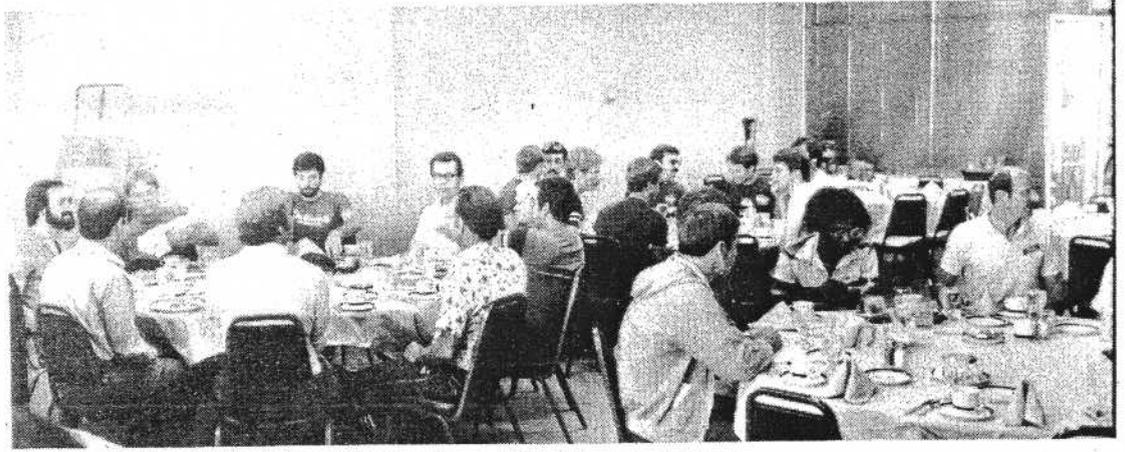


A season kickoff for Great Outdoors

Long Beach plays host to GO and plants the seed for a potential new chapter



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Ripples. For most people in Long Beach, the name automatically is associated with the "hottest place to dance and meet in town." But after May 17, "Ripples" has come to mean another tradition to be included in the annual Great Outdoors schedule.

On May 17, nearly 1,200 men and women crowded into the 5101 East Ocean Blvd. address to officially kickoff the 1981 Great Outdoors season. The locals driving by the popular establishment couldn't help but notice the well-known sign above the door replaced with a large "Great Outdoors" banner. Inside, GO members welcomed inquiring individuals with information about the upcoming season, copies of GO! Magazine and how to join the organization. There was a video presentation on the growing of Great Outdoors, plus a buffet which spread across the width of the Ripples lounge.

"It was the second largest group we have ever seen in the bar," said Ripples' John Garcia, who received special commendation from the GO Board of Directors for his assistance in staging the season kickoff. "This gathering was surpassed in size only by the grand opening of Ripples," said Garcia.

The kickoff party at Ripples was only one highlight of a full day's activities in Long Beach on May 17. It began with an organizational brunch held at the Hyatt Hotel where GO chapter organizers and key members met to outline plans for the coming year.

The afternoon was devoted to the first annual Great Outdoors Volleyball Tournament, held at the beach at the foot of Granada. San Diego eliminated the Los Angeles chapter in the semi-finals, but suffered defeat at the hands of the Desert Adventures Arizona Chapter of GO. Trophies were presented to individual members of the Arizona team in what promises to be another annual event.

Long Beach was selected as the site of the 1981 kickoff because of John Garcia's willingness to serve as host of the kickoff party, and because of the city's close proximity to a number of GO chapters, according to the Board of Directors. Another positive result of the day in Long Beach was the high level of interest in the formation of a new GO chapter in the city. In a Board of Directors meeting May 30, the GO governing body openly encouraged the formation of the new chapter. Board members Don Smith and Nick Durutta, who are also active in the Los Angeles chapter, said the LA group would assist the Long Beach chapter in its development through a series of programs during the year.

