



PalatinePicklers.com

palatinepicklers@gmail.com

MARCH, 2026 NEWSLETTER

NEED MORE PALATINE PICKLERS 3/19



Our first big tournament at the Mt Prospect provided two hours & eight games of fun for 32 of us. Our second Picklr tournament is Thursday, March 19th from 10 to Noon. The Mt Prospect Picklr is located at 211 W Rand Rd. That's just NW of 83 on the SW side of Rand.

I will give each of you a clipboard with a scoresheet attached. You will carry this with you all morning and fill in YOUR score for each game. How long are games? It's not about points; it's about time. Every 15 minutes I will blow my whistle.



Finish your current point, write your score and, if you won, move to the next highest numbered court. If you lost move to the next lowest number court. You're done with your old partner. Just note which of you has the earlier birth month. You'll pair with the earlier birth month of the other pair there. (If same month, go to date.)

Get to Picklr in time to pay their \$20 fee. We'll have a group photo taken and then hit the



court on your scoresheet. Once play is done and you've turned in your clipboard, enjoy relaxing in one of their lounges, while we tally the results so I can get a pic of the top three finishers.

Then we head to Jameson's Charhouse on 68 just east of 53 for lunch.

Email me at aokbarry@yahoo.com to sign up. The first 32 to email me get in.

The following article is Bob McGowan’s first as our new Fun Tournament Manager. Great job, Bob.

RED AND PINK TOURNAMENT

Twelve pairs of Picklers, one in Red and one in Pink, played one game against each of their 11 competitor pairs. Everyone had fun and the top three teams had the most success. Afterwards seven players gathered at KRH for a fun lunch.



Bob, Mary, Brian, Chrissie, Dawn, Phil, Jim, Karen, Tom, Denise, Nichole, Charles, Bill, Kathy, Tony, Stephanie, Natalie, Bryan, Katie, Cynthia, Maureen, John, Alice, & Oliver



Alice & Oliver

Bryan & Katie

Jim & Karen

Maureen & John



Charles & Denise Stephanie & Cynthia Tony & Chrissie Phil & Dawn



Tom & Nichole Bill & Kathy Natalie & Bob Brian & Mary



Kathy & Bill 2nd, Stephanie & Cynthia 1st,
Alice & Oliver 3rd Oliver, Alice, Bob, Stephanie, Tom,
Jim, & Karen enjoy lunch afterward

SEEMS STRIKES NEED TO BE REVIEWED

Even veteran Picklers who have read about strikes and heard about strikes before various events can be forgetful. So strikes apply to Intramurals, Mentoring, and Fun Tournaments. Here's how you "earn" a strike. (1) For Intramurals and Mentoring, you fail to accept your Sunday invitation by 10:00 a.m. Monday. For Fun Tournaments, it's 10:00 a.m. Wednesday. (2) For Mentoring you have **ANY** contact with our Mentoree Scheduler 10:00 a.m. or other than, "I'll be there" or otherwise accept your invitation. Any other communication about mentoring must come to me. (3) Not asking to be taken off an ETBA list you requested before Noon Saturday before an event, for Intramurals and Mentoring. That would be Monday for Fun tournaments. (4) Obviously, a no-show earns a strike, unless there was an 11th hour emergency.

I will suggest again that you write "Maybe Mentoring/Intramurals/Tournament on your calendar so, if a conflict arises, you'll be reminded to email Bob or me to take you off that ETBA list before Noon Saturday (intramurals & mentoring) or Monday (Fun tournaments.)

What does a strike mean to you? Just embarrassment for your first one. However, a second within a year will get you banned from ALL Palatine Picklers organized events for the next six months. Strikes are all about wasting our time needlessly. Just FYI we currently have three Picklers on 6-month suspension.

OUR PALATINE PICKLER VOLUNTEER TABLE AT LUNCHEON

We had our usual table of 10 for selected volunteers of 2025, at the annual Palatine Park District Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. For the first time, Kathy and I were absent. It was two days after I got a new knee, and Kathy is my pretty much full time Caregiver. Each year I select one Pickler to be our Volunteer of the Year. This year that was Linda O'Connor, also known as Shirt Lady. She's been processing all shirt orders, collecting money, placing our orders, picking them up, bagging and tagging them, and seeing that the owners get them for three years now. Once upon a time this was all me. I love Linda. Now all I do is write a check.



Rune, Jim, John, Chrissie, Cathy, Frank, Bob, Linda, Jonny, Dennis

These Picklers are several of those who keep me sane. I am so grateful for all they've done for the Palatine Picklers. Rune is our Mentoree Scheduler. Jim is the probable 2027 President of our Club. John a Senior Mentor. Chrissie is our awesome new Intramural Manager. Cathy is our Media Manager (& my laptop fixer). Frank is an indoor & outdoor Mentor, Bob is our new Fun Tournament Manager, Linda is our Shirt Manager, Jonny adds creative names to our action photos, and Dennis is a nine-year outdoor and indoor Senior Mentor.



Todd Ranum, Athletics Director, Commissioner Jennifer Rogers, & Commissioner Greg Sammons surround Linda



Linda with her plaque



STILL TIME TO ORDER A SHIRT FOR THE PHOTO

If you don't have at least one Palatine Picklers shirt, why not? Many of us have at least six of them. We like different colors and different styles. Anyway, Photo Day will be Friday, April 3rd at Falcon. To be in the photo, you must be wearing a Palatine Picklers shirt. Just go to PalatinePicklers.com, click on SHIRTS, select your style, size, and color and, ON A COMPUTER, NOT A PHONE, place your order. Linda will contact you about paying. They are affordable, and they look really cool. Picklers wear them often in other states/countries and get noticed. They often invite conversations about your game and your awesome club.

ANNUAL PHOTO DAY IS FRIDAY, APRIL 3RD



Here's what we looked like last year. Wear your PPC shirt to Falcon on April 3rd. At 10:00 a.m. I'll again blow my whistle. That's the signal to remember your score and who will be serving when you return. Once again, I will bring loaner shirts from my own collection, for those who forgot or simply, for who knows what reason, haven't yet purchased their first shirt. Wear it for the photo and return it to the box right afterward. IF YOU ARE NOT IN A PALATINE PICKLERS, PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO SNEAK INTO THE PHOTO. Please try to separate colors a bit better than we did last year. It will make a better photo, if we don't have clumps of color here and there. Thanks.

WEARIN' OF THE GREEN TOURNAMENT 3/12

To celebrate St Patrick's month, Bob McGowan is inviting all Picklers to try for one of his roster spots for this Thursday, March 12th tournament in Lake Barrington's Canlan Sportsplex, from 9:00 to Noon. It will be a round robin so you'll play with each of your competitors for one game. Of course you WILL have to be dressed in green. Once the play is done and Bob has taken a photo of the top three finishers, everyone is invited to join for lunch at Kelsey Road House a mile away. That's always a fun ending to this great event. The only charge is Canlan's \$10 daily fee you pay at the lobby desk upon arrival.

To register email Bob at BobMcGowan1946@gmail.com.

ATTENTION PETITE PICKLERS – WE HAVE A DATE CHANGE

Our annual Untall Ladies Tournament for those no taller than 5'2" had to be rescheduled. The new date is Thursday, April 9th, from 9:00 to Noon. Of course, as are all our tournaments, it will be in Lake Barrington's Canlan Sportsplex. This tournament has been a fun one, for a lot of

years. Bob will take up to 12 contestants. If he doesn't get them, the first 8 to apply will play. Just email BobMcGowan1946@gmail.com to, hopefully, get in on this action. And, of course, lunch follows, if your schedule allows.

COME ON HALF OF YOU – SIGN UP

We have an enormous membership, half of which is ideal for our intermediate intramural matches. Our target is 3.0 to 3.5. If in doubt, ask someone if they think you qualify. Just email me you want to try. We'll give you a try or two which you'll enjoy. If you above or below or desired range, no big deal. We just won't keep inviting you. Behind mentoring, intramurals has been our 2nd most successful event. For almost four years, we've had 16 Picklers show up at Lake Barrington's Canlon Sportsplex every other Tuesday morning for three hours of really fun pickleball. Our next matches will be 3/3, 3/17, and 3/31. If you'd like to join the fun, email our Intramural Manager Chrissie at TonyandChrissie@earthlink.net, AND include your MMDDYY Dae of birth. As teams are based on age. We'll enjoy having you with us. You'll pay Canlan's \$10 daily fee at the lobby desk. After the match, you're welcome to join us for lunch a mile away.

ANOTHER APRIL TOURNEY – THIS TIME FOR “TREE TOPPERS”

Yes, it's time to gather our 6'+ men to fight for “top of the tallest.” It's Thursday, April 30th at Canlan, starting at 9:00. Register early, to be dure of making the roster. Just email Fun Tournament Manager Bob at Bob McGowan1046@gmail.com. Think we'll get more little ladies (Untall Tournament) or big boys? Let's see. This is another twice-repeated tournament. And, as always, lunch follows.

FEBRUARY'S WALKERS

This is Natalie's first Walker section on her own. Congrats, Natalie.

SUPER STEPPERS (at least 20,000 steps in one day)

22,172 steps



20,745



WORTHY WALKER (15,000+ STEPS IN ONE DAY)**20,224** steps**17,237** steps**ANY WANNABE PHOTOGRAPHERS OUT THERE?**

I'm not likely to be around our courts for quite a while. I'll be able to take some Mentorees, while I mentor from a chair, but I'd love to have some of you send me pics of Picklers in action. One tip: Close your field to just around the player. I've gotten too many pics of the whole gym with the subject supposedly in the center. You can do better. I'll do the editing. Just sent your pics to aokbarry@yahoo.com.

ANOTHER ARLINGTON REC CENTER TOURNAMENT – 4/11

It's Saturday, April 11th 9:00 to 1:00. The level is intermediate (3.0-3.9). Cost is only \$40 for AHPD members and \$50 for all others. Register with your partner for this one. It will be limited to 32 teams. If a member of ARC or have been in any AHPD classes, register online. Others can register in person at the ARC, 660 N Ridge Avenue, AH. Any questions, contact John Stepal, johnstepal@gmail.com or 847-791-6813.

REMEMBER OUR DISCOUNTS

5% OFF anything sold on PickleballCentral.com, when you use the code CRPALATINEPB.

10-20% OFF Paddletek paddles from Chuck at 847-877-7770 or grtfuldad@aol.com.

20% OFF EngagePickleball - Use discount code 20Jon

Selkirk discount code is Adv-JBradford

25% OFF anything from Gammasports.com, with the code ba_soderborg25

\$10 OFF Vatic Pro paddles ... https://vaticpro.com?sca_ref=3606076.ir5retg8qU Use code CHICAGO

15% OFF anything in Badminton Warehouse in Schaumburg, by mentioning Palatine Picklers

10% OFF anything purchased at Strings Attached IN Arlington Heights, when you mention Palatine Picklers. You can demo their paddles too.

MEET PICKLER JIM FARINA



I'm choosing to write my own profile because I'm a writer. I've written both for work as a copywriter in a creative department and freelanced for outside clients. I've always enjoyed writing, and the practice helps me process my emotions and keeps me present. I have nearly five hundred articles published on [Medium.com](https://medium.com). The platform is a subscription service that focuses on high-quality, long-form, and thoughtful content.

My topics primarily include [personal development](#), [leadership](#), [relationships](#), [life experiences](#), physical and mental health, and a smattering of observational [humor](#) pieces.

I've peppered this profile with links to stories I've published when I feel they are relevant in context or offer more nuanced insight into my person. My mantra for achieving any goal: keep showing up.

[I was born on Christmas Day](#) in 1957 at Michael Reese Hospital. I grew up on Chicago's northwest side. I've lived in the Hermosa, Old Irving Park, and Portage Park neighborhoods of the city. My first job at 16 was stocking shelves at Walgreens on Chicago and Michigan Avenues. I still have a good friend I keep in touch with from that job.

A few highlights from that period included meeting Barbara Eden, of I Dream of Jeannie fame. I was starstruck, but managed to conjure up enough nerve to ask her for an autograph

Working on Chicago's Magnificent Mile afforded a high likelihood of occasional celebrity encounters. I also assisted Princess Caroline of Monaco and was informed of it afterward. Her Mother was the actress-turned-royalty, Grace Kelly. Had it been Grace, I would've been a complete wreck.

At 17, another stockboy and I took advantage of a deal that Greyhound offered – a 21-day pass for wherever the bus line went for \$120. We decided to go west. We walked across the Golden Gate Bridge as the fog rolled in.

We experienced Haight-Ashbury at the waning of the Hippie movement. Los Angeles and Colorado were also highlights on that adventure. We stayed in youth hostels, slept in a park in Riverside, California, one night. I did have relatives in LA and Denver who took us in and showed us around. It was a great way to see some of the country at that young age.

Interestingly, I worked at 3 other addresses on North Michigan over the years.

I retired in March 2024 as a Logistics Director at a market research company. I also spent several years working with the company's Creative Services department. We had offices on the 34th floor of the iconic Diamond Building, across from Millennium Park. Our floor was in the slanted diamond façade of that building with a breathtaking view over the lake, Grant Park, and the museum campus. I walked through Maggie Daley Park almost daily during lunch breaks, enjoying the green space, art sculptures, free concerts, and the lakefront activity. I even caught some glimpses of the elusive red fox that resides in the park. I love the solitude of long, meandering strolls, and they help spark and fan the flame of creativity.

[During the pandemic, I went down to the office daily.](#) I volunteered to keep operations going, and I loved the adventure, risk, and experience of this great city forced to pause.

I had that entire floor, with an amazing 360-degree view, all to myself for about a year and a half. It was surreal to see Michigan Avenue and Lake Shore Drive deserted for months. Some have said that I single-handedly kept the company afloat. I'm not sure that's entirely true, but I am certain a number of plants owe their lives to me.

[I'm extremely introverted](#) and shy by nature. If you know me from the pickleball courts, you might not believe this of me. The friendly, gregarious person you see at play is post-retirement Jim. Trust that I need a lot of alone time between play sessions to recharge my social battery. And every time I show up at the courts, a pep talk to myself precedes it.

I worked very hard to change my story, push down my self-sabotage, negative speak, and social anxiety. I used to drink fairly heavily as a means to smooth out my rougher inhibitions, help relax me, and gain temporary confidence in social arenas.

It was not sustainable. I know it was only a matter of time before my health would suffer. In the past year or so, I've ditched both alcohol and my anti-anxiety meds. I want to do this on my own. I want to experience the life I have left without blunting it with alcohol and meds.

Showing up on the pickleball courts was a huge step, a frightening prospect for me. I was never athletic. Thank God for the welcoming Palatine Picklers community. And thank you for putting up with my insufferable skills on the court in the early days of that journey.

Today, I can compete fairly comfortably at the intermediate level, thanks largely to Bear's tiered learning structure and our dedicated team of volunteer mentors. The welcome I felt also motivates me to give newcomers to the game the same warm, encouraging reception I received. I fully understand the satisfaction the mentoring staff realizes in seeing a mentee advance in confidence and skill over time.



Growing up in the 70s, I was a stoner. In fact, I experimented quite widely with all types of drugs and hallucinogens. Part of this was the crowd I hung with, while also desperately trying to escape my demons and social insecurities. I could not focus in a traditional classroom setting. My mind was always wandering. Today, neurological labels are in place to identify many of these learning challenges. I'm also on the autism spectrum and neurodiverse to some degree. I did not have a college experience. My education was on my terms. [I read everything I could get my hands on](#), from fiction, classic literature, science, history, philosophy, and nature. I've also read through the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It took two years. Being on the spectrum brings with it unique superpowers. I'm ultra-creative and an empath – very



sensitive to others' emotional energy. It's both a blessing and a curse.

I discovered that helping others wherever I can gave me a sense of purpose and got me out of my own head. When the day is done, I like to think I did something to make our corner of the world a little better.

One of the most memorable times I've had on the pickleball courts at Hamilton was on a

Jim, Tari, Nicole, & Wendy at Ice Experience, Racine hot, humid, and uncharacteristically windless Saturday afternoon during a mentoring session. A young man, overdressed for the conditions, came through the gates and wanted to learn the game. This kid had severe physical disabilities and was mobility-impaired. His hands were gnarled and twisted. The congenital limb difference was apparent. He also suffered a speech impediment, but was not completely unintelligible.

Bear, Steve, one of the mentors assigned that day, and I worked exclusively with that young man that afternoon. By the end of that session, he had successfully returned a few balls and made contact once or twice with balls served gently to him. He said something like, "Thank you, guys, so much for being kind to me." It broke my heart because the implication of his statement made me think people are often "unkind." Probably not intentionally unkind, but dismissive. I thought about the tremendous courage that guy had to muster to show up on the court that day. My only goal was for him to leave feeling like he had won. I never saw him again, but that afternoon stayed with me for a long time.

I always carry extra paddles for those occasions when I notice somebody curiously clinging to the fence perimeter to watch us play. I'll approach them, mention that I have an extra paddle, and ask if they want to give it a go. "We can just start by dinking." I'll offer, as a low-friction introduction to the larger aspects of the game.

I also find that dinking at the kitchen line is a great place to get to know others. I've become pretty skilled at breaking the ice and mastering the art of elevating small talk to something more substantial. Most appreciated the friendly welcome.

I find opportunities every day to offer help to others. They don't need to be grand gestures. Small acts of kindness can boost someone's day immeasurably. The next time you think, "I should really give so-and-so a call and see how they're doing, act on that instinct. And, when you follow through and end that call, that warm after-glow you feel for a time is what I'm talking about.

Being consistently reliable, curious, innovative, and task-oriented, I've never had a problem finding meaningful work or getting quickly promoted despite my lack of formal education. When I was in my early 20's, I worked retail selling shoes at the Brickyard shopping mall. Soon after, I was offered a manager position at Payless ShoeSource stores. The Topeka, Kansas-based company was just entering the Chicago market. I excelled at achieving nearly flawless inventory audits. I might mention that an obsessive need for order in certain areas is another quality plagues many of us on the spectrum.

I became the region's troubleshooter. If a store had inventory problems, they would terminate or transfer the manager, and I would step in to serve a one-year term to straighten out the mess. Around 1982 I managed their highest-volume store in Chicago's Logan Square neighborhood.



A young woman manager, Tari, who transferred from LaSalle, Peru, Illinois, was assigned to manage a store a few miles northwest of my location on Milwaukee Avenue – Six Corners. At 25, we became fast friends and then fell in love. **(at left is us in our dating days)** Tari is an introvert, too. People always wondered how two extremely shy people ever got together. I recall telling Tari, "I'd marry you tomorrow on the condition we do it downtown at city hall with a justice of the peace. No formality. No fanfare." She agreed without hesitation. In June 1984, we were wed,

followed by a small gathering of family and friends in my parents' yard.

We bought our first house in the Portage Park neighborhood when we were 26. We made the down payment using money Tari's mother had set aside for a wedding. We thought it more prudent to invest it in property than to put it toward a stressful one-day event where we'd both be uncomfortable.

After five years, we sold the house at a good profit. On the day we signed closing papers, we returned to find the house in flames. Our only concern was our young cocker spaniel, Gizmo, who was inside the house. The fire department hadn't arrived yet. I began busting out

windows, allowing the black, acrid smoke to vent. Neighbors began gathering on the street. When the fire department arrived. We told them there was a dog inside. More smashing glass. There was a firefighter on the roof, punching holes through the shingles and plywood. They could not find our dog inside and questioned whether he was even in there at all. Eventually, a fireman emerged with the limp, furry body. They laid him on the lawn, unconscious, but still barely breathing. One fireman knelt down and administered oxygen by holding a mask contoured for a human face over the dog's muzzle. Tari, along with a neighbor couple, jumped in a car and raced him to the emergency vet. Because of my compulsive behavior, I never leave the bedroom with the bed unmade. We had a heavy bedspread that reached the floor on all sides. Gizmo managed to scoot under the bed, and it served as a protective fire curtain.

The epicenter of the fire was in the kitchen. Our bedroom and the rest of the house were impacted by smoke damage. Our pet survived. He did have some lung damage and had a wheeze the rest of his days, but he became loving and playful again soon after the horrifying ordeal. The interior of the house was completely destroyed, and we lost everything, including a 75-gallon saltwater reef tank with livestock, and my coveted autograph from Barbara Eden.

The buyers insisted that the insurance company remodel the house to their taste and specifications. They had been in the house earlier that day for a final walk-through, while Tari and I were at work. The whole series of events was suspicious. We moved in with my parents for about four months while the house was being remodeled. We got rid of those buyers and had the house redone to our tastes. It turned out so nice that we briefly considered taking it off the market and living there for a few more years, but we sold it quickly at an even higher price to a lovely young couple. The cause and circumstances surrounding that fire are speculative at best and will always remain a mystery.



(above) Nicole, Wendy, Tari, & Jim

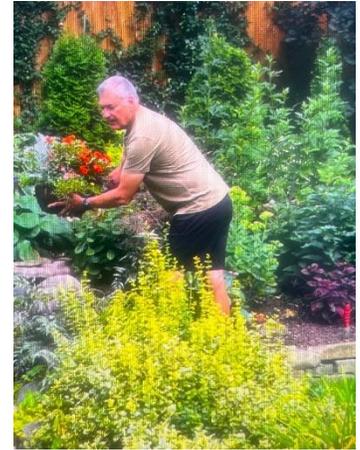
We moved to that house, along with Gizmo, in 1990. the same house where our daughters Nicole and Wendy were born. Nicole is now 34, Wendy is 32. And we are in that same house today, with a

As the discussion of raising a family percolated, we warmed to the idea of moving to the northwest suburbs, where we felt we could get more bang for our buck while still having easy access to the city's offerings. We both worked downtown. We followed the railroad tracks until we found what we liked in Palatine, a nice four-bedroom colonial near the high school in the Reseda subdivision.



couple of new additions, our very energetic **corgis, Mochi and Emmett.**

I didn't replace my reef tank, but being gardeners, I always wanted a **koi pond and water garden (at right)**. I dug the pond myself the first year in the house. About eight years ago, we hired professionals in landscaping and water features to upgrade my efforts. We are quite proud of the result. It's calming and brings continuous wildlife year-round.



After my relatively recent retirement, I wanted to identify some activities that would keep me moving and provide social interaction. I kept running into articles about pickleball being the perfect answer for older adults and retirees, helping them maintain good health and build social connections. It seemed ideal as it would check both boxes.

I was hesitant, as competitive team sports were out of my comfort zone. I was always one to compete with myself – I was a runner, swimmer, and cross-country skier. I still am. There is nothing at stake with these solitary activities. No looking like a fool in front of spectators. No spotlight on me to make the winning shot. No beating myself up for letting a teammate down when I miss that shot. I agree that these are all irrational thoughts, but they stem from the challenges I mentioned earlier. I educated myself about the science of neuroplasticity and was convinced I could reframe, relearn, and replace negative thinking with positive, affirming thoughts, and follow through with action. It took a great measure of courage to walk into Falcon Park's courts that first day with my cheap plywood paddles. I thought I found a fantastic deal on Amazon. I purchased 4 "pickleball" paddles and some balls for something like \$29. I asked someone standing near the rack-up area where I should put my paddle. After a quick assessment of my gear, he chuckled and pointed to a nearby trash can. Not a great start out of the gate.



My longtime friend (over 40 years), Karyn, a natural extrovert and athlete, agreed to come with me for moral support and to serve as a social buffer. She had an extra paddle (USA Pickleball Approved), and we played. We met a half a dozen welcoming people who surely sensed my fear and trepidation. I was awful. The only incentive to continue coming back were the welcoming people and my fierce determination to serve the ball into the proper quadrant of the court.

(Pickle for a Purpose benefitting Little City)

I was encouraged to attend the Palatine Picklers' free mentoring sessions. I believe I was assigned to court #1 for almost a year. In mentoring terms, that is the beginner's court, until your skill level dictates a promotion to courts 2, 3, 4, and so on.

I generally find myself on courts 4 and 5 these days. I still wander back to court #1 and even play there on occasion, to encourage those players and share my journey. Incremental growth is real. Often, others will recognize your change and progress before you do. Eventually, under the tutelage of John Stepal, I managed to win a handful of "mini-tournaments" at The Arlington Ridge Center and placed 2nd in last fall's Palatine Picklers Mentoree Tournament.

When I do get my ass handed to me, which feels more often than not, it's by a seasoned breed of players who respect my game and attitude. I also consider many of them friends. I came initially to play the game, and it's the relationships I've made that keep me coming back for more.

"And therefore, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe it has done me good, and will do me good; and I say, God bless it!" --Charles Dickens

Accomplishments and Service Highlights

- 2008 – I ran a marathon in Anchorage, Alaska, a race organized through the American Leukemia Society, where I raised \$6,000 in donations to support the cause and honor a local patient. It was an ugly run, but I finished.
- 2005 – September, Hurricane Katrina - I went down to New Orleans and the surrounding areas twice with teams who mobilized relief efforts through The Orchard Church in Arlington Heights. The work was exhausting, and our efforts seemed futile, but those we served were so thankful for our presence, standing alongside them, listening to their stories. This was my catalyst, moving me to develop a heart of service for others.
- 2009 – I wrote a screenplay based on a semi-autobiographical account of Jack London's life and times (public domain). My screenplay, *Martin Eden*, placed Second Place in the Inkwell Opportunity Screenplay competition. I was a semi-finalist in the Sundance Film Festival's Table Read My Screenplay international competition. An EP, Paul Kurta, who produced AMC's period series *Hell on Wheels*, requested my work for consideration, and we had some back-and-forth dialogue. I have another idea along these lines that I'm currently developing.
- 2010 and Beyond – Volunteering was something I felt needed to be integrated into my life, even if it's simply donating blood and plasma on a regular basis. I've found



opportunities both abroad and locally through non-denominational Christian groups and NFP volunteer organizations. I've been to Haiti 3 times. I've joined teams serving in Guatemala and Mexico. The work has focused on building projects, planting vegetable gardens, distributing clothing and supplies, and administering anti-parasite treatments. The relationships and experiences are priceless. I've also served locally for several years with Men in Action, a church group that helps widows and single mothers with household tasks, yard work and minor repairs. Now my mother at 93 is recently widowed and living "independently". She is now the recipient of this effort.

- Currently, I've been involved with a global nonprofit volunteer organization called [ENGIN](#). I have weekly one hour video chats with students in Ukraine. The organization vets, trains and pairs English speaking volunteers with students who share similar interests to help them improve their conversational English. It's a mutually beneficial relationship at the intersection of language practice, cultural exchange, mentorship, and offers friendship and moral support.

The most recent honor and offer is that Bear has tapped me as a potential successor in leading the Palatine Picklers upon his impending retirement. I can think of as many reasons that do not qualify me as there are that do. I've not made any decisions yet in that regard. Perhaps it's another chapter in my story that's yet to be told.

MEET A FEW NEW PALATINE PICKLERS



Aya



David



Lelo



Mike

Actually, we've had 17 Newbies since the last newsletter. Some of their photos will appear next month. Others I've yet to meet. Since I'm not showing up at courts much these days, it may be 2-3 months before you meet some of these.

OK NEWER PICKLERS – HERE'S YOUR INVITATION TO LEARN MORE AND GET BETTER

Through April our only mentoring sessions are every other Tuesday morning in the Canlan Sportsplex in Lake Barrington. They run from 9:00 to Noon. During that time, you, and three Mentorees of presumed similar skill and/or experience will be coached by each of six Mentors.

All you have to do is let me know the dates you Expect To Be Available. I'll put you on those ETBA lists. Then Sunday afternoons before the mentoring sessions, I invite 24 of you to attend. Of course, if a conflict arises, be sure to email me to take you off that ETBA list.

Plan to arrive by 8:45 to pay Canlan/s \$10 fee at the lobby desk. At Noon you're invited to join us for lunch a mile away at Kelsey Road House.

Here are the remaining indoor dates: 3/10, 3/24, 4/7, and 4/21. Just email me at aokbarry@yahoo.com, to get on all the ETBA lists your schedule allows. Thanks

NOT TOO EARLY TO SIGN UP FOR SUMMER MENTORING

Our outdoor mentoring season begins in May. We'll still have walk-on sessions from 3:00 to 5:00 each Thursday and Saturday at Hamilton. However, our most valuable sessions are on Wednesday mornings at Sycamore. These two sessions (9:00 to 10:30 and 10:30 to Noon) are by invitation. Just email me at aokbarry@yahoo.com with the dates you Expect To Be Available. If you'd be unable to attend one of the 90-minute sessions, be sure to let me know. On Monday afternoons I send invitations to 24 of you (12 for first session and 12 for the second). You must accept your invitation by 10:00 a.m. Tuesday. If you do not, I have to replace you which isn't always easy, as those who don't get an invitation tend to make other plans. That's why you'd earn a "strike." (See descriptions of strikes in earlier article.)

Here are the first few months of mentoring Wednesdays: 5/6, 5/13, 5/20, 5/27, 6/3, 6/10, 6/17, and 6/24. I'll be happy to add you to all the ETBA lists you request. During your hour and a half at Sycamore, you'll spend half an hour with each of the day's three Mentors. You'll spend the whole time sharing courts with peers of what I hope to be similar experience and abilities.

As always we do not charge for mentoring. It's our pleasure to help you develop your skills, learn new drills, brush up on the rules, and have a good time with other Picklers.

These Wednesday mentoring sessions began ten years ago and have helped more than 800 Palatine Picklers enjoy the game a little more.

PICKLERS APLAYIN'



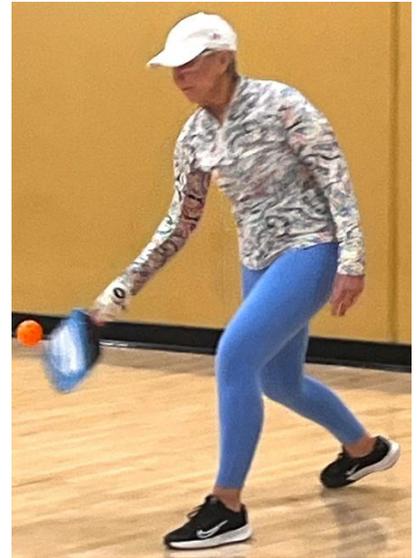
Chrissie



Bill



Gary



Chris



Debbie



Tommy



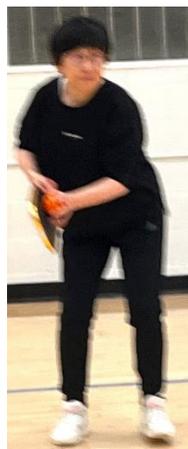
Ron



Patty



Scott



Ping



Paul



Sharon



Susan



Terry



Michael



Maria



John



John



Janet



Loren



Jay



Joanne



Mary



Kent



Kevin



Marv



Lyn



Mario



Cindy



Bill



Barb



Bob



Brian



Colleen



Gary



Dave



Mary Jo



Jaime



Chris



Janet



Jim



Ann



Bob



Karen



Gerd



Sally

ENJOY YOUR MARCH TO SPRING



This is always an exciting time of year ... Some days we play indoors, and some days we play at Hamilton. It's all good. I'm looking forward to returning to the courts one of these months myself. As you can see, I'm trying skiing to give me increased range of motion in my new knee.

There's still room to get on the roster for our March 19th Picklr tournament. Just email me. There may be room to join the Wearin' of the Green tournament on the 12th. Just email Bob.

Petite Picklers should also email Bob, to join other Untall Ladies for their annual tournament. This year it's April 9th. Always a fun one/

