

Large crowd at the Big Registration

For many Destin snowbirds, the season doesn't begin until the "Big Registration" takes place. Last Monday, the season officially began. A larger than usual crowd showed up at the Destin Community Center to register as 2020 snowbirds.



For Pam and Lyn O'Brien of Pennsylvania and Jaquie and Bob Drake of Illinois, the strategy was to be first in line so that they could sail through and have the rest of the day free to enjoy all Destin has to offer. For Dianna Michalski of Indiana, the strategy was to arrive just before event ended to avoid waiting at all. For the nearly 950 folks in between, well, the weather was beautiful and the line was continuously in motion with the anticipation, laughter and comradere often found in amusement park ride lines.

Registration chairperson Linda Zukonik has created a process that works like well-oiled machinery. Registration cards were passed out so that folks could fill them out while in line. Twenty people were let into a partitioned half of the gymnasium at a time where they moved from the registration table to the payment table to the membership card

tables. Then, as newly registered members, they entered the other half of the gym where activity chairpersons and golf club representatives were available to explain and enlist them in all the benefits that come with club membership. An important function that helped the event run smoothly was the organized and orderly data entry and card filing system that was taking place behind a privacy screen. Ken Lemire and his team worked unceasingly throughout the entire event transferring information from registration cards to computer files. By the end of the day, we knew just how many had registered, how many were from each individual state (or from other countries) and how many were new members. In all categories the reports were exciting. It looks like this will be one of the biggest, busiest seasons ever, with an increase of nearly 200 members compared to this time last year.



Naturally then, the Tuesday morning meetings at the Roost were packed. Snowbird favorites, Jabbo and Krissa with Krissa's husband Mark on guitar, were chosen to welcome and entertain the masses and they didn't disappoint. If you missed them, you might want to catch one of their shows at the Cabana Café in Seascape, Thursdays through Sundays, 8 p.m. to midnight.

The meetings lasted a bit longer than usual because there were so many important announcements that needed to be shared such as the current parking regulations. (Parking will be free during snowbird meetings but a pass will be needed to attend activities that take place in the Community Center.)



President Ted Spring also had a surprise for one newly registered couple. Fraedy and Alvin Toll of Winnipeg, Manitoba, had no idea they were going to be called up on stage and given a gift for becoming snowbird members 1,000 and 1,001.

If you were unable to attend the last meeting, please be sure to check the website, www.destinsnowbirds.org, where pertinent and up-to-date information is always posted.

Next Tuesday's entertainer will be David Seering. I would list all his accomplishments but there just isn't enough space. If you're a new snowbird, you might want to Google David; you'll see that this is one meeting that you won't want to miss.

Most of the activities have already started, and I plan to highlight some of them in next week's article. Some have changed their location. For example, the Euchre Club will now meet at the Community Center on Thursdays from 6 to 9 p.m., and the Quilting Club will meet at Cornerstone Presbyterian Church on Beach Street, Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The first T.G.I.T. (Thank Goodness It's Tuesday) party will be Tuesday at the Seascape Conference Center from 3 to 6 p.m. The entertainer will be Bobby D. For \$5, it's the best entertainment bargain in the Destin area. Last year, sadly, some people had to be turned away due to capacity limits, so you may want to get there early.



The Singles Friendship Club will gather for lunch at 790 on the Gulf next Tuesday following the 11:00 a.m. meeting.

Registration will be Monday, January 13, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Remember, there will be NO Tuesday morning registrations before the meetings. Please pay attention to the paper and website, however, because there will be an exception to this schedule the week of the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.

Next Saturday will be the last scheduled access to the storage lockers from 8 to 9 a.m. Tickets for storage boxes will go on sale in mid-February.

If you'd like to publicize your activity or event, be sure to contact me. My information is e-mail: destinsbclub.publicity@gmail.com Phone: 419-250-9377