

A Closer Look—Nor Cal's Barbara Mikel

Written by **BOB COSTA** and published in the February 1997 edition of *Thru the Green*

Most of you know her from that familiar response, "Golf course superintendents, this is Barbara." Or perhaps you have seen and met her at monthly events, painstakingly handling the registration. She's Barbara Mikel, executive secretary, and stabilizing force of the GCSANC. She's served in that capacity since 1990, and it was a strange twist of fate that led her to our doorstep.

It was June of 1990 when Barbara was first introduced to Jean LaDuc. The chance meeting occurred because Barbara's business, Easi Data Processing, maintained an office adjoining the GCSANC office in San Jose. "It so happens that the current secretary had suddenly left," Barbara recalls. "As a result, Jean, who was serving as a board member at the time, was making frequent trips to the office." When Jean shared her plight, Barbara offered to assist with some computer work on an interim basis. Before long she presented a formal proposal for her services to the board, which they wisely accepted. The rest, to our benefit, is history.

For a considerable time Barbara's work was behind the scenes so to speak. She regularly attended Board of Directors meetings, as she still does, and quickly became aware of the needs and functions of the Association.

Barbara credits Cliff and Myrtle Wagoner and Jean Laduc for shortening the learning curve. "Their help was invaluable," she said. "They never failed to come to the rescue whenever I had a question." The position of executive secretary for an association with over 500 members is much more complex than it may appear. Aside from the normal bookkeeping, accounting and reporting function of the business, there is a lot more required to keep an

association of this size running. In a given day Barbara may handle membership questions, questions from the public, job referrals, write her newsletter article, interface with board members, all of which makes for a non-dull office environment. "Maybe that's what originally attracted me to the position," she said. "Being a Gemini, I like variety, and this position has never failed to provide that." Preparing monthly meeting notices, mailings and handling reservations provide the most interesting part of the job for her, and attending the monthly meetings gives her the opportunity to do the two things she truly enjoys, flying and meeting the GCSANC members.

Her love for flying began out of necessity she told me. "In the early '70s, I owned several outdoor advertising companies based in the San Fernando Valley and Bay Area. Tiring of the commute along highway 5, she decided to learn to fly her own plane, and obtained her license in 1977. She recalls one occasion when past Association President, Brian Bagley flew with her to a meeting in Napa. "Brian maintained total composure until landing. That is when I heard this long sigh. I don't think he was critiquing the landing, I think he was happy to be on the ground again."

Like Brian, who was grateful for a safe landing, as an Association we too are grateful for the many contributions and professionalism Barbara has brought to our Association. Through her guidance, dedication and direction we have been able to assume a position of leadership within our industry. Thank you, Barbara, and perhaps we should thank fate as well.

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