

HONORING PAST PRESIDENTS

It's been a week for honoring past presidents, and the Destin Snowbirds have done just that. Last Monday, nine of the 33 past presidents of the Destin Snowbird Club gathered at McGuire's Irish Pub for the 28th annual Past Presidents and Life Members Banquet. An interesting representation of leadership, each has added their own personal touch to enhance the club's appeal.



Destin Snowbird Past Presidents (front to back)
Grace Fostmeier, 2002-2003,
Addie Selid, 1997-1998,
Dean Harper, 2016-2017,
Charles Cassell, 2017-2018,
Don Cooksey, 2005-2006,
Paul Hewitt, 2010-2011,
Nancy Hewitt, 2014-2015,
George Olson, 2013-2014,
Ken Yee, 2002-2003.

Addie Selid was the attending past-president with the most seniority, having served in the 1997 – 1998 season. When asked how she happened to become involved with the snowbirds, Addie said she saw an article in the newspaper. She called and asked if she could join but, back then, the snowbird club had boundaries and, staying in Fort Walton Beach, she was ineligible. So, she moved. In fact, she moved into the very condominium where the snowbirds were holding their meetings. She became active immediately as a “Condo Representative,” which meant that she made sure that visitors - within the boundaries – knew all the benefits of being a snowbird. After serving as president, Addie volunteered to chair the registration committee. She also served on the nominating committee and was the club historian for a time. Addie and her husband Orville were celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary that evening. Having met each other at an Elvis Impersonation show, they knew from the start that they had a lot in common. Orville also became actively involved with the snowbirds, serving on various committees.





Nancy and Paul Hewitt are unique in that both have served as president; Paul for the 2010-2011 season and Nancy for the 2014-2015 season. Only one other couple, the late Lise and Brian Walsh, were both president. The Hewitts took a neighbor's advice and journeyed from Ontario to Destin over 14 years ago. They have stayed at Sandpiper Cove for most of those years. Nancy said that, she too, learned about the snowbird club from a newspaper article. Wanting to make new friends, they knew the best way was to become involved. Paul joined the storage lockers team and Nancy volunteered to be publicity director. Both were involved with the prize committee and eventually, even after their terms as president, and until just recently, they co-chaired the prize committee. Nancy said this may be their last year in Destin. Health concerns and economic considerations make their future here doubtful. Should that happen, they will be sorely missed.

Don Cooksey served in the 2005-2006 season. He and his wife Carol say they have, "done it all." And it all started with a time-share exchange to Destin's Holiday Beach Inn back in 1995. Like the others, they read about the Destin Snowbird Club in the newspaper. Once registered, they volunteered as greeters and ushers. Don became involved on the board, rising from 3rd vice president to president. During that time, he initiated the immensely popular Harbor Boat Cruises, an activity that gets sold-out nearly every year. Now, he organizes an annual Caribbean cruise as well as potential trips to the Windcreek Casino in Atmore, Alabama. Carol continues as an indispensable member of the prize and greeter committees.



A common thread with the aforementioned past presidents, that is an attribute of the majority of past presidents, is the commitment to serve even after holding the highest position the club has to offer. They are all truly appreciated.

Back to the present – if you are enjoying this with your early morning coffee, you may still have time to get down to the Christmas Street Parade. Walkers will be gathering in the parking lot of the Old Time Pottery, 761 US-98, weather permitting, around 9 a.m. for the 10 a.m. parade. Sunday night will be the lighted boat parade and, those snowbirds who were lucky enough to purchase tickets can meet at the Crab Island Cantina beginning at 4:30 p.m.

If those events don't put you in the Christmas spirit, next Tuesday's meeting certainly will. The Emerald Coast Community Band has filled the Roost with familiar, well-loved carols for nearly 10 years. They are a holiday favorite. Also, unique gifts will be available for purchase at the first Snowbird Craft Show, which will be held before and after the meeting. Registration will again be open from 8:30 to 9:45 a.m.

This will be our last Tuesday meeting until January 8, 2019 when they will be split into an 8:30 and 11 a.m. meetings. Don't forget to check our website at www.destinsnowbirds.org for updated information.