

If You Need Members . . .

. . . here is a collection of tested membership campaigns that work. Pick out the ideas that appeal to you, combine them into a well-rounded program, and be all set to **SELL** before next season starts.

MODERNIZED CLUBHOUSE

MAKING the club "easy on the eyes" was the successful method used by a West Virginia club to increase its membership. The club employed a good interior decorator, tore out a few eyesores, bought some attractive new furniture, and then, having gotten the clubhouse and course in tiptop shape, held an open house at which time the members brought as many friends as possible out to the club. The club obtained a good list of prospects, and on the following day all of these prospects had heard about the attractive membership proposition that would be open until May 1. Initiation fees would be raised from \$50 to \$100 on that date, the club announced. The plan worked, and diligent follow-up by the membership committee enabled the club to get 38 new members in two weeks time.

THREE FREE PLAYS

ONE Ohio club, to stimulate interest and increase its membership, issued a guest card which permitted a prospect to play the course three times without payment of green-fees. The record of these cards was kept by the club manager, and his report on this method was that the privilege was never abused. The results obtained were more than expected, as considerably over 50% of such prospects made application for membership.

NO DUES FOR A YEAR

WHEN times are tough and clubs are forced to give memberships away without initiation fees rather than lose desirable fellows to other clubs, there's always the danger the 'bargain rate' member will resign rather than pay dues over the winter. The club has no particular hold on him. A membership proposition that has been used by a number of clubs forestalls these post-season resignations. Say the club's dues are \$144 per year, and with the 10% tax added to the total, \$158.40. The club's offer is to take members in the spring for \$150, with \$50 payable on issuance of membership certificate and \$25 a month for four months, *no dues becoming payable until a year has passed.*

The prospect figures he is getting an

equity in the club for the dues alone (in fact for \$8.40 less.) He is. Meanwhile, the club is satisfied, because it has a new member, and better yet, it has his dues through the winter and until the next spring. A man is not likely to resign from a club at the start of a golf season.

BEGIN YEAR IN MARCH

A MIDWESTERN club took stock of the resignations it had had over a ten-year period, and found that practically all came during January and early February. The club's fiscal year ended December 31. Acting upon a suggestion from a member, the board of governors approved a plan of extending memberships until March 31 of the next year. The result was that resignations were reduced by about 80%. The plan has now been in operation for four years, and the club has found that member resignations have been further reduced during each of the years. A man is not interested in paying golf dues during the winter months, but when it comes time to pay up along about the first of April, enough of the golfing bug is in the air to make him shell out willingly.

BEAR DOWN ON PUBLICITY

A PROMINENT Eastern club, confident that it had as outstanding a course as could be found anywhere in the country, talked up that point so strongly, both in the local newspapers and by every possible spoken method, that they were able to get 75 new members within one season — and without making concessions of any kind to the prospects. The club did, however, make the sports editors of the local papers honorary members, and this accounted for the ample publicity and news items on club activities carried by the papers.

FRIENDLY LETTERS

THE president of an upstate New York club hit upon a smart idea of keeping the membership filled. When a member did not come around for several weeks he figured that whatever was wrong could be righted by showing a little interest in the member. So he took it upon himself to write these members a personal letter, impressing upon them the fact that they had

been missed. Instead of a resignation at the end of the year, it usually meant that the strays came back into the fold and took a renewed interest. When one member is permitted to become dissatisfied, his quitting usually takes two or three others with him.

GOLF LEAGUE

IN quite a few cases, the golf league idea has been responsible for awakening golfing interest in towns where the game had been allowed to run down. The interest in golf that leagues made up of clubs in the district, stimulate, brings back many who have allowed their memberships to expire because of lack of enthusiasm. Publicity given these events, which are usually conducted on a weekly or twice-a-month basis, brings in many new members who find themselves thinking and talking golf, and who were previously not interested in joining any club.

MEMBERSHIP LOTTERY

A PENNSYLVANIA club last winter filled up its membership and its pro kept busy during the time the snow was flying—by the simple method of appealing to the gambling spirit of the 'eligible' men of the vicinity. The pro went around the town, which was a lively little place, selling chances on a golf club membership at one dollar a week. Every Sunday afternoon the ticket buyers and the club members met in the lobby of the town hotel and held the drawing. If a fellow's number wasn't drawn before he had paid in \$25, he got a membership anyway. The memberships were at a bargain price for a nice club with a swell pro, and by charging only a dollar a chance, there were no suicides when a fellow's number wasn't drawn.

But here's the important thing. It got 100 new members, and it got the right kind of members—all fellows who were live enough to take a chance and meet and enjoy each other in the winter as well as at the golf club in the summer.

PAY AS YOU PLAY

ONE Pacific Coast club increased its membership by over two hundred members in less than a month. Eighty were former members and the club now has a substantial waiting list. The plan was very simple. Members were dropping out because the monthly dues were getting higher than many could afford. So instead of charging flat monthly dues that would normally be expected to cover most club expenses, the cost per member was broken down into dues to cover capital charges, such as real and personal property taxes, annual indebtedness charge, insurance, depreciation, amortization, etc., which in

the case of this club amounted to a base rate of \$2.50 per month (plus federal tax), and green-fee charges. Each member (and the members of his family if the membership was of the "family membership" type) was charged (or paid cash) a stipulated green-fee for each eighteen holes or part thereof played during the month. Such green-fee charges were set at 25c for 18 holes on weekdays and 50c on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

A maximum limitation, however, was placed on the amount any one person could be charged for green-fees. This was set at \$5.50 per month, and no player was billed for any charges in excess of \$5.50. Thus the maximum any member of this particular club paid would be \$5.50, plus the monthly \$2.75 (dues and tax), or a total possible charge of \$8.25. The members were notified of this plan on the first day of October, and were told to call the idea to the attention of their friends, immediately, because the membership limit would be reached shortly. This warning was timely, because the by-law limitation was reached by the 25th of October.

EAST SIDE, WEST SIDE

A DETROIT district club found a very successful way to increase membership was to put into effect the old team competition idea, which in this case meant dividing the locker-room—the east side against the west. Each side appointed a chairman, and a captain was named for each row of lockers. There were ten men to a team and a total of 20 teams all working for new members; the competition was so great that the club had 50 new members within two months.

FAMILY APPEAL

INCREASING a club's family appeal has been, of course, one of the best methods of increasing membership. Perhaps a new swimming pool, which keeps the younger element all pepped up, or some other form of club entertainment that has appeal to all ages, is the thing that brings them in—and keeps them there. There are few better ways of keeping a member sold on his club than to have the members of his own family boosters for it.

ANALYZE PROBLEM

A "TROUBLE - SHOOTER" who has done considerable work at Eastern courses, has the following to say on getting new members:

A membership drive isn't always advisable because it often brings in the briars with the wheat. Instead of a membership drive, why not talk it over with the active members and let each one make a few contacts. They are sure to know

some newcomer in the community; some young man or woman who is just becoming established and needs a club as a recreational and social hub.

How about the club's initiation fee and yearly dues? Even if you tap only the blue-bloods, there is more than a possibility that the ten-year drought has even affected their financial wells. Check on all dues and fees. If they need a revision, go to bat to revise them. Remember, more active members, even if they do have less, mean more for you and the club than a lot of millionaires with arthritis.

Your new member should be more than a name on the roster. See to it yourself that he is having a good time. Not only introduce him to everyone but see that he is thrown in with the old-timers, both on the course and at the club proper. It's your job to be a host as well as a teacher. Arrange for him to be placed on committees, to be given club responsibilities. A good start is 99% of the battle.

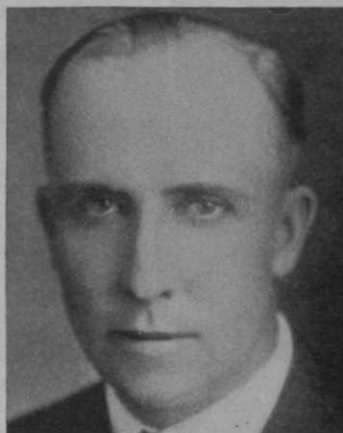
DON'T IGNORE YOUNG BLOOD

A VETERAN club manager observes that one of the major causes for club decline and dwindling memberships was the fact that many clubs had an attitude bordering almost on animosity towards the younger members. Foursomes that had played together for years resented the intrusion of younger blood, and at some clubs, it was with difficulty that younger men got games with the veteran members. But conditions have changed. Age and the depression took toll amongst the oldsters. The younger men kept on and preserved the club. So take heed from this. If yours is a club where the 'youngsters' may yet be given to understand they're intruding, and if conditions at your club demand a larger roster, take heed and don't bar the gates to the kids. Then you'll get well in a hurry.

DINNER MEETINGS

AN exclusive New England club saw its membership drop from about 550 to 250 in a period of two years, but a membership drive in May of last year was so successful that the roster swelled to well over 400. The 102 new members added in the May membership drive brought an increase of club income of about \$10,000 a year, due to the efforts of about 100 members who attended 6 dinner meetings and by those meetings were inspired to go out and make real solicitations. The club got 25 old members to rejoin, but the big gains were made among those men who had stopped playing golf during the height of the depression, and though they were now beginning to get back on their feet, had not yet been inspired to take up golf again. This membership drive took care of that,

HAVE YOU SEEN HIM?



Howard L. Lawrence

The G-Men are looking for this lad, a golfer of considerable ability. They want to talk to him about a hunk of dough he's accused of embezzling from the First National Bank of Danville (Ill.) back in 1932. Have you any tips on his present whereabouts? Maybe he played your golf course this season.

Lawrence is 38, weighs 200, is 6'-1" in height. Dark chestnut hair, thin on top; dark, tanned complexion; gray-blue eyes; teeth in good condition. Suffers from hay fever; may limp slightly with left leg.

If you know anything of Lawrence, J. Edgar Hoover would appreciate your phoning or wiring collect to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Dept. of Justice, Washington, D. C. Phone: National 7117. Or get in touch with the nearest division of the F.B.I.

The club also found many newcomers in the district who had actually not been invited to join any club.

NO PAID SOLICITORS

HERE'S what a veteran club official in the Chicago district says: It has been my observation that only members can secure worthwhile new members. A club is simply an enlarged family group. No professional solicitor can bring units into this group and keep them there. An older member must help in this process of absorption of the new blood, for the new member expects this social chaperonage. There may be the finest fairways, the sportiest greens, most entrancing scenery and the best cuisine, but unless the recent member is absorbed by a real fellowship, he does not remain.

Berrien Hills CC, Grand Rapids, Mich., uses a bright competitive stunt in adorning its dining room. Members are invited to supply flowers from their gardens to the club. Men and women members vie in making clubhouse tables attractive with specimens from their gardens.