

BoardRoom magazine Recognizes 21 Private Club Presidents of the Year

Additional Award to Richard A. Brodie As Distinguished President of the Year

By Dave White, Editor, BoardRoom magazine

*Private Club Presidents of the Year sponsored by
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In a time when many private clubs throughout the world have had their survival...their very existence threatened, in some cases after decades of servicing their members, it's a good news story to realize that many, because of their leaders, are emerging from the economic storm as strong, thriving clubs, with eyes focused on the future.

That's "life" today for the Detroit Athletic Club, Detroit, Michigan. And that's why Richard Brodie, a multi-generation member of DAC, president and visionary is *BoardRoom's Distinguished Club President of the Year*.

BoardRoom, for the second year, is recognizing 21 club presidents and chairs as *Private Club Presidents of the Year – 2009* for practicing what they preach – leadership for the betterment of their clubs. These are board presidents or chairs who have served the majority of 2009 as the volunteer leaders of their club.

One of the 21, Richard "Dick" Brodie of the Detroit Athletic Club is recognized with the additional award as the *Distinguished Club President of the year*.

"In its second year, the *Private Club President of the Year* designation has attracted almost 400 board president nominations from clubs and nominators," exclaimed BoardRoom publisher, John Fornaro.

Nominations of the top 21 have been reviewed by BoardRoom's industry experts who have an understanding of the industry, the structure of the board of directors, and the role and responsibilities of the club's board of directors, including the macromanagement of the club, which clearly defines the role and responsibilities of the club's management as its chief executive.

"Kurt and I are very enthused about the *Club President of the Year* program that has been created and

developed by BoardRoom magazine," commented Richard Kopplin, a partner with Kopplin & Kuebler LLC. The firm, with principals Richard Kopplin and Kurt Kuebler, is one of the major supporters of this *BoardRoom* endeavor.

"We have often honored club general managers and other employees in the private club world but this is the first effort to recognize club members who give so much of their time for the betterment of their clubs by serving as their club president. We say it's about time that these volunteer club presidents, who give generously of their personal time, receive some accolades for the work that they do to benefit their fellow club members," Kopplin added.

"In this era when clubs are expecting top performance from the GM/COO, it's especially gratifying to come across a president who truly 'gets it', and ensures that in order to achieve that top performance, they have to provide strong support and guidance, and make sure that roadblocks, real or perceived, are not obstacles to the GM/COO's success," Kuebler injected.

"The group of presidents selected for this year's *BoardRoom awards* all seem to share that collective trait of visionary leadership in the boardroom, combined with strong recognition of the most effective organizational model necessary to be successful in today's club world," Kuebler added.

"To be selected as one of the final *21 Club Presidents of the Year* is truly an honor considering the hundreds of annual nominations for this recognition. Someone once said that the two happiest days in the term of a club president are the first and then again, the last. This award rec-

Distinguished President



Richard A. Brodie (left), president and
Ted Gillary, executive manager
Detroit Athletic Club, Detroit, MI

ognizes all of the time in between that requires numerous meetings, phone calls, and communications with members and employees,” Kopplin commented.

“We both salute *BoardRoom Magazine* for initiating this program and we congratulate this year’s 21 club presidents who so richly deserve this recognition, and both for recognizing and highlighting the importance of ‘energized, engaged and strategically focused partnerships’ found in thriving clubs in this ever-changing club landscape,” Kuebler added.

“We, at *BoardRoom* agree,” Fornaro explained. “It’s vitally important we recognize people who, as volunteers devote their time for the betterment of their clubs, and it’s even more important now in the stressful times that clubs have been facing for the past number of months.

“It’s a real credit to these board presidents...these board volunteers who diligently establish the club’s

direction and then let their general managers get on with managing what the club’s board and members want.

“Our congratulations go to Dick Brodie and the other top 20 club presidents for their outstanding work in leading their clubs,” Fornaro enthused.

Stories on the other recipients will follow in subsequent *BoardRoom* issues.

Brodie, a visionary, is dealing in the present with an eye on the future. That means dealing with change, facing the challenges of an ever-shifting private club membership, requiring different needs and wants, while leading the Detroit Athletic Club through a time of turmoil.

In a presidency that began as the DAC basked in the glow of its prestigious Michigan Quality Leadership Council Award, the only club in the nation to receive a quality award based on the Malcolm Baldrige criteria, Brodie worked diligently to maintain a steady ship, as worsening economic seas washed over Detroit.

Personally impacted by the downturn in the automotive industry,

Brodie still led the DAC without losing stride, focusing instead on his beloved club and Detroit.

“Dick Brodie was making sure the DAC maintained a steady financial course, allowing management to do what it needed to do to right-size the operation without allowing the first-class services of the club or its reputation to suffer in any visible way,” opined the club’s executive manager Ted Gillary.

Prior to his term as president, Brodie served on the club’s strategic planning committee that helped shape the club’s direction over a multi-year period leading up to the quality award.

“Dick Brodie has supported (and encouraged) the kind of creative strategic thinking and decisions on the part of key board members and the executive manager that eventually led the DAC to seek an alliance and begin the process of possibly acquiring an additional property, the Forest Lake Country Club, through a non-binding letter of intent to merge,” Gillary explained.

“This effort is still ongoing and has required Dick to be responsive and a reassuring leader.

“Clubs like the DAC uplift the community and are worthy of extraordinary effort by our members. Leaders like Dick Brodie recognize this,” Gillary enthused. “They want to be a part of something, to have a vision greater than that of their own well being.”

“Allowing something new and bold to move forward in times like these in our community takes great fortitude and courage and Brodie has shown the kind of courage that would make all of our past presidents proud.”

And that’s exactly what has happened at the Detroit Athletic Club, with Dick Brodie at the helm.

An outstanding delegator, Brodie has trusted that the responsibilities handed down would be faithfully carried out



DETROIT ATHLETIC CLUB

and in all cases has been pleased with the work of his board and the management of the club.

At a recent DAC board meeting when it was announced Dick Brodie has been named *BoardRoom's Distinguished Club President of the Year*, he was presented with a "special cake," Gillary explained.

Brodie's response? "I really should cut this cake into 18 pieces and share this honor with all of our board of directors. I also need to share this cake with our staff and employees. I accept this award on behalf of the club - it is a great honor for the DAC and for me."

He's always been an ambassador for DAC. "This club has always been a big part of my life," said the 67 year-old Bloomfield Hills resident, first elected to the club's board of directors in 2004.

Brodie's a proud father of two daughters Pauline Fisher and Margaret Williams, and Pauline and son-in-law David Fisher represent the fourth generation of club membership for the family. Brodie's wife of 45 years, Joanne, enjoys the club as much as her husband.

"She's a life long Detroiter as well," he said. "We're local through and through and love our community."

"The DAC has been a tradition in my family for four generations and the chance to lead it has been such a privilege. It has always been a big part of my life" Brodie reflected.

And these unselfish and visionary attitudes are the reason why Dick Brodie of the Detroit Athletic Club is *BoardRoom magazine's 2009 Distinguished Club President of the Year*. **BR**

Ken Voyles, publisher and editor, DAC News contributed to this story on Dick Brodie.

2009 Private Club Presidents of the Year

Ian Altman	Lakewood Country Club	USA	
Francis Armstrong	Pinegrove Country Club Inc.	Canada	
John W. August.	Irondequoit Country Club	USA	
Steve Balisteri	The University Club of Milwaukee.	USA	
Len Becker	Diablo Country Club.	USA	
Jerry Chubb	Brookside Country Club.	USA	
Dick Darmody.	The Vintage Club	USA	
Mike Freece	Boulder Country Club	USA	
Terry Geller	The Saint Andrew's Golf Club	USA	
Bill Kamm.	The Country Club at DC Ranch	USA	
Earle Layman	River Bend Golf & Country Club.	USA	
Bill McDougall	The Members Club at WoodCreek & WildeWood	USA	
Jim Morton	The Country Club of St. Albans	USA	
Thomas J. Roth	The Country Club of Rochester	USA	
Dale Rotner.	Club at Morningside	USA	
Bill T. Smith, Jr.	Royal Palm Yacht & Country Club.	USA	
Tim Sullivan	Congressional Country Club	USA	
Mark Taylor	Hallbrook Country Club.	USA	
David Townsend	Hamilton Farm Golf Club.	USA	
Larry Tucker	Big Canyon Country Club	USA	















IAN ALTMAN | PRESIDENT | LAKEWOOD COUNTRY CLUB | ROCKVILLE, MD

Lakewood Country Club, having just celebrated its 50th anniversary, has realized Ian Altman's vision of a year-round resort experience for the entire family.

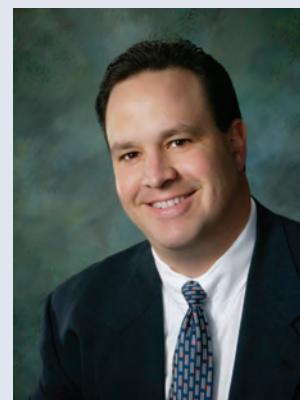
Ian Altman has served as president of Lakewood's board of directors in Rockville, Maryland initially in 2004/05 and again in 2009/2010, and during his tenure on the board, Lakewood Country Club has evolved into a top-tier, highly respected country club with exceptional amenities.

Members and guests enjoy tournament caliber course conditions, top-notch instructional programs across sports, and an active social calendar and dining operation that have contributed to membership growth amidst a challenging global economic climate. Altman joined Lakewood in 1997, and served as its membership chairman for half of those years, including during the golf course renovation. Despite those challenges, the club continued to exceed budget projections for initiation fees even while its golf course was under construction.

Ian has been part of a team of dedicated members involved in the planning, execution, and success of a dramatic Club transformation, which has happened in two phases. Phase I was a complete golf course renovation in 2003/2004 with legendary architect Rees Jones transforming the golf course from ordinary to 'extraordinary.'

Phase II delivered a complete clubhouse renovation and expansion. During his tenure, Ian also worked with industry expert Norm Spitzig (Master Club Advisors) who helped them to identify and hire respected PGA veteran and multiple award-winner, Eric Dietz, as the club's CEO.

Over the past few years, the club has enhanced its top-notch leadership team including USPTA National President, Tom Dagleis, who serves as the club's director of tennis, fitness, and aquatics. Lakewood has managed to deliver its membership experience in a setting that Altman coined "casual elegance." He is quick to point out that all of the club's success is attributed to "an outstanding leadership team of committed members, management, and associates that won't settle for anything less than excellence." And that's why Ian Altman is one of BoardRoom's top presidents of the year. **BR**



FRANCIS ARMSTRONG | PINEGROVE COUNTRY CLUB INC. | ST-JEAN-SUR-RICHELIEU, PQ, CANADA

Francis Armstrong, Pinegrove's youngest president ever, has used his professional skills to guide the Quebec private clubs through some of its greatest transitions. Francis has also worked diligently with board members to manage an unprecedented cultural transfer from an exclusively Jewish Club to one that is predominantly French-Canadian. It's a transfer also defined as a 'generational' one, since Pinegrove's members are now younger.

President Armstrong has used his professional skills and outgoing personality:

- To help craft the club's branding strategy
- To develop with various teams original and innovative social and golfing events
- To celebrate with founding members the club's 50th anniversary
- To team up with past presidents to update the rules and regulations that the club's membership abides by
- To supervise with incredible volunteers important renovations to the clubhouse and to the course
- To supervise Pinegrove's recruitment and retention strategies
- To streamline the club's board and
- To institute new governance policies that provide flexibility and freedom to help Pinegrove's Managing Director Bruno Hamelin and key personnel make the right decisions that benefit everyone.

Francis has been instrumental in enlisting the help of volunteers who provide the club with a wide range of expertise and goodwill. He has recruited board and committee members from very different backgrounds and who represent every type of member at the club. He has doggedly represented the *entire*

membership and has encouraged everyone to get involved and to provide opinions and positive feedback that help the club by regularly fielding surveys and conducting discussion groups.

Francis, a marketing and advertising professional, has helped brands succeed in Canada for over 30 years. He has worked for Philip Morris and A.C. Nielsen, and his clients have included such organizations as Bombardier, Johnson & Johnson, Molson Breweries, New Balance and Canadian and Quebec government ministries. He is presently a senior partner for creative agency Bleublancrouge (red white and blue) – one of Canada's top 10 advertising firms.

Francis strongly believes that belonging to a golf course is a privilege and belonging to Pinegrove is a treat. He has often said that club presidents should not be so wrapped up in themselves and their self-importance to let small problems cause friction, nor should they think that they are above the fray. No one member is more important than another. And that's why Francis Armstrong is one of BoardRoom top presidents for 2009.

Francis' two-year term ends this year and he is a little afraid that his present excuse for working too hard at Pinegrove will no longer be an excuse for playing badly on it. **BR**



JOHN W. AUGUST | PRESIDENT | IRONDEQUOIT COUNTRY CLUB | ROCHESTER, NY

For the last four years John August has led Irondequoit Country Club in Rochester, NY, guiding both the board of directors and membership through a tumultuous, contentious clubhouse renovation project.

In 2005 the membership failed to pass a vote presented to tear down the old clubhouse and build new.

In 2006 the membership approved a new \$8 million clubhouse by 67 percent, but with a price tag of \$25,000 per member many resignations followed, leading to the cancellation of the project.

In 2007, President August authored seven renovations options ranging from a \$1 million paint and interior upgrade to an \$8 million new building, outlined in a packet entitled "The Choices."

Finance options for each class of membership were painstakingly detailed, including 140 finance plans. In addition, August hosted dozens of informational meetings, which allowed the membership to express their project opinions and concerns.

"I have witnessed John August to be a most fair, honest, and respectful man towards all persons he speaks with. He is a great communicator!" explained the club's general manager Mark P. Miller.

The result?

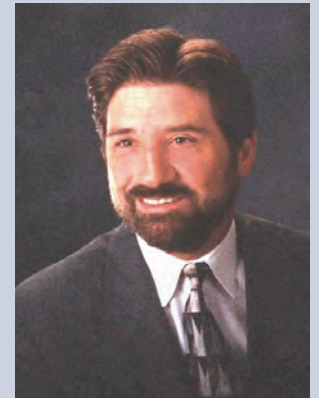
A membership vote supporting a \$4.5 million full clubhouse renovation.

August led architects, general contractors, engineers, interior designers, and club staff, with a team approach, gathering input and ideas from all throughout the project, which commenced in October 2008.

A 1931 building undergoing its fifth renovation (the current with two major new additions), required thousands of time sensitive and difficult decisions to be made.

John August never wavered with his positive support throughout the duration of the project.

In May 2009, the renovation of ICC was completed on time and with a budget variance of less than one percent because of the tireless efforts and thousands of volunteer hours of John W. August, president and dedicated member of Irondequoit Country Club, leading to his recognition as one of BoardRoom's top presidents of the year for 2009. **BR**



STEVE J. BALISTRERI | PRESIDENT | UNIVERSITY CLUB OF MILWAUKEE | MILWAUKEE, WI

Steve Balistreri has been a true leader in the face of difficult economic times for the University Club of Milwaukee.

He has provided direction and vision during tumultuous times that have required solid thinking and planning of short and long-term goals.

He was instrumental in the planning process of a major renovation and was able to bridge both sides of opinion regarding the scope of the renovation, says the club chief operating officer, Fred Fletcher.

He assisted with a vital line of credit that provided the club favorable terms and an infusion of operating cash.

He brought the board and the committees together to instill a unified direction, plan and vision for the club.

Balistreri has served as president of the club the past two years.

His leadership roles include serving on the board for eight years, as treasurer for two years, vice president for two years and head of the membership committee for a year.

Balistreri was the lead on the current strategic master plan,

which included hiring an outside consulting firm that subsequently placed a new COO at the club.

Balistreri's contributions as both a member and in various leadership roles have been very influential and critical for the future of the club, roles and contributions, which have led to his recognition as one of BoardRoom's top club presidents for 2009.

Steve Balistreri is currently president of Legacy Advisors, LLC, a boutique M&A and turnaround firm specializing in increasing the profitability and economic value of client companies. He lives in Mequon, WI where he enjoys spending time with his three kids. **BR**



LEONARD BECKER | PRESIDENT | DIABLO COUNTRY CLUB | DIABLO, CA

Now in his second year as Diablo Country Club's president, Leonard Becker has excelled at improving the member communication and board transparency through member surveys and focus groups.

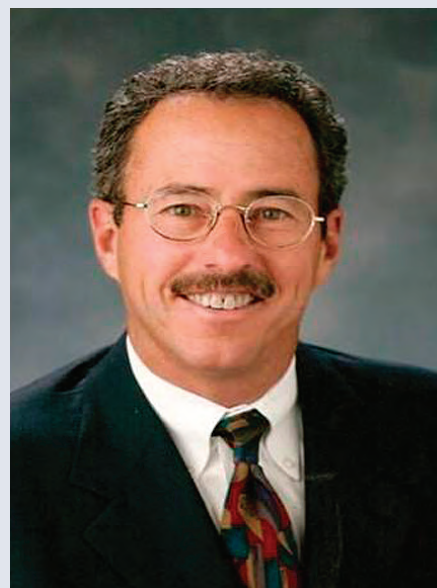
Becker has been proactive and under his direction a number of improvements have been accomplished including the addition of a fitness center, the approval of bocce ball courts, as well as a relaxation of the club's dress code.

His support of general manager COO Larry Marx has been vital to the club's success.

Becker joined Diablo Country Club in 1992 and has, over the years, served

on every committee. He loves to golf and has assisted with the Junior Golf Program.

Leonard Becker graduated with honors from San Diego State University in 1978, and received his Juris Doctorate degree from California Western School of Law in 1982. In 1984, he opened his own law firm specializing in personal injury litigation. He and Joanne have three children, all of whom have been involved in golf, tennis and swimming at Diablo Country Club. **BR**



DICK DARMODY | PRESIDENT | THE VINTAGE CLUB | INDIAN WELLS, CA

The accomplishments have been many for The Vintage Club under Dick Darmody's presidential tenure.

Dick Darmody joined The Vintage Club of Indian Wells, CA in 1993, and has been an active member of the community ever since. Serving on various committees under the "club" umbrella, as well as the board of his homeowner's association, then as president under the "Master Association" umbrella, Darmody is one of the hardest working members of The Vintage Club.

This has culminated in his election to the board of directors and his appointment as president in 2009-10.

Throughout Darmody's tenure, his focus has been on transparency and communication in the club governance.

He immediately established a direct email address through the club so that all members could communicate with him directly.

In addition, he organized a number of 'Board Meet & Greets' throughout the season where members could mingle with the board, ask questions and provide feedback.

Working with management, Darmody's fiscal oversight continued the trend of yearly operating surpluses, which has even resulted in the club not having a

dues increase during this housing decline and unstable economy.

Darmody with his foresight directed his board and committees to focus on attracting new members to the club, which brought about the creation of a new member development and marketing committee.

With a focus on marketing to our existing membership as well as to a national audience, the club has met its budgetary projections for the year, and expects even more new members.

His support of 'out of the box' marketing programs, such as supplying a stay for potential new members in a home on property in order to immerse them in the Vintage Club lifestyle, compliments of the club, have been very well received.

Darmody also has accomplished a multitude of improvements and additions to the club, including gathering support for the complete re-invention of the security program. The board approved the installation of multiple state-of-the-art systems for extensive perimeter monitoring, the elimination of the use of transponders to a simpler, member-friendly license recognition system, and the installation 24/7 DVR camera monitoring systems and light-motion-microwave apparatus throughout the property. The



Vintage Club has the most cutting-edge security program in the area.

Darmody's positive "half-full" outlook has empowered the board, management, staff and members to pull together through tough times, and with his leadership, the club has done just that. With clear guidance, he adheres to the philosophy: "In a model club, directors should direct, managers should manage and members enjoy their club." And that's why Dick Darmody is one of BoardRoom's top presidents of the year. **BR**

JERRY CHUBB | PRESIDENT | BROOKSIDE COUNTRY CLUB | STOCKTON, CA

Jerry Chubb's presidency began in 2008 with Brookside on the verge of financial collapse.

Even more disastrous, Brookside's culture was in turmoil, strife with rumor and member-pointing blame; a dwindling membership, and resignations occurring all too frequently. All this was happening concurrently with the economic recession in Stockton, the foreclosure capital of the nation.

Change became the modus operandi. President Chubb brought in a new general manager/COO Graham Leibowitz, known in the industry for his fiscal expertise and needs-based budgeting.

"The membership is wounded. It has lost confidence and trust in the club. It is as though Brookside has PTSD," Chubb lamented.

"Aggressive action is needed," Chubb said, "but we must be careful and mindful of the fragile membership. We must build back their (our members') trust."

While management immediately began to put the financial pieces back together, Chubb and the board increased communication directly and delicately with the membership. Letters were written, emails sent often to all members, open meetings held in both small groups and large town hall settings explaining what was happening and answering questions.

Chubb and the club's leaders pulled back the perceived velvet curtain of seclusion and the membership was challenged to get involved to positively rebuild the club.

In very difficult economic times, change began to happen. New members were recruited. Membership satisfaction increased dramatically, and Jerry Chubb's extraordinary leadership is still visible and he is starting his second term as president. Brookside Country Club of Stockton, CA is still here, no longer wondering how it will survive, but now looking at how it will thrive. **BR**



MICHAEL FREECE | PRESIDENT | BOULDER COUNTRY CLUB | BOULDER, CO

Michael Freece's passion, vision and unmatched support make him an example to all leaders. He consistently is looking for ways to make Boulder Country Club the best it can be for the members and staff alike.

Accomplishments that make Mike Freece an outstanding president include:

Successful implementation of the plan endorsed by the membership to renovate the athletic center into one of the finest facilities in the private club industry, and

He helped spearhead complimentary group fitness classes at the athletic center, which has been a huge success. This has added an increased perception of value and created more of a sense of community at both the athletic center and throughout the club.

"Mike has proven to be a president who ensures the board's focus is on establishing policy without micromanagement. He continually shows support and appreciation for all of the staff, and reminds the

members to express their appreciation as well," explained the club's general manager and COO Michael Larson.

He has enhanced a sense of teamwork between the board of directors, committees and the club's management. And through his open communication to the membership, there's an improved level of trust between the membership and the club's board of directors.

Members of the Boulder Country Club consider Mike Freece to be an inspired president, whose passion, commitment and enthusiasm for the club would be hard-pressed to exceed. As current president and as a long-time member, Freece has proven to be extremely gracious and a true man of honor.

Born and raised in Western Illinois, Freece was President and owner of a freight service for over 25 years. He has been a member of Boulder Country Club since 1984 and served on several committees the past five years.



And it's for these reasons, Michael Freece, a truly passionate leader and greatly respected man, is one of BoardRoom top presidents of the year. **BR**

TERRY GELLER | PRESIDENT | SAINT ANDREW'S GOLF CLUB | HASTINGS ON HUDSON, NY

The Saint Andrew's Golf Club, a Jack Nicklaus redesign, is the oldest continuously operating golf club in America (1888) and a founding member of the United States Golf Association.

It's one of the few clubs that operate without a general manager. The president, in this case President Terry Geller, must oversee and direct a committed board of governors that is engaged in all aspects of the club's operation.

Dr. Geller has been a member of the Saint Andrew's Golf Club since 1988. During that time he has served as the chair of the membership committee, and the nominating committee, a member of the board of governors and as president since 2007.

A graduate of New York University College of Dentistry, class of 1976, Dr.

Geller lives on the golf course at Saint Andrew's, and practices within five miles of the club. This unique combination provides him with the ability to closely monitor the operations of the club.

With the managers of the club reporting directly to the president and their committee chairs, this is truly a hands-on operation. This style of leadership has allowed the Saint Andrew's Golf Club to stay competitive in these difficult economic times while continuing to provide the highest level of membership services.

Besides maintaining a six handicap, Terry is also an avid skier (water and snow), speed skater and drummer. Terry and his wife Michele have five children, and one grandchild. **BR**



BILL MCDUGALL | PRESIDENT | THE MEMBERS CLUB | COLUMBIA, SC

In 2006 Bill McDougall was a member of WildeWood Country Club and Woodcreek Farms CC about four miles away, clubs owned and managed by Golf Trust.

For several years the facilities and services of both clubs had been allowed to deteriorate with Golf Trust trying to maximize its profit. Management had undermined member satisfaction and negatively impacted the quality communities surrounding the clubs.

Based on these facts, McDougall began examining the possibility of a member buy-out. Golf Trust, in previous years, had divested itself of all its other operations and now only had these two clubs left.

Twenty-four members each put up \$5,000 seed money to form a task force aimed at researching the opportunities of buying both facilities from Golf Trust and a developer amenities package at Woodcreek. The objective? Starting a new combined club called 'The Members Club.'

After a year and a half effort and just a couple months after the stock market crash in September 2008, McDougall convinced 575 people to buy equity memberships in the new club and also convinced over 300 people to stay on as

non-equity members paying higher dues.

A communication strategy that included dozens of small group meetings help accomplish McDougall's objective. He raised around \$2.5 million dollars and secured a loan and line of credit to allow for a successful closing and member purchase in January 2009.

In the past year the club has been able to invest \$1 million in facility improvements while fighting the same economic issues as all clubs.

The success of The Members Club can be attributed to the dedicated club board and committee members. However, the driving force has been Bill McDougall, a club member for 33 years. The retired USMC Lt. Colonel is also a retired commercial pilot...a captain with Delta Air Lines. His hobbies include sailing and golf (single digit handicap, although McDougall hasn't played much in the past couple of years).

He has worked full time for the past three years – on the purchase of the two clubs by the members and converting them to a broad based equity form of ownership – to make this reality happen. "However, the operational and organizational challenges of guiding the club dur-



ing its first year of operation have proved to be as difficult and as rewarding," explained McDougall. "And we have attempted to set up a strong club governance structure modeled on the best practices of successful clubs."

It is for these reasons and accomplishments that McDougall deserves recognition as one of BoardRoom top presidents of the year. **BR**

BILL KAMM | PRESIDENT | THE COUNTRY CLUB AT DC RANCH | SCOTTSDALE, AZ

The prestigious North Scottsdale club, The Country Club at DC Ranch completed turnover of its ownership from its developer to its 500-plus membership and Bill Kamm was elected president in April 2009.

That marked the beginning of major changes for Scottsdale's premier golf and country club.

With a newly elected seven-member board of directors, many of whom had never met previously, Bill was challenged with formulating the beginnings of a board culture. From the initial meetings of this group, Kamm created open forums of dialogue to help establish a comfort level among board members.

He also established a committee structure that had not previously existed, allow-

ing each board member to serve as committee chair, select their committee members, and determine their individual committee responsibilities and processes.

Following 11 years of developer ownership, Bill has recognized the importance for the club membership to determine 'who we are' and 'where we want our club to go' over the next 5-10 years.

The club continues to lead the way in social, tennis, and golf events. Under Bill Kamm's leadership, geared toward creating an enjoyable club experience, and with a strong management team, the club welcomed over 40 new members in 2009.

And that's why Bill Kamm is one of BoardRoom's top presidents of the year. **BR**



EARLE LAYMAN | PRESIDENT | RIVER BEND GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB | GREAT FALLS, VA

As River Bend's president, Earle Layman's leadership and vision has spearheaded a multi-million dollar golf course renovation, vibrant membership recruitment plan and implementation of GM/COO management structure.

In 2006, Layman's consensus-building skills united divergent opinions in support of a cohesive rebuilding plan for River Bend's golf course at a projected cost of \$13 million.

Board members, officers, committee chairs, and club management met for months to develop a strategy, evaluating all options, addressing significant infrastructure issues, and relocating the maintenance facility out of a flood-plain area.

Layman's strategy ensured that all board members were fully committed to whatever was presented to the membership as pressure was building from large member groups to defeat the plan.

At a record-turnout membership meeting, open discussion of all issues convinced members that the board was open and transparent, and had evaluated every alternative. Supportive members organized to persuade others, and the

proposal was approved by 87 percent of voting members.

Membership attitudes were extremely positive and many volunteered to help shepherd the project along in areas of finance, engineering, construction, reciprocal play, etc.

When Layman returned as River Bend President in late 2008, cost estimates had increased to \$13.9 million, requiring a membership re-vote. A program similar to the one in 2006 was organized. This time, 80 percent of the membership voted and 85 percent opted to proceed.

As the global economic crisis was causing membership losses at many clubs, Layman, working with the club management, committee and board members, devised a recruitment program engaging existing members.

It's been extremely successful, resulting in record applications during a difficult economic environment, thanks to a large team effort. A membership enhancement program is being developed to ensure success during the 16-month golf course closure and beyond. (When did construction start and when will the course reopen)



To enhance River Bend's operations, Layman championed the club's continued migration to a GM/COO management system, whereby the GM/COO and president agree on clearly defined objectives, but the president stays out of day-to-day operations, ensuring only that board policies are followed. The GM/COO and his managers make the club's daily operating decision. And it is for these reasons, that Earle Layman is one of BoardRoom top presidents for 2009. **BR**

JIM MORTON | PRESIDENT | THE COUNTRY CLUB OF ST. ALBANS | ST. ALBANS, MO

"For all of us who have experienced a leadership role, we know firsthand that extraordinary challenges lead to interesting opportunities and rewarding moments," exclaimed Jim Morton, immediate past president of The Country Club of St. Albans.

Facing economic times, a search for a new chief operating officer and an upcoming U.S.G.A. Championship, Morton found one of his beliefs reaffirmed when it came to trusting those members who serve on the board as well as the team of club professionals.

"From top to bottom, I believe if you have the right people, everything truly takes care of itself. More importantly, you must understand the roles of the board and staff," Morton shared. "We learned as a board that our job was there to support and coach from a strategic initiative and not be involved in the day-to-day operation of the club."

During his tenure, Morton felt that he struggled mostly with time management. As an active business owner with multiple locations, he found himself struggling with the clock and calendar daily.

"I am extremely fortunate to have such strength in management and staff, both in my business and at the club," Morton stated. "As president, I found that the club was very fortunate to have a talented team in place and to have hired a knowledgeable general manager/COO in Lawrence J. "Skip" Avery, CCM, CCE."

The culminating event for Morton as President was the club's opportunity to host the 2009 U.S.G.A. Men's State Team Championship. He didn't realize the amount of preparation work that would go into hosting a Championship.

"The championship took over two years planning and preparation," Morton reflected. "What I found so amazing and rewarding was the level of drive and dedication each one of the staff and the members took to ensure the participants and the U.S.G.A. would have an exceptional experience at our club".

As so many of his fellow recipients of this honor share, he has an even greater appreciation for the presidents and boards who have served and for the staff who give of themselves day in and day out because they care for their club. He



encourages fellow members of St. Albans or other clubs to get involved.

"As President, I found that my philosophy of surrounding myself with good people results in one of the most life rewarding experiences a leader can enjoy," he concluded. And it's for these many reasons that Jim Morton is one of BoardRoom's top presidents for 2009. **BR**

THOMAS J. ROTH | PRESIDENT | THE COUNTRY CLUB OF ROCHESTER | ROCHESTER, NY

Tom Roth, now completing his second term as president of The Country Club of Rochester, has championed new initiatives, encouraging families to spend more time at the club and foster new relationships, leading to increased member usage and higher club revenues.

"Mr. Roth's keen understanding of private clubs and his strong sense of stewardship has been critical to our club's success," explained Albert Antonez, CCM, CCE, the club's general manager.

Since 1895, CCR has been renowned for its outstanding Donald Ross-designed golf course, facilities, programs, and services. The club has hosted three U.S.G.A. championships including the first Women's Open. Walter Hagen also began his career in golf at CCR, starting out as a caddie before becoming head golf professional.

"At a time when some clubs decided to cut budgets and services, Mr. Roth supported plans to improve and enhance existing programs. As a direct result, we have experienced increased member usage and higher revenues", added Antonez.

Over a decade ago, Tom served as Commodore of the Rochester Yacht Club. That experience, coupled with his passion and transparent leadership style, has helped him to smoothly guide the club.

"He's a great listener and makes time to learn about issues in depth. Our club is in a great spot thanks to his vision, dedication, and commitment", concluded GM Antonez. And that's why Tom Roth, President of The Country Club of Rochester, Rochester, NY is one of BoardRoom magazine's top 21 Club Presidents of the Year. **BR**



DALE ROTNER | PRESIDENT | THE CLUB AT MORNINGSIDE | RANCHO MIRAGE, CA

Dale Rotner is the first female president in The Club at Morningside's history, and it comes following her work with the club's committees and women's golf.

"My husband George and I first joined The Club at Morningside in 1999, and I was very fortunate to serve and preside over a few important committees at our club. It's given me helpful insight into club governance," she explained.

Initially a member of the house committee and the Morningside Women's Golf Association, Rotner later chaired the house committee and assumed duties as the MWGA's president.

"I was then honored to be elected to the board of governors who appointed me club president in the second year of my term, becoming the first female president in club history," she related.

Rotner took over as club president just as the club was absorbing a significant loss of members because of an assessment from the renovation of their club-

house and irrigation system. The club has since rebounded nicely with the addition of over 23 new golf members, with most being much more involved with the club compared to the members who left.

"We were also searching for a replacement of our long tenured general manager whose duties the board and I assumed in the interim. This was all occurring during a period that the economy was challenging the entire club industry.

"In the face of these challenges I felt it my responsibility to remain committed to the high standards that make The Club at Morningside one of the desert's premier clubs." Rotner commented.

"Ultimately, our GM search resulted in what is a great new addition to The Club at Morningside. Our new management team's goals are consistent with the club's philosophy, which has always been focused on the highest quality and standards possible. And I'm proud to represent The Club at Morningside, our dedi-



cated board, members and our hard working staff," Rotner concluded.

And it's for these many reasons that Rotner is one of BoardRoom's top presidents for 2009. **BR**

BILL T. SMITH, JR. | COMMODORE, ROYAL PALM YACHT & COUNTRY CLUB | BOCA RATON FL

Commodore Bill Smith's tenure as president comes during an historical, but somewhat paradoxical time for the Royal Palm Yacht & Country Club. Not only has the country been in the middle of the worst economic circumstances seen since the 1920s it's also been a proud period for the club – its golden 50th anniversary.

Commodore Smith, the board of governors, and General Manager/COO Donald P. Emery CCM, developed a strategic plan to operate the club in a more fiscally sound manner to reduce operating expenses while still offering quality services. The result: During the first six months of 2009 the club's bottom line was almost 150 percent better than the previous year, despite lower membership counts because of the poor economy.

To answer the members' request for more casual dining became a huge challenge during this time. The board decided to improve the current clubhouse facilities while being mindful that the building would soon be demolished to make way for a new \$17 million yacht clubhouse that the members approved before the 2008 recession. The challenge was met by converting a large meeting room into a new casual din-

ing space by using the club's own staff for the construction and design.

Commodore Smith has shown a passionate ability to lead the club during this transitional time by making informed decisions while having a prioritized vision for both the club's short and long term interests.

He was instrumental in establishing the strategic master plan developed through the cooperation of the management team, a professional consultant and club members to provide for the club's macromanagement for month-to-month operations.

He guided the management staff in developing comprehensive standard operational procedures for each department and established the new core values of inclusion, transparency and communication to both the membership and club staff.

To emphasize on the club's heritage, he was instrumental in creating the club's Hall of Champions in the golf clubhouse with tributes to the men's and women's club champions, hole in one winners and the revered course architects - Robert Trent Jones, Joe E. Lee and Jack Nicklaus.

An attorney and private practitioner, Commodore Smith and his wife Bonny have one son, Scott.



A club member since 1988, Commodore Smith previously served on the board from 1998-2001, the club's nominating committee and the planning committee. He also has a distinguished community service record, including a term as mayor of Boca Raton from 1993-95.

And it's for these many reasons, that Commodore Bill T. Smith, Jr. is one of BoardRoom's top presidents for 2009. **BR**

TIMOTHY J. SULLIVAN | PAST PRESIDENT | CONGRESSIONAL COUNTRY CLUB | BETHESDA, MD

Since Tim's father became a member in 1969 when Tim was seven years old, he knew Congressional from top to bottom when he became president of the board of governors in 2009.

While the club is fortunate to have several legacy members on the board, Tim always had his heart set on leading the club and he served with unbounded enthusiasm.

CEO/GM Michael Leemhuis shares that, "With Tim as President I was able to work with a man who had a vision and an ideal, but not an agenda. He was always working in the club's best interests."

During his tenure the club endured the harsh economic times but also enjoyed the opening of a \$26 million renovation and the club's 85th Anniversary. Also on the horizon during 2009 were the myriad preparations connected with the hosting of the U.S. Open Championship in 2011.

In a momentous occasion, over 1,000 members celebrated the opening of the club's renovation – a stunning transforma-

tion on the back side of the clubhouse. The planning and renovation was completed during Tim's time on the board.

Tim's interest in the history of the club is keen and he shared tidbits with the membership in the club's newsletter each month. In conjunction with the 85th Anniversary a time capsule was created and will be opened 100 years down the road. Members from that era will be able to see what Congressional was all about in 2009.

While serving as president, Tim continued to have to share time with his thriving law practice. This made for some long days but he always found time to take care of club business. This was one of his biggest challenges as he endeavored to meet the needs of his firm as well as the members of Congressional Country Club.

Under his leadership the club managed to make it through the financial uncertainty of 2009 by sound financial management. Tim credits the management staff with their overall budgeting practices that



resulted in cost savings but minimal impact on member services.

And it's for these many reasons, that Timothy J. Sullivan is honored as one of BoardRoom's top private club presidents. **BR**

MARK H. TAYLOR | PRESIDENT | HALLBROOK COUNTRY CLUB | SHAWNEE MISSION, KS

Mark Taylor's leadership and firm belief in club governance procedures has helped lead Hallbrook Country Club to an enviable financial position. With the help of the management team, the committees and the board of directors, Hallbrook Country Club is poised and willing to accept the challenges of an ever-changing club industry. Mark joined Hallbrook Country Club in 1993 shortly after to moving to the Kansas City area 20 years ago. He and his wife Debbie served on the club's member guest event committee, "The Highlander" for four years. Mark has also been a member of the board of directors for over five years and has served as treasurer, chair of the finance committee and president of Hallbrook Country Club.

"Mr. Taylor has been instrumental in serving as a liaison between management and the board of directors," says club general manager and chief operating officer Kevin Donovan. "After incurring nearly \$5 million in debt because of club renovations, financial responsibility and planning were of utmost importance.

"As management was working towards developing plans to fund depreciation

and build cash reserves to lessen the need for future assessments, Mr. Taylor's insight into this process was much needed and his support of the direction of management has also been very important."

"The club is in great financial shape and with cash reserves for operating accounts, emergency funds equal to two months dues and reserves for future capital needs, giving the club the ability to withstand the financial downturn that has in many cases devastated pockets of the club industry," said Donovan, in explaining why Mark Taylor is one of BoardRoom's top club presidents for 2009.

Taylor is the vice president and chief financial officer and a member of the board of directors at Burns & McDonnell, Inc., an engineering, consulting and construction firm, which he joined in 1996.

Mark also serves on the board of United Way of Greater Kansas City and has done so since 1996. Mark has also been a board member and treasurer of the Greater Kansas City Boys & Girls Club. A graduate of Indiana University (1974), Mark and his wife Debbie have two sons, Jason and Justin, and two granddaughters.



Hallbrook Country Club was built in 1988 by the Hall family of Hallmark Cards on the land that was once Mr. Joyce Hall's farmland in southern Johnson County. The rolling hills of Hallbrook Country Club are not typical of Kansas and have served as a beautiful landscape for the fantastic Tom Fazio-designed golf course. **BR**

DAVID TOWNSEND | PRESIDENT | HAMILTON FARM GOLF CLUB | GLADSTONE, NJ

David Townsend is the visionary president of the exclusive Hamilton Farm Golf Club and president of Townsend Capital, a private investment firm based in Maryland.

Townsend attended Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore where he graduated with a degree in economics and started on the nationally renowned lacrosse team. He is a civic leader in Baltimore and contributor to numerous local and national charities.

Since purchasing Hamilton Farm Golf Club in 2001, Townsend has brought the club into the 21st century while maintaining the privacy, camaraderie, decorum, gracious service, and golf traditions that continue to be valued and respected.

He has brought the same unique and distinct perspective that underlies Townsend Capital's approach to investment opportunities to Hamilton Farm's exclusive golf experience.

"He has a complete understanding of the club operations, and he brings an out-of-the-box perspective in thinking," says club general manager Tim Bakels. "Clubs do the same thing a lot, but with his understanding of what a club is really about, David brings a perspective that is

quite different.

"He also allows us to manage the club effectively, to continue the high level of service even in these tough economic times. And that's vitally important today," Bakels said of Townsend, one of BoardRoom top private club presidents of the year.

Situated on an elegant historic country estate, 60-minutes away from Manhattan, Hamilton Farm's facilities include 36 holes of golf designed by notable course architects, Hurdzan & Fry, including the nation's only USGA rated 18-hole par three course.

In addition to the golf courses and practice areas for driving, pitching, chipping and putting, members enjoy legendary five-star personal services and amenities including a Georgian style mansion with 10 guest suites, a spacious and private lodge with four guest suites and meeting accommodations, and an inviting clubhouse offering both casual and formal dining, men's and ladies' locker rooms, a pro shop and terraces.

Hamilton Farm is one of America's premier golf clubs, and home to multiple LPGA tour events, the HSBC Women's



World Match Play Championship, (2005 & 2006), and the Sybase Match Play Championship (2010, 2011 & 2012).

Those who have had the pleasure of seeing and experiencing Hamilton Farm Golf Club are certain that the club is among the world's most exclusive and admired private golf clubs where members consider it both an honor and privilege to belong. **BR**

LARRY TUCKER | PRESIDENT | BIG CANYON COUNTRY CLUB | NEWPORT BEACH, CA

Larry Tucker has been a member of Big Canyon Country Club since 1991, and he assumed the presidency at a critical time in the history of the club.

In early 2009, with the nation's economy in freefall, the club was nearing completion of a new clubhouse including multiple dining outlets, golf pro shop, fitness/spa facilities and swimming pools.

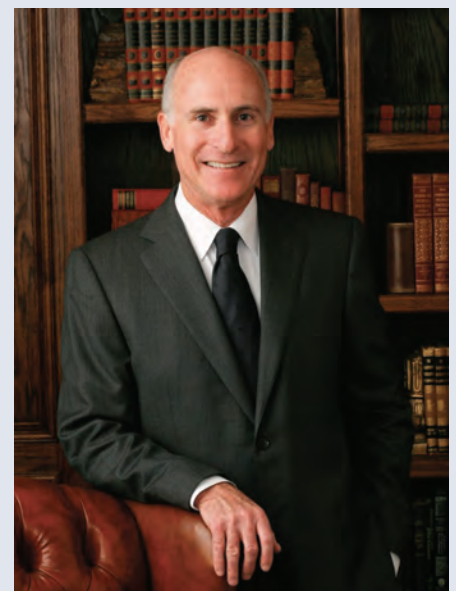
If opening a new facility in this economy was not demanding enough, a second assessment was needed to cover the cost of the project overrun. Under Larry's expert leadership, an assessment was approved and over the next nine months member confidence with club leadership was restored.

Tucker was also instrumental in accomplishing a very complex punch list and close-out procedure with the general contractor, forging an essential partnership

with local officials, and preparing an unused parcel of club land for future sale. These are simply examples of the challenges the club president has faced and resolved.

"Larry's considerable accomplishments were due in part to a balanced approach to leadership. Specifically, he maintains an active involvement yet recognizes that the staff is responsible and accountable for club operations. He's a good listener yet not reacting to every member comment. Staff leadership couldn't have asked for more," commented the club's general manager David Voorhees.

"Through the most demanding year as a nation, as well as our fine club, Larry's humble leadership, dedication and sincere willingness to be a good listener saw Big Canyon through. He is owed a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid."



And it's for these achievements that Larry Tucker ranks as one of BoardRoom's top club presidents for 2009. **BR**