



# HOLMBY HAPPENINGS

The newsletter of the Holmby Park LBC founded in 1927

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

Southern California lawn bowlers are among the luckiest outdoor sportsmen in the world! **Our spring** seemed to have arrived early and in February we were able to bowl on every scheduled day. Just think about all those devoted bowlers in England, Canada, Scotland and other cold winter places where lawn bowlers compete during only part of the year. So, come on down to bowl at Holmby while the sun is shining and the going is this good. You deserve to benefit from our luck. Soon, we shall also start twilight bowling in March!

By early February we completed our negotiations for all our **2020 visitations**. During this year, five clubs will visit us at Holmby Park and our bowlers are scheduled to play at eight different SWD clubs. We hope to have two bus trips: to Laguna Woods and to Santa Barbara. We hope that you can participate in all, or at least some these events. Supporters of these reciprocal visits will notice that a few clubs have paid us the ultimate compliment: during the last few years, other clubs also started to organize one day competitions with players from several clubs bowl, eat and have fun together. There is something heartwarming to watch all these bowlers develop a camaraderie.

We also published our **2020 Roster**. This useful annual booklet includes our Board members, all our committees and other volunteers appointed for the many tasks for this year. Our 76 active and dual members are listed alphabetically both by their first and last names. The last four pages are devoted to the history of our club from 1927 to 2019.

Our **2020 Calendar of Events** was also completed and it is now available on our website. You may want to review these dates and try to synchronize your participation with your other obligations. This year, we are planning eight **club tournaments** and hope they will be well attended.



*Participants of our Allison Singles tournament in February.*

Although we started this year with 76 members, **participation** remains an issue. But every cloud has a silver lining. Our talented novices are devoted, bowling beautifully and their participation ratio is high. To move confidently forward, we revamped our Membership Committee, which is now lead by Philip Fox. This could be a pivotal year for us. On page 3, the current numbers will tell our story.

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## OUR 2020 VISITATION SCHEDULE.

- March 14: vs. Oxnard at Holmby Park
- March 28: vs. Santa Anita at Santa Anita (by car)
- April 18: vs. The Groves and Hermosa Beach at Holmby Park
- April 25: vs. Laguna Woods at Laguna Woods (travel by bus)
- May 2: vs. Hermosa Beach at Hermosa Beach
- May 16: vs. The Groves in Irvine
- June 6: vs. Santa Anita at Holmby Park
- June 20: vs. Oxnard at Oxnard
- July 18: vs. Newport at Holmby Park
- August 15: vs. Coronado at Coronado
- August 16: vs. San Diego at San Diego
- September 12: vs. Santa Barbara and MacKenzie at Santa Barbara (travel by bus)

## GRITTY WINTER LEAGUE TEAM RAPS UP SEASON.

*This year our Winter League team finished a strong fourth among the five teams in the northern division. Given the unavailability of many players due to injuries, illnesses and vacations, our captains were pleased with our overall showing. This year's W. L. also featured a new schedule that required teams in the northern division to travel to clubs in the southern division. This change in scheduling required two trips of over an hour by teams to The Groves in Irvine and to Laguna Beach.*

*This year, we want to recognize Debbie, who not only agreed to take on the difficult assignment of playing the singles matches (typically against the strongest players in the competition), but also won many of those games. At the same time we should also acknowledge the contributions of our other players. Without the commitments of Boris, Linda, Molly, Ramesh, Reynoir, Sandra, Ron and Tamara, Don and I would not have been able to field a complete team each week. Thanks to you all. Don and I hope you all had a great experience.*

By John Friedland

## ONE DAY TOURNAMENT: FEBRUARY 8, 2020.

As recently mentioned, participation in our traditional tournament have not attracted the same number of bowlers as in the past. But our "One Day" tournaments remain popular. They typically include almost all bowlers who are at Holmby on that particular day. Our One Day tournaments are always on Saturdays, so we can also include members who can only bowl during weekends.

With these thoughts in mind, on Saturday, February 8, we went ahead with our first tournament of the year. **18 bowlers entered** including many novices.

At the end of competition only one team remained unbeaten. **Don, Jerry and David** smiled a lot when they received their well earned trophies.



THE ALLISON SINGLES TOURNAMENT 2020.

The Allison is one of our most prestigious tournament. Named after Bill Allison (our 16th President, from 1963 to 65) it is for our most competitive bowlers. This year, **16 bowlers entered**. They look determined on the group photo shown on page 1 of this newsletter. The first round started on February 25.

Our singles tournaments are still viable because no teammate is inconvenienced if a bowler is unable to turn up for the next round match. In Pairs and Triples one player's non appearance can cause disappointment for teammates. In the Allison Singles it is rare that a player gets a 'walk over'. The bowlers are dedicated and the matches are closely contested.



Not unexpectedly, **Cecil and Harry** reached the final which was played on March 3. The two veterans had a wonderful match both playing exceptionally well. At the end, Cecil deservedly beat the current singles champion, Harry. **Congrats** to our two top players!





**MEMBERSHIP/RECRUITING.**

After four years of extraordinarily painful losses, we need to take extraordinarily effective measures to ensure our club's viability, I am not going to sugarcoat it. Here are the sobering numbers:

**EVOLVING MEMBERSHIP AT HPLBC**

Year	Start With	Gained	Lost	Net loss (-) Gain (+)	Novices renewed
2015	83	8	1	+ 7	6 of 8
2016	90	9	20	- 11	2 of 9
2017	79	8	14	- 6	5 of 8
2018	73	27	15	+ 12	22 of 27
2019	85	16	<b>27</b>	- 15	13 of 16
2020	76	?	?		

Indeed, during these otherwise pleasant and successful last four years, we lost 76 members. This is more than the total current membership in most other SWD clubs. This also equals our starting membership in 2020.

On the bright side, our number of novices who renewed their membership during the last two years is exceptionally high, both as a percentage (82%) and in total numbers (35 new members in two years). Even more importantly, many of these novices enjoy the game and participate regularly. Still, the losses hurt. Just imagine your club without the addition of these 35 novices.

As far as we know, these losses did not occur because bowlers lost their enthusiasm for the game. We have lost members mostly for two reasons: health problems and relocations. Neither of these two can be influenced by smarter retention methods. But facts must be faced. This year, special recruiting (and retention) efforts have to be organized and we need all of you to help.

Philip Fox was appointed as Chair of the Membership Committee for 2020. We have 10 other volunteers who will participate in this committee's work. They will implement new ideas and continue with those methods that were successful in the past. You need to help only with your personal recruiting among your friends. Let's do it!

**PARTICIPATION.**

Even more important is participation in our activities. We can analyze membership numbers, print our Roster to include all those who paid their dues, but what really matters is the number of members who regularly bowl at HPLBC. We need a 'critical mass', a minimum number of bowlers playing on our greens to make our bowling days meaningful and to attract new members. To put it charitably, trends in participation during the last two years are not encouraging.

**OUR GREENS.**

The impact of the quality of our greens on our bowling can hardly be overstated. It is an uphill battle as the RAP is in full charge of the maintenance. A week ago we even offered split responsibility which would have given us an opportunity to outsource and pay a professional maintenance provider. We learned that under current regulations this would not be possible.

We had three meetings in February with the Superintendents of the RAP. Bill Wolff also came from Beverly Hills to advise us about our irrigation system. It seems that part of our problem is inappropriate watering. We hope the RAP will follow Bill's suggestions and improve our greens. As it is, we decided to bowl only on the lower green until the upper green will improve. It will now be used only when we have more than 48 bowlers playing at the same time.

**PROMOTIONAL VIDEO TO MARKET OUR SPORT.**

Our 'super novice' Vaughn Feather has successfully been helping with our 2020 recruiting. He recently persuaded his friend Rob, to produce a video about our sport in general and about our club in particular. On March 3, Rob came to Holmby, interviewed many members and spent hours to create yet another promotional tool for us. In March the work will be edited and the final version uploaded to our website. Your comments are always welcome.

**Upcoming events in March:**

- 7 Novice Singles tournament starts
- 14 Visitation by Oxnard at Holmby
- 17 Birthday Party
- 18 Twilight bowling/pizza season starts
- 21 March Board meeting
- 24 Naylor Pairs tournament starts
- 25 Twilight bowling/pizza party
- 28 Visitation to Santa Anita LBC (by car).



**DONATIONS AT HPLBC.**

As far as I know there is no way to scientifically measure satisfaction although psychologists use a few sophisticated methods. In the absence of such methods at Holmby, one could possibly measure our members' satisfaction with our club life by observing their behavior towards our club and recognizing their personal, volunteer contributions to our combined success.

Those members who donate a lot of volunteers hours are probably reasonably satisfied with how things are handled at Holmby. We know that members donate food, cash and other items when we organize visitations and social gatherings. Each month, our birthday parties are well attended with donations of large, delicious cakes and other goodies to make these social events successful.. We regularly recognize these members by publishing their names in this newsletter.

Occasionally, we receive other generous donations. February was a **"Month of Unexpected Donations"**. It started with our collecting the annual dues that are currently \$105 for a year. Quite a few members expressed their satisfaction with our organization by giving us a check larger than requested. One of my friends (no names mentioned here) gave us a **\$1,000 check**. How much is that helping our club?



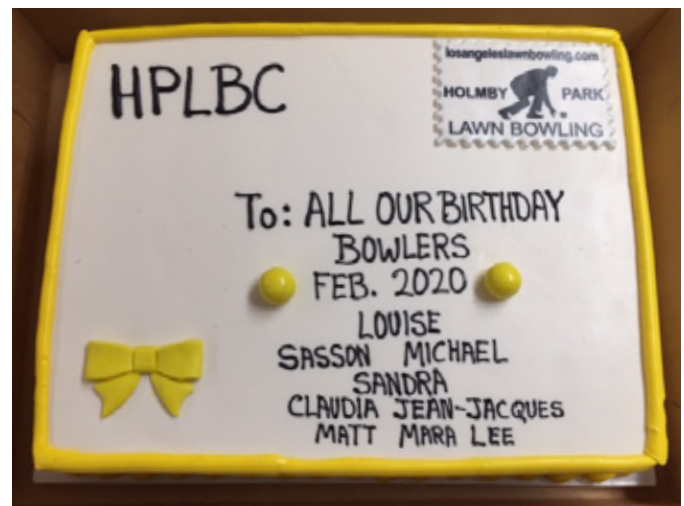
One measure is that this amount could provide monthly spiders prize money for more than four years. Thank you.

Another of my friends noticed that our answering machine is old and not very efficient. So instead of complaining (as others often do), he bought a new one for the club. Two of our novices were equally generous. Vaughn gave us an invaluable archive photo of Shirley Temple with a bowl in hand, reportedly in Holmby Park. Could this be used as a promo tool? Perhaps we attract some park users who will say: "If young Shirley could do it, perhaps I should try it too".

When we wanted to brag about this by displaying **Shirley's promo picture**, Vaughn got it beautifully framed. It is now permanently attached to the bulletin board. Thank you Cecil! It might impress park users who could be curious about our game that even our retired President Reagan watched.



When basketball legend, Kobe Bryant, died in an accident, Reynoir surprised us with **giving away 12 Kobe shirts**. We turned this tragic event something that added to the bonding for these members.



February cake with the best ever decorations.

**BIRTHDAY PARTY SPONSORS: DECEMBER 2019.**

- Cake: Michael Litwin (thank you Dr. Mike!)
- Ice cream: Michael Litwin
- Spiders: Vicki Goddard
- Crew: Vicki, Louise, Carol, Judy, Sandra, Ira, Valerie and Linda.

In this issue, all articles and photos are by Vicki Goddard and Tom Seres, unless indicated otherwise.