

The Sun City Center New England Club

Looking Back

The Sun City Center New England Club was founded on March 19, 1970 at the then Town Hall (Rollins Theater). The first president of the Club was appointed at that time. A couple dozen people attended that first organizational meeting.

On April 29, 1973, The Sun City Center New England Club held its ham dinner & show. It elected its new officers. Approximately 200 people showed for the event. In reviewing the old records, it was quite common for the Club to have such a good turnout for its functions. Dan Patch organized the Ham n Bean dinner 24 times. Dan's apron was retired in 2018 when John Sherburne and John Bukowski assumed responsibility for our most popular event.

John DeWilde deserves a lot of credit for getting the club started back up after it had failed years before. He was instrumental in getting John Bowker, Mae Ellen Dowdy, Dan Patch and Lee and Nancy Saunders involved with the Board. John Bukowski agreed to take over for John DeWilde as President after his service to the Club. Nancy Saunders was Chairperson of the Nominating Committee for a number of years. Accolades to Lester Parkhurst for his contributions to the Club.

The Sun City Center New England Club was started so that the many residents who moved to Sun City Center, Florida, from the States of New England could find kinship in their new home. The purpose of the Club was to provide functions and events where the New Englanders could mingle with fellow New Englanders in a relaxed atmosphere, generate new friendships, reminisce of their home states and enjoy themselves. The Club started collecting \$5 dues in 2018. During 2018 there were over 300 members in the Club.

Past Presidents

- 1970-71-1972 - Bob Short
- 1973 - Betty Sloan
- 1974-1975 - Reginald Emerson
- 1976 - William Bowen
- 1980 - 1981 - Mr. & Mrs. Robert O'Keefe
- 1981 - Warren & Flo Evans
- 1982 - 1983 - Charles & Betty Nystedt
- 1983 - 1984 - John & Claire Waters
- 1985 - 1986 - Burt Coplan
- 1987 - Richard Washburn
- 1988 - Muriel Rackliffe
- 1989 - Donald Lee
- 1990
- 1991 - 1992 - Gerry Holden
- 1992 - 1993 - Dave & Margaret Hempstead
- 1993 - 1994 - Lester & Ruth Parkhurst
- 1994 - 1995 - Tom & Peggy Lovett
- 1998 - 1989 - Elmer Angell
- 2000 - Connie McGee
- 2001 - John Bowker
- 2002 - 2004 - Ann Cross
- 2005 - 2006 - Jim Torpey
- 2007 - 2009 - John DeWilde
- 2010 - 2012 - John Bukowski
- 2013 - 2018 - Richard Young
- 2019 - 2020 - Bob Sanchez
- 2021 - Michael Burnham

2001 -2021



The 2021 Annual Ham & Bean Dinner has two distinctions. The gathering was held on Veteran's Day instead of during the month of February. The COVID-19 Pandemic restricted social activities from March 2020 through April 2021. In attendance were four past presidents. Pictured left to right are Current President Mike Burnham with Past Presidents John Bukowski, John Bowker, Dick Young and Bob Sanchez.

2008's New Beginning

New England Club Marked New Beginning

The Sun City Center New England Club marked its new beginning with a gala regional dinner on Feb. 7 in Community Hall. The traditional ham, baked bean and hot dog menu with all the trimmings, including apple pie with Vermont cheddar cheese, was enjoyed by 320 Sun City Center residents from the six-state region. Each state was recognized with cheers and applause during the event, and dancing to the music of Skylight Entertainment capped off the most pleasant evening.

Club President John DeWilde presented lucky ticket holders with prizes that had been solicited from the travel bureaus in each state – banners, aprons, pins and shirts were awarded. One lucky couple went home with a ham-bone fresh from the kitchen as the base for their own pea soup! Many club members had sliced the ham that afternoon, cooked the Boston Baked Beans, sliced the authentic brown bread, dished up potato salad and cole slaw, and cut the 42 pies into eight pieces to accelerate the serving process. DeWilde attributed the menu, kitchen and serving success to Dan Patch. Patch has been in charge of this detail for over a dozen New England Club dinners.

Arrangements have been made for club members to attend a base-



ball game between the Tampa Bay Rays and the Boston Red Sox on April 21 at Tropicana Field. Tickets are available for this regular-season game from Lee or Nancy Saunders at 642-0232, until Feb. 21.

The next club event will be the traditional Spring Fling wine and snacks party on April 30 in the Florida Room. Any CA Member born in New England, or who was employed in New England, stationed in New England or, as DeWilde mentioned at the dinner Thursday night, has ever driven through New England, is welcome to attend. There will be no charge for admission. A summer (ice cream?) event is also being organ-

ized in addition to a “Welcome Home” party on Oct. 26 in the Florida Room.

The club is actively recruiting members for this revitalized club. In addition to President DeWilde, its 2007-2008 officers are Ellen Mae Dowdy, Vice President, Giselle Cabral, Secretary and Maureen Alletson, Treasurer. No membership dues are charged. If you are a CA Member and have ties to any of the six New England states, you should send an e-mail to the membership secretary, Linda Bowker, telling her of your address, telephone number and state affiliation so they can notify you of future events. Her address is lbowker@tampabay.rr.com.

1970's Origins





Pictured left to right is the New England Club Executive Committee: Charles and Daisy Caddoo; Bob AND Rita Okeefe; Lary and Amy Brown; Leo and Anne Fox; and Warren and Florence Fox. Photo By John Smucker



Pictured are New England Club members: Charles Ruth Wassmer; Mary and Harold Hyde; and Lou