



## John Strayer

John Strayer the founder of the La Costa Over 35 Athletic Club in 1984 will be honored in a celebration of his life and his contributions to the City of Carlsbad on March 17 at Stage Coach Park (3420 Camino De Los Coches, Carlsbad, CA 92009). Current and former members of LC 35 AC are invited to attend the event, which begins at 10:30 am with a brief memorial from prior Presidents of the League, a few members, and Matt Hall, the Mayor of Carlsbad.

As John Strayer noted in 1984 the LC 35 AC was *"for guys older than 35 years of age, who don't want to play with young guys but still want to enjoy playing softball with the emphasis on having fun and not on winning and competition."* Strayer always stressed that sportsmanship was the most important part of the LC 35 AC, and he established rules to make that happen. Every team qualified for the playoffs each year and teams were rebalanced before each new season to establish parity. In the 35 years since the founding of the league, the last place team in the regular season has won the Championship about 25% of the time.

The LC 35 AC now has more than 400 active members, fields 19 teams for summer softball, with 14 teams in the Hotel California division for those under 55 years old, and 7 teams in the Elvis Division for those over 55. The divisional names reflect John Strayer's love of music and John's weekly efforts to make sure music was always playing during games. There are 8 teams in the winter softball season, 11 teams that play 2-hand Touch Football from September to February, and 5 teams in the Over 50 Touch Football division.

The LC 35 AC has sponsored events to benefit the Carlsbad community through its annual poker tournament that has raised more than \$250,000 for the Carlsbad Boys and Girls Club. The LC 35 AC has held numerous *'Swing with Your Heart'* tournaments to help with medical bills for members, funding for the D.A.R.E program for the Encinitas School system one year, and donated \$5,000 to Casa De Amparo in treating and preventing child abuse.

John Strayer's community involvement extended far beyond the LC 35 AC. Strayer was actively involved in the Carlsbad Athletic and Recreation Association, Carlsbad Open Space Committee, La Costa Youth Organization, and Leucadia Soccer Club. Strayer received the 'Carlsbad Parks and Recreation Certificate of Appreciation' and the 'Shining Star of Carlsbad Recreation Award' for his contributions to the City of Carlsbad.

It is rare for a private organization to not only survive for 35 years but prosper as LC 35 AC has. The main reason LC 35 AC remains a vibrant organization providing '*mediocre athletes in the twilight of their careers*' the opportunity to play team sports in a fun environment that emphasizes good sportsmanship as its guiding light is due to John Strayer. John worked tirelessly to establish and make the LC 35 AC what it has become. From all of us who have had so much fun over the past 35 years and continue to do so, you have our Thanks and Gratitude. You will be missed John.