L1 player Ray Merrill has provided sponsorships for Merrill Bookkeeping & Income Tax and RAMBIT for over a decade. Ray has designated RAMBIT for the Thursday Night League where his son Monte is playing this year.

Two other loyal sponsors, L1/L7 Bob Nielsen and L4/5 Bob Reinwald have added a second sponsorship in 2014 to Nielsen Real Estate/Appraisals and Reinwald Health & Dental.

L3/5 player/manager, picnic chair and former Club President Bill Hill sponsors on Tuesday and Thursday Nights through his businesses, Bill Hill Replacement Windows and Bill Hill Roofing and Vinyl Siding. Many will remember the vivid orange of powerful California Energy Services teams he sponsored in the past as well.

The granddaughter of deceased member Billy Beck, Alisha Bowles, has provided two Monday day league sponsorships, in Memory of Mr. and Mrs. Billy Beck and American Medequip.

L7 player Bob Rogers has transferred his Jolly Rogers sponsorship to his L7 team after many years on Tuesday Night League 3 and Tuesday Day League 2.

Tuesday Night has had multiple player/manager sponsors. Club Secretary Dave Tanner manages and sponsors Tanner & Associates (formerly re/Max), Rich del Chiaro and brother-in-law Robbie Geremia the family business, Geremia Pools, and Larry Shelton's Silver Cats. In addition Tuesday Night player Sue Byler has brought in her husband Jay's Rapid Solutions. Jay has also generously agreed to do team photos this year.

Thanks also to L1 player Tom Arnold's family business, Arnold Properties, L1 player David Sturdivant's L&S

Surveys, L7 manager Joe Kline's Show Biz Productions, L4 player John Mohamed for Executive Limousine, L5 manager Frank Lamar for Tri-C Machine Company, L5 assistant manager John Brendle for John Brendle Consulting and special thanks to Jamyn Jodice, son of deceased club President Jerry Jodice, for his faithful duty in creating and maintaining the club website. Jerry himself inspired creation of League 6 in 2005 and now the Jodice team is in League 6.

Finally, thanks to many members who have established friendships with and patronized sponsors. Most are low-key and almost invisible, but valuable contributors. The editor will be pleased to feature some if they make themselves known. An example is L2/L6 player Larry Lagomarsino, friend/neighbor and, for more than 40 years, a regular lunch patron of Espanol Italian Restaurant and its owner, Perry Luigi. #

SUNSHINE & HEALTH REPORT

Former Golden Senior Bob Abercrombe passed away April 21 at the age of 84. He joined the club in 1994 and played on Mondays for seven years, until the end of the 2000 season.

Frank Bettencourt is recuperating from a broken leg suffered in the first inning of the L-2 season when the pitcher was hit by

a come-backer. Frank blames the "hot" bats but also vows to wear shin guards in the future.

Life Member Bob Nevis was set to have surgery on his left shoulder.

Among players coming back from knee-replacement surgery: Bruce Gilmore (a perennial triples machine). #

SHORT HOPS AND LONG BOUNCES

Shutterbugs: Jay Byler, whose wife Susan plays Tuesday nights on the Byler-sponsored Rapid Solutions team, is taking team photos this year. He is filling in for longtime club photog and life-member Lou Coppola, who turned 87 in April. Mary Gray, a photo hobbyist, has been taking action pictures for the Dugout Chatter, some of which are in this on-line edition. She is Jim Wait's sister-in-law. Very nice photo of our cover girl for this issue: Aquanetta Gordon. #



TUESDAY MORNING TEAMS EXCHANGE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP HAND CLAPS .
(PHOTO BY MARY GRAY)

NEXT GENERAL MEETING: MONDAY, JULY 14, 7:30 P.M. AT THE VFW POST 67 HALL ON STOCKTON BOULEVARD. NOMINATIONS FOR CLUB OFFICERS AT THE JULY MEETING.

IS IT RAINING? IS IT EXTREMELY WINDY? IF YOU ARE WONDERING WHETHER YOUR GAME HAS BEEN CANCELED, CALL THE CLUB HOTLINE, OPERATED BY DON SHANK, AT 491-1721

MAY 12 GENERAL MEETING

FURTHER SEPTEMBER PICNIC DISCUSSION; SAFETY CONCERNS

The date for the club's annual picnic, previously set for Sept. 27 at Howe Park, is under review because the date conflicts with a major senior softball tournament.

Club President Tom Sansone, at the May 12 general meeting, said the board of directors will continue discussions of what to do in September.

Returning the picnic to the Sacramento Softball Complex, where four fields are available for league championship games, is not an option as all Saturdays this September and October are booked. Sansone said he has reserved the complex for the last Saturday in September 2015, just in case.

The problem for many is there are numerous senior softball tourneys involving Golden Senior players during September and October. Having the picnic at Howe Park means fewer fields and, with tournament conflicts, GSSCS league championship game teams missing some of their best players.

The tourney conflicts are not such an issue with the club's Monday and Tuesday league teams as their tournament teams, in the older brackets, play during the week in the senior softball national or world competitions. The night leagues, however, have many players involved in weekend tournament play. They can play their league championship games on their regularly scheduled nights, but then miss out on the picnic festivities. One option is to have each night league represented in an "all-star" competition of night leagues vs. night leagues.

Last year, the Tuesday night league had an "all-star" game at the picnic that proved highly successful, drawing more night league players to the picnic.

Perhaps some year, the club will return to the banquet (even a dinner-dance) for awards and socializing at the end of the year, some suggested. Old-timers recalled how successful these events were several decades ago.

Other club news:

Nominations for club offices. John Mizerak again agreed to chair the club nominating committee, which will present a report at the next general meeting, July 14, when nominations also may be made from the floor. The election is at the August general meeting and the new board is sworn in at the club picnic. Anyone interested in running for president, first vice president, second vice president, club commissioner, club player agent, treasurer or secretary, is advised to contact Mizerak at (916) 332-5511. There also will be more information on club email blasts, including which board seats have incumbents seeking another one-year term. (See Page 6)

MAY 12 GENERAL MEETING NEWS, FROM PAGE 5

Safety. Club Safety Coordinator J.C. Terry and umpire Bill Greene reported on the need for each player to have emergency contact information up to date, which was underscored on May when Janet Bailey suffered a stroke as she prepared for her at-bat. It was noted that a number of players, especially those new to the club, need to be furnished with plastic ID tags that can be attached to bat bags. Terry also suggested that scorekeepers be given the information.

Greene said he had complimented Ms. Bailey on a nice catch she had made but she was non-responsive. He quickly noted she was slurring words, and 911 was called. Terry, manager of her team, helped carry her from the field, medics were called and took her to the hospital.

Meantime, the player had left her bat bag away from the team bench and it was difficult to find an emergency contact for the stricken player.

It was stressed at the meeting that each team manager must make sure players provide current emergency contact information that is readily available through the club-provided plastic ID tags.

Club Sponsors. Dave Vargo, first vice president in charge of sponsorships, announced that there are 42 paid sponsors for the club's 42 teams -- "the first time this has ever happened in the history of the club." Therefore, sponsorship income has exceeded the budgeted amount and the club has not had to use any jerseys from non-paying sponsors.

Team Photos. Vargo said Jay Byler, whose Rapid Solutions company sponsors a team in L3 on which his wife plays, is taking team photos. Another club member, Doug Austin, will take the digitized images and produce photos with GSSCS banners suitable for team sponsor plaques. Each team manager is expected to receive, electronically, a team photo that he or she can reproduce for players or forward the digital photo to members of the team. By May 13, Byler had taken team photos of all four day leagues.

Treasurer Report. Don Wall said it may be too soon to predict what the board will do in September, when it deals with next year's budget, but could be possible to reduce dues by a few bucks. Sansone said the \$5 dues reduction approved for the current year amounts to \$2,500. "Our goal is to bring down the surplus" so the board will be "looking to do it again" for the 2015 season.

No Waiting Lists. Player Agent Myron Dahl reported that there are no waiting lists for players who have signed up since the drafts. Some leagues, such as L2, added a seventh league to make sure all signups were placed on teams. Dahl said night leagues have been dealing with player needs by having substitutes fill in. #



J.C. TERRY TAKES A BIG CUT. HE MANAGES THE AVALON TEAM. BELOW: JOE SAIZ DISPLAYS HIS HITTING FORM. (PHOTOS BY MARY GRAY)



THE NEXT DUGOUT CHATTER WILL BE PUBLISHED AFTER THE JULY 14 GENERAL MEETING. WATCH FOR CLUB PRESIDENT TOM SANSONE'S EMAIL "BLASTS" FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND ALERTS.

GOLDEN SENIORS AWARD OF MERIT RECIPIENTS

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

2014 LEAGUE COMMISSIONERS

Club Commissioner Curtis Holcomb has appointed the following league commissioners:

- L-1 Henry Low 391-3938; Asst. Dick Reisinger Sr.
- 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 Henry Low 391-3938; Asst. Bob Annecone

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SUPPORT YOUR 2014 SPONSORS

AMERICAN MEDEQUIP, LLC	AND INCOME TAX (Ray Merrill)
ARNOLD PROPERTIES	R.H. NIELSEN REAL ESTATE/APPRAISAL
AVALON HEARING AID CENTER, INC. (TEAM 1)	*R.H. NIELSEN REAL ESTATE/APPRAISAL (TEAM 2)
AVALON HEARING AID CENTER, INC. (TEAM 2)	OVERHEAD DOOR COMPANY OF SACRAMENTO, INC.
BECKS, IN MEMORY OF BILL AND SHIRLEY BECK	RAMBIT, INC. (Ray Merrill)
BERTOLUCCI BODY & FENDER SHOP, INC.	RAPID SOLUTIONS
BILL HILL REPLACEMENT WINDOWS	REINWALD'S HEALTH AND DENTAL INSURANCE
BILL HILL ROOFING & VINYL SIDING	*REINWALD'S HEALTH AND DENTAL INSURANCE
C&C PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES	SAM'S HOF BRAU
CAPITOL BARRICADE EG THREADS	SHOW BIZ PRODUCTIONS
*ELK GROVE LOCK & SAFE	SILVER CATS
ESPANOL ITALIAN RESTAURANT (TEAM 1)	SPORTS LEISURE VACATIONS
ESPANOL ITALIAN RESTAURANT (TEAM 2)	TANNER AND ASSOCIATES
EXECUTIVE LIMOUSINE	TRI-C MACHINE CO. OF AUBURN, INC.
GEREMIA POOLS	VFW POST 67
GSSA (GREATER SACRAMENTO SOFTBALL ASSN.)	RYAN R. WILGUS, DDS
HARPER PROPERTIES	*YANCEY COMPANY
JERRY JODICE, IN MEMORY OF	* -- New Sponsor for 2014
*JOHN BRENDLE CONSULTING	
JOLLY ROGERS	
SACRAMENTO CATHOLIC FAMILIES -- GEORGE L. KLUMPP CHAPEL OF FLOWERS	
LIVINGSTON'S CONCRETE SERVICE, INC.	
L&S SURVEYS	
MARK E. WHITE, DDS	
MERRILL BOOKKEEPING	

MONDAY DAY LEAGUES GET UNDER WAY

From Henry Low, commissioner of L1 and L7

After the rain cancellation of our first regular season games, there is a three-team battle for the winner of the first round of play in the seven-team League One. Within a half-game of first place through games of May 12: L&S Surveys managed by Benny Benson, Nielsen Real Estate #1 managed by Norm Blackwell Sr., and Arnold Properties managed by Ernie Shaffer.

Winners of the May 19 makeup games for previously canceled games will determine the winner of our first round of play. This will clinch a playoff spot for the winner. The In Memory -- Becks (my team) continues to struggle with an 0-5 record in seventh (last) place through games of May 12. Top hitters through games of May 5: Ed Caluza (Merrill Bookkeeping) 1.000; Bill Ferguson (Merrill Bookkeeping) .909; Jim Stinson (American Medequip) .917, and Dave Tanner (L&S Surveys) .917.

After the first six games in League Seven (the more competitive 70+ four-team league), Jolly Rogers, managed by Tom Watwood, has a commanding three-game lead. Avalon Hearing #2, managed by Al Tirapelli and Bill Hooper, and Nielsen Real Estate, managed by Norm Blackwell Sr., are tied for second place at 3-3. Show Biz Productions, managed by Joe Kline, is in fourth with an 0-6 record. All four teams will qualify for the playoffs with seeding determined by won-loss records over the course of the season. Top hitters for each team through May 5: Jim Stinson (Show Biz) .750; Ron Roach (Nielsen) .923; Bill Hooper (Avalon) 1.000, and Tom Watwood (Jolly Rgers) .950. #

TUESDAY MORNING LEAGUES

Off to a 5-0 start in games through May 6, Sports Leisure leads the Tuesday morning L2, scoring 100 runs against 65 and batting .725 as a team. Sam's Hof Brau was 4-1, followed by C&C Plumbing 3-3, Capital Barricade 3-2, VFW Post 67 2-3, Avalon Hearing Center 1-4, and Yancy Company 0-5. Joe Cors of Capital Barricade was scorekeeper Colette Barnes' player of the week for May 6 with a perfect 4x4 game, including two homers.

E&G Threads and Jerry Jodice, both 5-1, were atop Tuesday morning L6 in games through May 6. Mark E. White DDS was 4-2, followed by Livingston Concrete 3-3, GSSA 1-5, and Espanol Italian Restaurant 0-6. Livingston's Don Bess was 4x4 to be named player of the week by the scorekeeper.

NIGHT LEAGUES

Bill Hill #1, with a perfect 7-0 mark, paced Tuesday night L3, followed by 5-2 Rapid Solutions. Silver Cats were 4-3 in the games through May 6. George Klumpp was 3-4, Tanner & Associates 2-5, and Geremia Pools 0-7. Mark Holgerson of Klumpp was leading the league with a .929 batting average. Sharyn Ruff (.731) was the leading lady slugger, including one homer and three doubles

In games through May 7, the Wednesday night L4 leaders at 4-1 were Bertolucci's Body and Fender and Ryan Wilgus DDS. Elk Grove Lock and Safe and Overhead Door were tied at 2-2-1, and Reinwald Health and Dental was 2-5. Executive Limousine was 0-5. Marcus Kirkland of Elk Grove Lock and Safe was the May 7 player of the week for going 4x4 with a double and an over-the-fence homer.

Thursday night's L5 was paced by Tri-C Machine Co. at 5-1-1, followed by Reinwald Health & Dental Insurance 4-2-1 and Espanol #2, 4-3. Bill Hill Roofing and Siding and Rambit were tied for fourth at 2-4-1 and John Brendle Consulting was 2-5. Espanol's Kevin Brewer was the leading hitter at .952. Rambit's Jarvis Quenga had five homers, three of them clearing the fence. There were 19 over-the-fence homers in this league through the first seven games of the season.

INFORMATION FROM SCOREKEEPERS SANDY BEGG AND COLETTE BARNES.

#



Jim Wait keeps his eyes on the ball. (Photo by Mary Gray)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS -- 2014

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:
Dave Tanner 216-1941
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