

Fred Arbuckle

BOARDROOM MAGAZINE'S DISTINGUISHED CLUB PRESIDENT FOR 2016

By Dave White, editor

Private Club Presidents of the Year major supporters

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As a volunteer, serving as president of a private club is a large enough task. Serving as president of a second private club is an even larger commitment.

Leading a private club through the transition from a developer-owned to a member-owned club is also an enormous task, so you can just imagine the magnitude of the effort of leading a second club through a similar transition, at the same time.

That's exactly the case with Fred Arbuckle, president of *The Bridges at Rancho Santa Fe*, near San Diego, and president of *3 Creek Ranch Golf Club* in Jackson Hole, WY. Lenny Fisher is general manager at *The Bridges at Rancho Santa Fe* with Chad Becker the general manager at *3 Creek Ranch Golf Club*.

President Arbuckle featured in this issue is one of BoardRoom magazine's two ***Distinguished Private Club Presidents for 2016***. The other ***Distinguished Private Club President*** is Matt Kellogg, president of the *Colorado Golf Club* in Parker, Colorado, southwest of Denver.

President Kellogg will be featured in Boardroom's July/August cover story.

BoardRoom magazine this year is recognizing ***22 Private Club Presidents of the Year – 2016***, for practicing what they preach – leadership for the betterment of their clubs – board presidents or chairs who serve as the volunteer leaders of their club.

It's the ninth year the industry's top private club presidents have been honored by BoardRoom magazine for their outstanding work.

"We accepted nominations and applications from many different clubs for 2016 and are honoring 22 club presidents from Canada and the U.S.," explained BoardRoom magazine's publisher and CEO John Fornaro.

"Our selection of the top 22, Fred Arbuckle and Matt Kellogg as our Distinguished Club Presidents, signifies another successful search for leaders who have contributed so much to their private clubs and their member experience.

"And it's a rare occasion when a volunteer is selected president of two clubs, let alone the massive tasks President Arbuckle accepted. It's a marvelous achievement," Fornaro added.

The impetus for BoardRoom's top president recognition program comes from its sponsors, the Association of Private Club Directors, the parent organization of Boardroom magazine, and Kopplin Kuebler & Wallace, one of the country's leading private club industry consultants.

"Fred Arbuckle is the epitome of good governing leadership and collaboration. To lead two clubs through such change takes great leadership, good governance and a wonderful staff to complement his style," acknowledged Gordon Welch, president of the APCD.

"Congratulations on this tremendous achievement. The Association of Private Club Directors (APCD) is thrilled to recognize this achievement and award," he added.

"Our firm continues to assist BoardRoom magazine in the quest to identify some of the top club presidents," expressed Dick Kopplin, partner in Kopplin Kuebler & Wallace with Kurt Kuebler and Tom Wallace.

"In my over 40 years of working in the private club business, first as a club general manager and then as a search consultant, I've never met an individual who was the president at two different clubs at the same time," Kopplin added. "Then I met Fred Arbuckle. After spending time with Fred, I can see why both clubs would nominate and elect him to that position.

"He has a genuine curiosity about 'best practices' for the governance and management of private clubs. Through his leadership, both *The Bridges* and *3 Creek Ranch* boards of director have experienced presentations on governance and strategic planning.

"Fred has a sincere commitment to providing the best information and data regarding the private club business to his fellow board members so that they can make sound decisions," Kopplin stressed.

And Arbuckle fellow board members at both clubs acknowledge his outstanding achievements.

“Double congratulations on this honor,” expressed Larry Bloch, The Bridges’ vice president. “The recognition is clearly very well deserved. The transition in club ownership was on all levels a great success and wouldn’t have been possible without his long-term dedication to making it happen. All of us at The Bridges have benefited greatly from Fred’s leadership and commitment to excellence.

3 CREEK RANCH GOLF CLUB

“Fred was a perfect partner in this endeavor,” explained Arnold Silverman, 3 Creek Ranch past president and board member. Arbuckle and his wife Helen have been members at 3 Creek Ranch since April 2007.

“A true professional, Fred never lost sight of the goal and never let his ego get in the way of performing for our members. I have never enjoyed a better partner in a challenging situation. The award is well deserved in spades.”

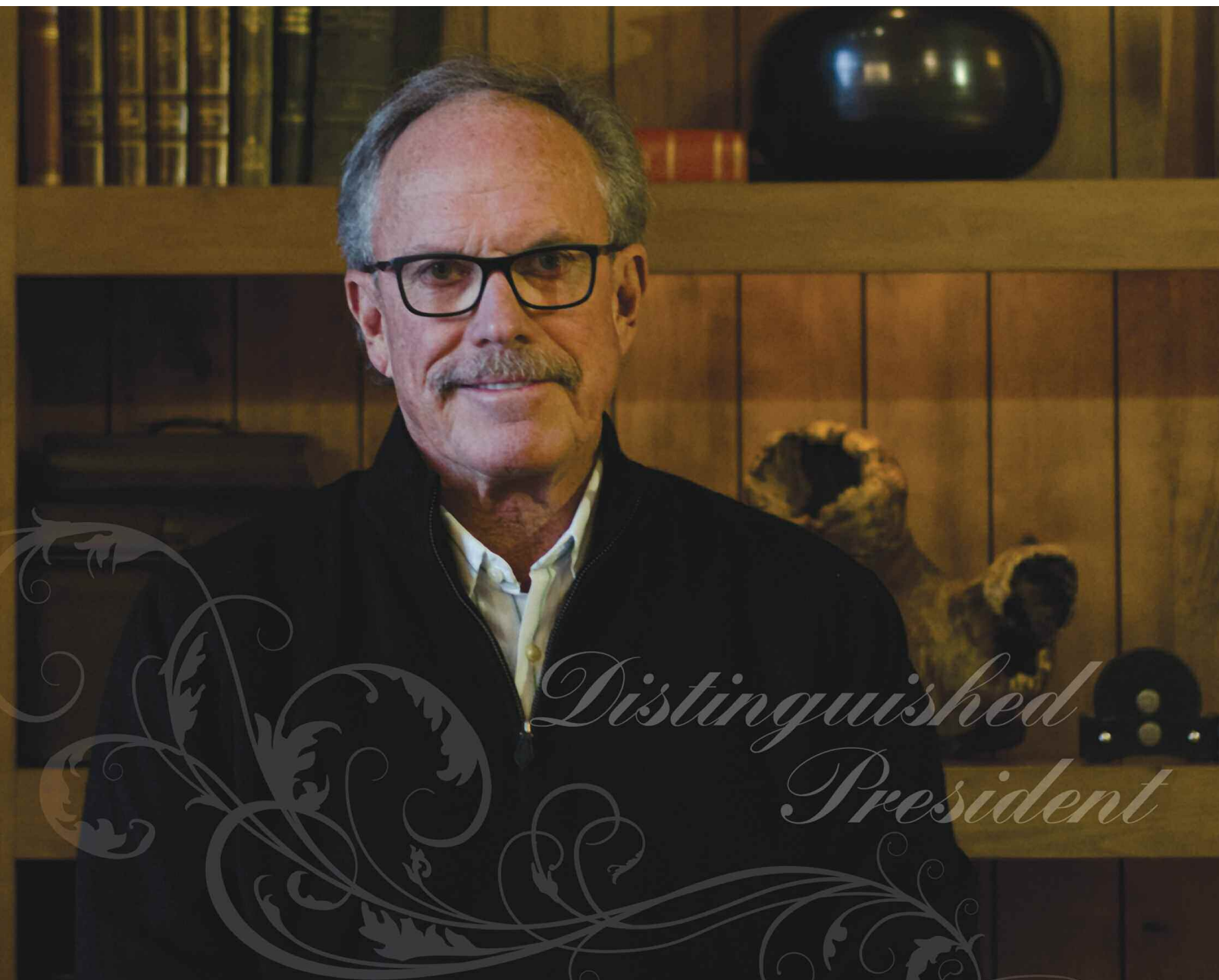
While similarities surface in the process at both clubs, significant differences also arose. After his election as

president of 3 Creek in 2014, President Arbuckle was instrumental with the board and turnover committee in early transition negotiations with the developer. Arbuckle and the committee worked diligently on goals and strategies and developed sound financial modeling for the next 15 years, while also working with staff on developing successful programs for membership growth.

In 2015, after two years of record membership growth, Arbuckle and club management finalized all turnover-related tasks. In May of 2016, more than 90 percent of voting members approved the turnover.

This also started the selection process for a new slate of board candidates, by-law revisions, membership satisfaction surveys, focus group sessions, board retreats, and the initiation of a strategic planning process.

“After more than 26 years in the private club industry, the dedication, passion, and drive of our volunteer board leaders never ceases to amaze me,” expressed 3 Creek Ranch GM Chad Becker. “President Arbuckle’s leadership, ➤



dedication, commitment, and time spent is a testament to his love of the club, fellow members and staff.

“What I find most incredible is that he had been and was doing the same things at The Bridges as their president as well. A rare breed of member and president indeed!” Becker exclaimed.

“The turnover negotiations took over three years, and ... a road was filled with pot holes,” commented past president Silverman. “At the beginning, while there was good will, there was a misaligned slate of what the developer needed and the members needed. At times, agreements were reached only to fall apart at the approval stage as the various partners of the developer had different views on what would be a ‘reasonable deal.’

“There were several opportunities for the negotiations to evolve into a bitter contest to wills,” Silverman added. “That the ultimate outcome was a “win, win” for both sides was not because anyone being smarter or more clever. The excellent outcome happened by maintaining a consistent air of cooperation and optimism regardless of what, at the time, may have seemed provocative.

“That the committee kept its cool for over three years and maintained a climate of optimism and trust was because its patience and the ability to smile in the face of adversity,” Silverman commented.

“Fred has the unique ability to bring individuals together to build a cohesive strategy serving the entire membership,” added Don Opatrny, 3 Creek’s treasurer.

“Working with president Arbuckle has been a positive learning experience in effective due diligence, governance best practices, and challenging ourselves to do better each day,” stressed GM Becker. “His main focuses since becoming president, along with the turnover process, has been benchmarking, developing, and communicating good governance practices.

“He has worked with his fellow board members and the club team in developing new committee roles, responsibilities, and charters. He consistently communicates the importance of a board setting policy and direction while allow-



ing the club’s management team to run the day to day operations of the club,” Becker expressed.

THE BRIDGES AT RANCHO SANTA FE

A 14-year member at the Bridges, Arbuckle served on the developer’s advisory board of governors, but a year before the turnover, Arbuckle was selected one of three members of the acquisition committee, each with different talents that created a comprehensive unit to lead the club through the complex turnover process. The turnover process was spelled out in the original club documents but it involved significant supplemental negotiations and detailed due diligence aimed at clearly identifying the title, survey, environmental, engineering, operating, governance, tax, financial sustainability and other issues critical to the transaction’s success. In addition, political issues requiring constant attention to address individual and group member concerns arose as one of the most challenging and demanding elements of this process.

Also, critical to the success was the ability of the committee to work effectively together as a team, based on an unwavering mutual respect and trust that evolved very quickly and was sustained throughout the process.

“Fred’s character, integrity, objectivity and competence was demonstrated every day and his commitment to get the job done in the best interest of all members was the motivation for the committee to stay the course and achieve its goal,” expressed Dave Schaffer and Andrew Leitch, the other members of the transition team.

A supermajority of the membership approved The Bridges’ transition, and Arbuckle, elected by his board members, has served as the club’s president for two years, as the knowledge acquired during his tenure on the acquisition committee guides him in his duties.

“His dedication and focus are admirable as he continues to lead a team of talented board members as they refine the club’s sales process, operations and governance,” expressed the club’s general manager Lenny Fisher.



Bottom of page 24 ➤

Distinguished President Leads A Distinguished Career

Fred Arbuckle, one of *BoardRoom's Distinguished Private Club Presidents for 2016*, also can be recognized for his distinguished career, especially in the country's real estate development industry.

Matt Kellogg, president of the *Colorado Golf Club*, also selected as a *Distinguished Club President of 2016*, and will be featured in the *July/August issue of BoardRoom*.

Arbuckle and his wife, Helen have been members of *The Bridges of Rancho Santa Fe, CA* since 2002, and members of *3 Creek Ranch Golf Club* in Jackson Hole, WY since 2007.

The couple has two sons; Dan and Kyle. Dan graduated from Utah State with a degree in business, and lives in North San Diego County with his wife and daughter. He works in a local manufacturing company. Kyle graduated from the San Francisco Art Institute with a degree in Fine Art. He continues to live in the Bay Area and works in the hospitality industry.

Professionally, Fred Arbuckle, president of Morrow Development since 1993, has spent most of his working career in the real estate development industry.

Morrow Development is the master developer of the award-winning Villages of La Costa in Carlsbad, CA, a property consisting of four villages on 2,300 acres with approximately 3,300 homes and 2,000 acres of preserved natural open space. The firm has also worked with a pri-

ate owner on the planning, sales and marketing of 35,000 acres of various properties around Telluride, Colorado.

Previously, Arbuckle served as vice president of The Baldwin Company, managing properties, and the planning of a new town consisting of 27,000 homes, six million square feet of commercial and 345 acres of industrial property on the 23,000 acre Otay Ranch; vice president of Leisure Technology, a public company that became one of the nation's largest developers of active adult retirement communities; and vice-president of Harty Companies, a firm with real estate developments in Galveston, Austin and Houston, Texas.

President Arbuckle graduated with a Bachelors degree from California State University, Pomona, and a Masters from the University of Michigan.

His previous club affiliations include *La Costa Resort*, Carlsbad, California, *Shadowridge Country Club*, Vista, California and *Woodlands Country Club*, Houston, Texas.

Arbuckle, a prolific volunteer, and in addition to his commitments to his private clubs, has served as past president of *La Costa Greens* and *La Costa Oaks* and *La Costa Ridge Homeowners Association*; past chair of the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce; past member of the Carlsbad Library Foundation board of Directors, and past executive board member of the Home Builders Council, San Diego. Arbuckle also received an honorable discharge from the United States Army. **BR**

from Cover Story | 22

Shortly after the turnover, the club faced a huge challenge with the departure of its general manager. President Arbuckle led a task force devoted to finding a new GM with unique skills to fit The Bridges' culture – and a person who could deal with significant operational issues. The committee selected Fisher as the person best suited to meet the Bridges' needs.

In the spring of 2016, recognizing the importance for the board to work with a common understanding of club governance, industry trends and the current state of private clubs, Arbuckle initiated a board retreat for board members, as well as nominees in upcoming board elections.

"This ensures that continuing and new board members will have a common understanding for the future," explained Fisher.

The club, under President Arbuckle and GM Fisher, has had to replace management staff in key positions and this has helped improve the club's member experience, as well

as grow the club's membership. A strategic plan also has been initiated, initially through focus groups and a club-wide survey, to establish a baseline understanding of the members' view of the club.

While this has also assisted the board in creating a vision, mission statement and core values for The Bridges, the board continues to refine these findings to establish the club's future needs and improvements, both operationally and physically.

"This will establish new governance directives and priorities to be approved by the club's membership and help ensure fiscal responsibility for the future," Fisher added.

"If you want something done, ask a busy person to do it. The more things you do, the more you can do," the famous comedian and actress Lucille Ball once offered.

To be sure that's true of Fred Arbuckle, president of The Bridges of Rancho Santa Fe and president of 3 Creek Ranch ... significant reasons why Fred Arbuckle is one of *BoardRoom's Distinguished Private Club Presidents for 2016*. **BR** ➤

2016 Top Private Club Presidents of the Year

Volunteer private club board presidents play a huge role in the professional operations of their club, working diligently with their board of directors and general managers, striving for well informed, but not emotional decisions.

BoardRoom magazine's 22 outstanding private club presidents for 2016 exemplify the focus on the leadership responsibilities, the accountability and the management of the board, while providing a healthy respect for the club's management overview.

They understand the importance of working, effectively and efficiently, with their volunteer boards, of working with but not micromanaging the club's management, and the dedication that's required from everyone with whom they work.

They practice what they preach – outstanding leadership to maintain best practices and an extraordinary member experience for their members' clubs, factors clearly exemplified by the selection of **Fred Arbuckle, president of The Bridges of Rancho Santa Fe** and **3 Creek Ranch Golf Club,**

and **Matt Kellogg, president of the Colorado Golf Club** as **BoardRoom Distinguished Private Club Presidents for 2016.**

Systems alone do not insure a good board. Key elements include commitment, competence, diversity, collective decision making, openness, transparency, effective communication with management and the membership, fiscal responsibility, development and establishment of the club's mission, vision and policy direction, especially through establishment of a strategic plan.

Successful board presidents draw upon the expertise of other board members, the club's institutional memory and stewardship of the club's resources. As well, board presidents provide new board members and future presidents with information they need to perform effectively as board members.

Congratulations to BoardRoom's 22 outstanding private club board presidents for 2016. BR

Linda Adamany	Kensington Golf & Country Club	USA	
Fred Arbuckle*	The Bridges at Rancho Santa Fe	USA	
Fred Arbuckle*	3 Creek Ranch Golf Club	USA	
Kathleen Boyce	Wellesley Country Club	USA	
Ken Donovan	Fiddler's Elbow Country Club	USA	
John Fanburg	Mountain Ridge Country Club	USA	
Paul Fulmer	The Hamilton Club of Lancaster	USA	
Janet Ginsburg	Alpine Country Club	USA	
Steve Hokanson	Grey Oaks Country Club	USA	
Ron Hankins	Myers Park Country Club	USA	
Matt Kellogg	Colorado Golf Club	USA	
Michel La Roche	Pinegrove Country Club	Canada	
Dan McCarthy	Mission Viejo Country Club	USA	
Claudia McNulty	Vero Beach Country Club	USA	
Randell McShepard	The Union Club of Cleveland	USA	
Greg Meland	Interlachen Country Club	USA	
Fred Noa	Outrigger Canoe Club	USA	
King Purnell	Cherokee Country Club	USA	
Tom Reni	The Reserve Club	USA	
Dick Schlosberg	Eldorado Country Club	USA	
Thomas Usher	Laurel Valley Golf Club	USA	
Michael Wagen	Hillsdale Golf & Country Club	Canada	
R. Paul Wickes	The Ford Plantation	USA	

* is president at both clubs

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