

Keep the House Accounts Live —or Run in the Red

FEW clubs can boast of such substantial and active patronage of the clubhouse and a resulting goodly volume of monthly billing to the extent that a constant campaign to build business is not necessary. Some of the larger metropolitan district clubs estimate that inactive house accounts mean a loss of gross business averaging several hundred dollars per inactive member each season and are constantly engaged in a drive to get these inactive members to patronize the club more. Their membership committees give preference in admission to those whose house accounts will be alive.

With the smaller clubs the loss of possible profit resulting from lack of house patronage often reaches the point where "sleeping sickness" seems to attack the entire enterprise. Members lose interest, the course deteriorates, and the club runs into assessments that are almost ruinous.

The observant president, house chairman and manager get a danger signal when they note that members' luncheon and dinner business is going to commercial establishments when it really belongs to the club. In finding the reasons for this loss there are two fields for investigation. The first question that arises concerns the quality and service of the club meals. Correct buying, proper kitchen operation and careful training of the dining room staff keep every manager "on his toes" but even when this work is done it is futile unless there is complete and energetic co-operation from the house committee in "selling" the club to its members.

The usual meal service, the dinner dances and holiday parties, constitute the regular run of house business with a few Rotary, Kiwanis or other club luncheons thrown in when the club policy and the action of a few club members combine to get this additional revenue. During the last couple of years there has been an increasing amount of bridge luncheon business that has aroused club officials to the possibilities of making more of a "play" for women's patronage of the club.

How Charlotte Does It

At Charlotte, N. C., the country club impresses the visitor as having far more

than the usual number of members as active patrons of the club's house service. Some of the plans that Charlotte employs in creating this lively interest are described by H. M. Wade, president of the Charlotte Country Club. Mr. Wade says:

"We have a committee of women from the families belonging to the Charlotte Country Club, that is known as the Ladies' Entertainment committee. We budget to this committee a certain sum of money to be spent by them in order to increase interest on the part of the women members of the club that they may use the club for their events. On each Tuesday there is a ladies' luncheon, bridge parties in the morning and afternoon. The ladies committee, under their budget, employ an expert bridge teacher to give complimentary bridge lessons in the morning and to serve as hostess in the morning and afternoon when bridge parties are being conducted.

"The result is that practically every bridge party that is given in Charlotte is given at the Charlotte Country club, not only on Tuesdays which is the day set aside for this particular activity but on other days as well. On Tuesday the club is full of women from morning till night.

"Then on Tuesday night of every week we serve a special dinner and the hostess who has charge of the Tuesday activities is also hostess for Thursday night. The women, their husbands and guests get together after dinner and have a bridge tournament, all under the control of the hostess who is a splendid bridge expert.

"Our dinners on Thursday night are attended by seventy-five to one hundred people.

"I put this plan into effect about eighteen months ago and I have found it to work admirably. The women are very much interested. The general committee of women appoint a special committee to have charge of activities each month and there is quite a rivalry to see which is the most active month in social activities at the club, participated in by the ladies and their friends.

"We also have a young men's committee, known as an entertainment committee for young people, which has charge of

all the dances of the club. The club gives a dance every Saturday night. These dances are given free by the club, club paying for the music as this committee of young people is also budgetted and they, under their budget, pay for the music and other entertainment. The club, through them, gives a free dance every Saturday night. Before the dance, however, at least one hundred members of the club and sometimes more than that come to dinner and therefore patronize the dining room in this way.

"We encourage the giving of private dances at the club by members of the club



Parking is getting to be a big problem, but it's simplified by posts indicating parking spaces. This shows Blue Mound, Wauwatosa, Wis.

and we make it as comfortable and pleasant for them as possible. They pay the club a fee for the use of the club on the night of their dances.

"We have a wonderful golf course and I expect we have four hundred members playing golf. All of these people play very systematically and of course they patronize the various activities of the club while they are there in connection with golf.

"Last year the Women's Southern tournament was held in Charlotte. This year the Men's Southern tournament will be held in Charlotte. Events of this character also help to make the Charlotte Country Club the meeting place for practically all social activities in the city.

"It takes a lot of work, a lot of committees but everybody is pulling for the club and before you hear from us many more years we will build a beautiful \$300,000 club house."

Swimming Pool Helps

Oscar Broyer, assistant secretary and manager of Sunset Hill Country club, finds that the club's swimming pool is a good magnet for club business. Sunset Hill is in a St. Louis suburb and a pool naturally is a great attraction after a hot morning

spent in the broiling, bustling metropolis.

The swimming pool is 115x35 feet. It is for the use of active members and their guests. Several times during the summer the club holds water carnivals to which it invites its associate members. These always are well attended.

Sunset Hill has 450 active and 1200 associate members. The club has found a two night a week dinner dance schedule pleases the members and gets business for the house. On Wednesday and Saturdays they have dinner dances at Sunset Hill from 7 p. m. to 1 a. m. A reasonably priced table d' hote dinner is served. Attendance ranges from 175 to 635 at these events.

Broyer tells of other phases of the Sunset Hill plan for making the club a popular rendezvous for its members. He says:

"On Sunday nights we have a concert of classical and light opera music for the benefit of those who do not care to attend the dinner dances and want to get away from jazz music. Attendance ranging from 125 to 385.

"We set aside Tuesdays as Ladies day, when our members' families who are entitled to the privileges of the club entertain their bridge clubs, etc. We have had as high as 485 women attending on that day, taking advantage of our bargain bridge luncheon at \$1.25 per plate, which on other days would cost them from \$1.50 to \$1.75 per plate.

"Once in a while we have the Colonel from the flying field land a large dirigible on our grounds. This attracts and pleases our members.

Breakfast Events Begun

Although a little additional work is required from the force a breakfast event holds forth possibilities from the viewpoints of increased revenue and interest, when there are enough members living near the club to permit anything like this on the program.

The Clearview Golf club at Bayview, Long Island, has formed a breakfast club under the leadership of President Vincent Maguire. Some of the members living near the club have arranged to play nine holes every morning, beginning at 7. The players are organized into two teams, the losers paying for the breakfast. The schedule is worked out so the players can complete their nine holes, enjoy breakfast and catch a suburban train to New York on an easy time basis, arriving at their offices at the usual hour.