

Deser

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magazi

Giving in Style

In this joyful season we celebrate:

EMPOWERING CLUBS

where members work together to give back

BALLROOM DECORUM

where young ladies and gentlemen are nurtured

MILITARY BEARING

where one couple works with neighbors to support our servicemen

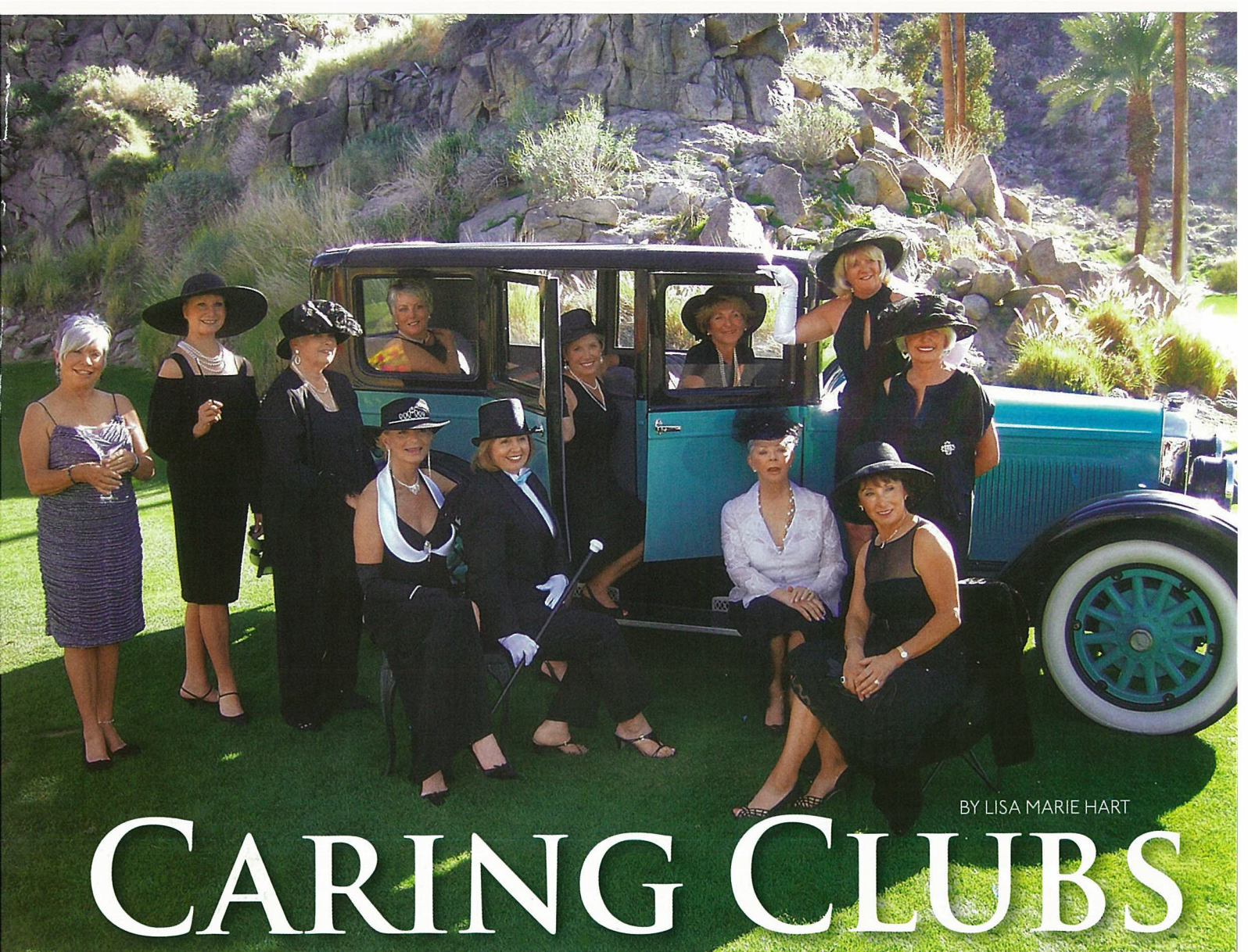
AND

THE ONE-WOMAN DYNAMO

Annette Bloch

Cancer's foe:
Annette Bloch
at home in
Rancho Mirage





BY LISA MARIE HART

CARING CLUBS

Committee members for the Indian Wells Women's Golf Association Invitational get glamorous in front of a 1927 Buick at Indian Wells Country Club.

It doesn't take a billionaire to raise millions of dollars for Coachella Valley charities. Some of the valley's most committed philanthropy results from cohesive work by like-minded members at area country clubs.

TAKING IT ON

"It takes an organizer," says Mary Block, a former educator and member of Indian Wells Country Club since 2002. "It's getting something organized and getting people to help you with it. Everyone else is just happy to show up." Block adds that her teaching background, along with her husband Dan's experience in customer service, comes in handy when it's time to rally their fellow members behind an event.

This winter she's using her skills to boost proceeds netted at the annual golf-and-dinner charity event. "I said to the GM, do you want to raise more money? Let the members plan next year's event." Taking over from club staff, the small board of Indian Wells Country Club members has moved the fall date to January when more potential pa-

trons are in the desert, reduced the ticket price to encourage more participation and convinced the club's golf shop to open the original "Olde Course" for the event. Attendees will now play nine holes on the Cove Course and nine on the Classic—a special experience, since the two have rarely been played together in recent years.

As the event is underwritten by the club, all proceeds benefit three charities. Block says this last year's event netted about \$30,000 for charity. She fully intends to top that in 2013.

THE PERSONAL CONNECTION

While Indian Ridge Country Club member Peter Wasserman was undergoing chemotherapy treatments in 2002, he received a visit from fellow member Art Teichner,

who brought him a book of jokes. In 1994, Teichner, who passed away from his third battle with cancer in 2005, founded Desert Cancer Foundation along with his wife, Cory, in 1994. They were joined in the effort by fellow Indian Ridge members.

"He didn't ask me for 10 cents, and he was sicker than I was," Wasserman recalls. The kindness of the gesture touched him at a critical time, and he quickly became active in Desert Cancer Foundation. He now serves on their board of directors.

For nearly two decades, Desert Cancer Foundation has provided life-saving medical assistance to Coachella Valley residents and others in adjacent communities who can't afford care. "It never occurred to me that one way or another I wouldn't get my cancer treatment," Wasserman says. "But there are people out there with no job, no money, no insurance, and it's hopeless. Someone says to them, 'If you don't get treatment, you're going to die.' That's a tough thing; it's overwhelming."

Wasserman co-chairs the annual fundraising gala dinner and golf tournament event, A Round for Life, which amassed during two days this last spring a whopping \$331,866. Indian Ridge Country Club and its members underwrote the costs to ensure 100 percent of those funds went to the foundation.

The sum is impressive on its own, but over the years Indian Ridge's annual fundraiser has provided more than the \$3.63 million to the foundation. The nonprofit then leverages value by collaborating with physicians, imaging centers, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies and clinics. Therefore, for every dollar donated, Desert Cancer Foundation can offer \$6 in services; the club's \$3.63 million has generated nearly \$22 million for local cancer care.

RESCUE OPERATION

When Bighorn Golf Club's chairman and member R.D. Hubbard received a dire call to action from Eisenhower Medical Center in 2006, he recognized the importance of having a "Top 100" hospital within minutes of the club. He first gathered members who had been healed at Eisenhower. "Our goal was \$3 million," he says. "Within a month, we were over \$10 million, and it just continued to grow."

In response, Eisenhower named the Bighorn Radiation Oncology Center at the Lucy Curci Cancer Center. Since then, members have contributed a total of \$31 million to the hospital.

"Everything we ask of our members, they respond," Hubbard says. "Ninety-five percent of our members are self-made. They started businesses and built them. They know what it feels like when you're in trouble and don't have anything. So when there's a need, they're willing to step forward. I'm just proud to be part of it."

Members also band together in support of wellness issues, scholarships and patriotism. They have raised money for a variety of causes, notably \$1.6 million for Hurricane Katrina victims and \$2.56 million for battling breast cancer through BIGHORN Behind A Miracle (BAM), plus thousands of dollars for prostate cancer.

"Last year," Hubbard relates, "one member said he would donate \$100,000 to BAM to have dinner at my new house with (fellow club members) Goldie Hawn, Kurt Russell and myself. Two others said they would match it. So we made \$300,000 over dinner that night."



Indian Ridge Country Club's A Round for Life group includes event co-chair Lewis May; Louise Fasana, Desert Cancer Foundation's executive director; Bob Schenkman, a foundation board member; Hall Wade, Indian Ridge's general manager and COO; Peter Wasserman, event co-chair and foundation board member, and fellow club member Rod McDonald.

College of the Desert has just unveiled the Bighorn Golf Club Charities Veterans Resource Center. Veterans and their families now can find career and counseling resources plus access to computers to help transition them into their new lives.

MANY HANDS

In 2000, four women members of Sun City Palm Desert decided to found a Gilda's Club cancer support community in the Coachella

Valley. Starting with hosted coffees and teas in their homes, the women introduced the Gilda's Club concept, got the word out to the community and raised funds, often \$25 at a time. In the end, they resurrected a burnt-out structure to become a support facility that offered a comforting sense of home.

Barbara and Max Stern were among the first Sun City members to pitch in. "We couldn't even visualize it at that point," Max says. But they profoundly believed in the center. They still dedicate time to Gilda's almost daily. "When you're stuffing envelopes and cancer survivors are sitting next to you working because they want to give back, it's very emotional," Barbara says. "And to see something built that you have worked for and dreamt of... I still marvel that it was done." The annual fundraising luncheon in 2013 will honor the Sterns' ongoing commitment.

Through the Friends of Gilda's Club at Sun City, some 150 members volunteer more than 10,000 hours a year to Gilda's Club in Cathedral City. "What some consider 'supporting' is going to galas," says Gilda's Club president and CEO Paula Kennedy.

“We simply couldn’t do our work here without them.”

–Paula Kennedy

President and CEO, Gilda’s Club

“Our Sun City volunteers take ownership and are very much hands-on.” Kennedy adds that Gilda’s Club has reenergized the retirement of the Sun City members who are deeply invested in the club’s well-being. “They were there from the beginning and helped us build what we are. We simply couldn’t do our work here without them.”

Many members at the newer Sun City Shadow Hills in Indio also volunteer at the club. Sun City fundraising events help fund the on-site support group started last year; the rest goes back to Gilda’s Club.

SAVE THE DATE

The following events are open to the public. For tickets and information, contact the club or the charity.

- **Bighorn Golf Club**, hosted at Toscana Country Club, Game Day for Life, to benefit Bighorn BAM, March 19, 2013; (760) 610-8218; bighornbam.com.

- **Del Webb Sun City**, 2013 Friends of Gilda’s Club Achievement Award Luncheon honoring Max and Barbara Stern, to benefit Gilda’s Club, April 11, 2013; (760) 770-5678; gildasclubdesertcities.org.

- **Indian Ridge Country Club**, A Round for Life, to benefit Desert Cancer Foundation, April 14-15, 2013; (760) 773-6554; desertcancerfoundation.org.

- **Indian Wells Country Club**, The Event on the Olde Course, to benefit ClubCorp Employee Partner Care Foundation, ALS and Martha’s Village & Kitchen, January 25, 2013; (760) 345-2561; clubcorp.com/Clubs/Indian-Wells-Country-Club.

TOP, LEFT: Gilda’s Club honorees Barbara and Max Stern.

TOP, RIGHT: Indian Wells Country Club’s Dan and Mary Block.

MIDDLE: Bighorn Golf Club’s R.D. Hubbard, fourth from the right, joins Bighorn Golf Club Charities board member Jim Gagan (next to Hubbard) with the most recent among more than 200 scholarship recipients since 2006.

BOTTOM: At the ribbon cutting at the Bighorn Radiation Oncology Center, R.D. Hubbard with his wife Joan Dale Hubbard, in red, are flanked by Eisenhower Medical Center’s president and CEO G. Aubrey Serfling, EMC board member Harry Goldstein and Betty Wolf, EMC foundation vice president.

