

## Jerry Berrow, The Pied Piper of Alameda

The GCSANC is encouraging donations to benefit Junior Golf. The Board has agreed to ask GCSANC members to donate what they can; new or used equipment, money, or time; to a worthwhile junior program. The association will select a charity and will look to present donations at the December meeting. The following article describes one outstanding junior program right here in the heart of the Bay Area.

**J**erry Berrow loves kids. The father of five and grandfather of nine operates the Junior Pro Shop at the Chuck Corica Golf Complex in Alameda. The Junior Pro Shop is not your typical golf shop. It is an 8' x 40' former shipping container with a sign nailed to the front door that reads: "All golf items are for juniors only, and are available to them at no cost on a need basis."

Around the Alameda golf complex, everyone regards Berrow as "the Pied Piper." Says Norma Arnerich, president of the Junior Golf Club, "I think he just has a love for the children." Since 1970, Berrow has been collecting broken and used golf clubs from around the complex. After mending them and cutting them to youth size, he distributes the refurbished clubs to youths who want to play golf but don't have the proper equipment. "I did it because the kids needed them," said Berrow about his devotion to getting the discarded golf equipment into the hands of youth. His passion

for the game shows when he states, "We have the greatest sport ever conceived, one ostensibly, of great poise and dignity, honesty and humility. The game is much touted for all these qualities, which has for the most part treated kids shabbily."

Last year Jerry issued equipment (and a smile) to 584 kids out of his shop at Chuck Corica. All he asks in return is that the kid comes around once in a while and help keep the shop neat and organized. He has received donations from Callaway, Spalding, and Mizuno. Even the PGA of America has been grateful enough to donate grips.

"The typical kid is not affluent enough to purchase golf equipment, nor to maintain it. They will go through three to six shoe sizes alone over an eight year period," says Berrow. "It is my express intent to provide clubs, clothing, equipment, and club maintenance to any kid in the world who asks for it."

When things were simpler, money wasn't much of a problem for Berrow. But since his shop has grown in popularity, funds and equipment are needed. Phone bills, grips, tape, solvent and other expenses have to be paid for somehow. The Junior Pro Shop has now become practically a full time job for Berrow. Not suprisingly, he loves it. "This is one of the greatest forms of therapy in the world." Thanks to Berrow, today's kids are being properly introduced and actually welcomed into the game of golf. ↗

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