



**PalatinePicklers.com**

**palatinepicklers@gmail.com**

## **FEBRUARY, 2025 NEWSLETTER**

### **WE TURN 10 THIS MONTH**

To paraphrase a famous movie line, If we build it, they will come. It was 10 years ago I started this club with my hand-drawn logo, 18 members, and the idea of creating fun and beneficial programs for members. It worked. We now have 4,200 members, mentor more than 150 Picklers each year, have a dozen or so fun tournaments each year, have about 70 in intermediate intramurals, have a few social gatherings, and even “give back” with Feed My Starving Children. A summary of our fun 2024 appeared in the January newsletter. In upcoming pages I’ll summarize our ten-year history, in kind of a rare “Yea me” article.

### **MAYBE STILL TIME FOR YOU COUPLES**

On the morning of Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup> we’ll have our 3<sup>rd</sup>, annual Red & Pink Valentines Tournament. You do not have to be married or even SOs to enter. You’re just a “couple” for the day. One of you wears red, the other pink. This is for fun. No one cares how well you play. The best three couples will probably take the top three spots. You’ll play against each of the other pairs. So email me at [aokbarry@yahoo.com](mailto:aokbarry@yahoo.com) with your partner’s name. As with all my events, this will take place from 9:00 to about 11:45 in the Canlan Sportsplex in Lake Barrington. AND afterward we have lun ch a mile away in a VERY Valentiney environment.



Adam



Bruce



Natalie



Steve



6. Nancy



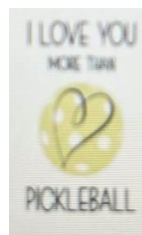
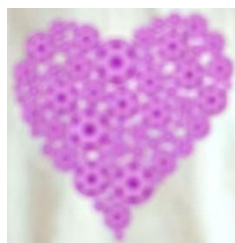
Ramesh



Natasha



Nancy



## MEET PICKLER SHEILA O'GARA



Sheila was born in 1959, along with her brother and sister. These triplets not “Wow” enough for you? OK, they were # 9, 10, and 11 in their family of 12 children.



They grew up in Evanston and attended St Ahanasius School 1-8 and then Evanston HS. Photo at right is from 1962. Sheila is on the right. The triplets in 1960 an on their last birthday



Shela played varsity badminton and was on the varsity diving team. She was also in the soccer club. She really wanted to be on the swim team, but didn't swim the required mile. The coach sent her to the diving coach. She proved a quick study, and he had her doing forward and backward 1 ½ somersaults and twists. All was great, until she hit her head on the board performing an inward 1 ½ somersault after her junior year. On the way to the hospital, the ambulance ran out of gas. She was put in the back of a squad car. Strange enough? Hardly. She shared that back seat with a bunch of plants. Why? Because the officer didn't have a partner and needed “someone” to talk to. Not done with strange yet. They managed to lose one of her new Adidas gym shoes for which she'd saved babysitting money for quite a while. (In a family



of 12 kids, brand new anything was a rarity so that really hurt.) Once at the hospital, ~~Page~~ 3 of 32 received 13 stitches. Fear of hitting the board again did impact the quality of her future dives.

Perhaps, her best sports memory was scoring a soccer hat trick (3 goals) in one of the few games her Mom got to see. Her Dad was “always” working, and her Mom had 11 other kids to nurture.

Sheila earned a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education at the University of Illinois. Her teaching career took off at McKenzie School in Wilmette and ended at Willow Grove in Buffalo Grove. She retired two years ago. In between she taught PeeWee sports to 4-5 year olds in 10 different Park Districts and taught 3-4 yr old preschool in Wilmette, was Director for Tiny Tots Day Camp and the Ajer School Program for the Wilmette Park District. She was also Tennis Instructor for Kelly’s Day Camp.

In 1981 Houlihan’s Restaurant and Bar. She and Terry O’Gara noticed they were each wearing the same Irish Claddagh ring. They married four years later. They raised kids and lived a happy life, until Terry passed from cancer in 2017.

In 2019 she was set up on a blind date with Mike Huber, and they’ve been together ever since. His wife had died 3 months after Terry passed so they had an immediate bond. Their first date was at the County Line Tavern in Buffalo Grove. They talked for over three hours, until the restaurant closed. Then COVID came calling, and they were each other’s “safe” friend. In 2022 they bought a house in Deer Park and are now engaged. **break to see more Picklers in action.**



Satish



Sheri



Tom



Sue







Peggy



Linda



Karen



Kevin



Let's learn about Sheila's kids. She has 2 sons. Ryan is 36 and married to Audrey, living in Lexington, KY where he's a realtor. Connor 34 married to Lauren with their 1.5 yr old Claire in Orlando where he's a Sr sportswriter covering SEC football. Photo at right shows Connor, Sheila, Terry, and Ryan in 2013.



Sheila has lived in Evanston, Skokie, Buffalo Grove, and Deer Park. Her hobbies include photography, sports, clubs, and volunteering. Photography is her favorite. In 2011 she began her own business called Sheila Grace Designs. Visit at [www.sheilagrace designs.com](http://www.sheilagrace designs.com). You'll see all the products she sells. Her favorite subjects relate to Door County, the Chicago Botanic Garden, or birds. In addition to through her website, she sells in a number of stores and restaurants in Door County and at local craft fairs. Her work has won numerous awards and been featured in newspapers and brochures. Her Facebook page has more than 1200 followers. She recently began painting with water colors, after taking an intensive, week-long class at the DC Peninsula School of Art. She sells her paintings at her shows too. Next summer she plans to learn to paint with acrylics, pastels, and oils. Photo shows some of her work displayed in a Door County gallery.



**BUY PALATINE PICKLER SHIRTS** ... Our current order has been on hold since October. We need 12, before we can place it. Go to [PalatinePicklers.com](http://PalatinePicklers.com) and get a good one.





Sheila comes from a family of golfers. Only two of 32 family do not play, and her dad played until he was 93. While student teaching, she took 6:00 a.m. lessons.

Then she taught seniors that lesson the rest of the day. They have an annual family tournament at Cog



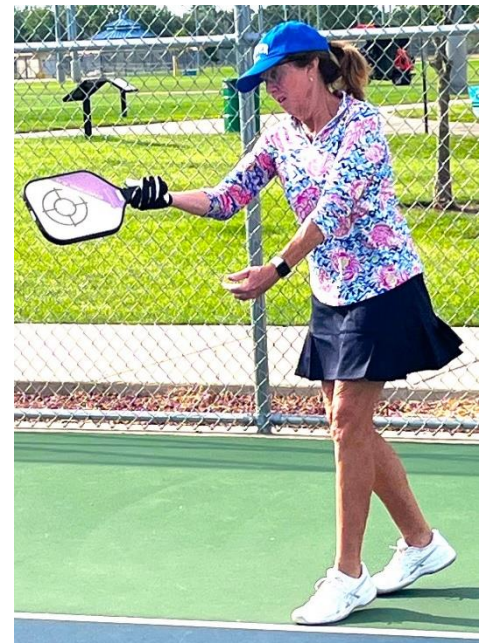
Hill. She shoots 100 +/- . She also enjoys kayaking and stand-up paddle boarding. Upper left photo is Dad's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2016. Above photo is kayaking with Mike.

Left photo shows Connor's wife Lauren, Connor, & Sheila paddle boarding at Nicole Bay in Door County. At right is Mike and Sheila on Peninsula State golf course in Door County,



She began pickleball two years ago. She's self-taught, but had played a lot of tennis over the years so found the transition pretty easy. She is now one of our Mentors. When she's not playing at Hamilton, Falcon, or Birchwood, she's playing in Palm Springs where she and Mike vacation for two months each winter.

While playing in Buffalo Grove, the Palatine Pickleball Club was suggested to her. The timing was ideal, as they'd just moved to Deer Park. She was amazed and delighted with how nice and welcoming everyone here was, even though she was pretty much a beginner. She's received so much advice and encouragement from those far more skilled. That's what makes this group so special. Everyone is out to have a good time, and they don't take themselves as seriously as they do elsewhere. She plays it forward and enjoys helping and encouraging newer players. That's why she's been an excellent Mentor for us.







Bucket list items already checked off: Buying her own place in Door County (Sunrise photo was taken from her back porch in Ellison Bay, WI)

... Driving up the Pacific Coast Hwy in a convertible ...  
Listening to



great music in Nashville ... Eating fresh lobster in Boston ... Hiking through Zion Nat'l Park and Bryce Canyon ... Spending winters somewhere warm ... Seeing a concert at Red Rocks Park in CO ... visiting the Badlands, Black Hills, & Custer State Park in South Dakota ... Seeing Northern Lights. Photo was taken in Egg Harbor, WI (DC, of course).

Bucket list items yet to be experienced: Ireland ... Visiting more Nat'l parks (will snowmobile through Yellowstone in March) ... African safai ... Learn to snow ski out west.



Since 2009 her family has been into country music, to go along with her love of classic rock. Every July they all come home to attend Country Thunder, a 4-day event in Twin Lakes, WI. They think they've seen every living country star they can imagine.

Photo shows family and friends enjoying this event in 2015.

At right is Sheila and Mike at a Bear's game.

Interesting closing note: Sheila doesn't eat anything orange.



Ann



Bob



Chris



Dale





Bob



Cheryl



Chris



Brian



Carole



Jenna



Nancy



Rich

## LET'S FILL OUR FEBRUARY TOURNAMENTS

**RED & PINK COUPLES VALENTINES TOURNAMENT** ... Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup> 9:00 to Noon in the Canlan Sportsplex in Lake Barrington. One of you wears red, the other pink. You'll play one game against each of the other couples. Afterward we go to lunch in Kelsey Road House's Valentiney lower level. Just email me at [aokbarry@yahoo.com](mailto:aokbarry@yahoo.com).

**UNTALL LADIES TOURNAMENT** ... This is another annual favorite. If you're a female who doesn't tower above 5'2", this one is for you. Also in Canlan 9:00 to Noon, but on Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. Again, it will be a round robin so you will partner with each of your diminutive diva peers for one game. Then, of course, we go to lunch a mile away. Sign up by emailing me at [aokbarry@yahoo.com](mailto:aokbarry@yahoo.com).



Jeff



Ryan



Pam



Mike



Polly



Maureen



Mike



Michaela

## STILL TIME & SPOTS AVAILABLE FOR 2/16 TOURNAMENT

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual **DENSITY MATTERS** tournament will be Sunday, 2/16 in Lake Zurich's Foglia YMCA. As I write this there are still openings in all three divisions (Beginner 3.0 and below, Intermediate 3.1-3.9, & Advanced 4.0 and above). Fee is \$50. Register at

<https://mydensitymatters.org/calendar/pickleball-tournament-2025-02-16/>

There is also a Charcuterie Class adjacent to the gym. Cost is \$40 and includes the tools you'll need to create a delicious charcuterie board. It's taught by Personal Chef Ann Wayne. Register at <https://mydensitymatters.org/calendar/charcuterie-for-your-cutie/>







Angie



Bob



Anna



Brian



Clay



Don



Fred



Don



Gary



Gary



Janet



Janice

**LET'S CELEBRATE 10 YEARS OF THE PALATINE PICKLERS**



This will be fun for me but also embarrassing. I am not a one-man band. In July's newsletter identified all those who have helped make the Palatine Pickleball Club the fantastic group we are. Still, I can't ignore that I'm the engine that powers the fun and growth. Other than writing my resumes, this may be the first time I've patted myself on the back in print. Sorry, but some of you may enjoy seeing everything YOUR club has accomplished in its first decade.

## 2015

In February the Park District asked me to start a pickleball club. They were well aware I was already their first and second most involved volunteer, for my work with hockey and baseball. I said, "OK." That month I spent time on my drawing board creating our logo and recruiting our first 12 members, including a Board of Directors of six. That worked for about six months, until they left and I was left as monarch. It was then that I began lobbying the Palatine Park District for lining the two tennis courts at Sycamore and Locust to accommodate pickleball. They were receptive and did just that. I began writing my monthly newsletters. It was a few months later that I recruited Neal Harris to help me mentor brand new Picklers. Fast forward, we now have 4 mentoring sessions each week in the outdoor season, serving as many as 140 Picklers each year and 24 every other Tuesday for three hours during which each will spend half an hour with a different Mentor in the indoor season. I liked an idea from Debbie Paneral so decreed that, inside or out, the North side serves first in Palatine.

The summer of 2015 Al Zaman (member of both HE and Pal) and I arranged a travel team match in which we got blown away. Then I arranged for us to go to Libertyville to play them, after they got blown away by Hoffman too. This time we did the blowing away. Also that first summer, we lost our first Pickler, Emily "Tucky" Marchica. She was also a member of Hoffman so I got Hoffman to secure Fabbrini for a Saturday and launched the Tucky Tournament. It raised more than \$1200 for her charity. I calligraphed and framed our "medals."



Dave



Cindy



Evelyn



Freddy

## 2016

I called for our first Photo Day for those in PPC shirts. It's been an almost annual event ever since. I asked PPD to get colored balls for Birchwood, as their white ones were hard to see.



They got them right away. I requested Sycamore and Locust tennis courts be lined for pickleball use of 32 (done in spring 2017)

I was emailing newsletters in groups of 24 to our members.

Meanwhile, our needs had expanded so I asked the PPD to give us actual pickleball courts. They did. They gave us two purely pickleball courts along with the one lined tennis court at both Sycamore and Locust. I expanded our shirts to include wicking, and eventually sweatshirts ... then, after COVID with help of Carol Hawes and John Guilfoil, we started offering caps.



Gillian



Ivan



Jen



Karen

## 2017

Requested the Community Center's tennis courts be replaced by 6 pb courts (No) ... Captains of four clubs started the 3.5-4.0 league at Canlan. Each of us Captains seeded his gender and mixed teams. I reported Div 1 and Div 2 match results each newsletter ... 2 more ½ court ladders ... 155 shirts ordered ... June 1<sup>st</sup> picnic at Sycamore ... May hit 500 mbrs ... added V-neck & wicking shirts ... June 50s King of Court ... July pb shirt collection contest (Lynne Weisbart had 64) ... July introduced "win 3 in a row rec move up, lose 3 in a row competitive moved down" policy ... Aug introduced Pickleballcentral discount ... Our club covered in a Multi-family design magazine article ... Birchwood rec & competitive policy for evenings ... final ladder ended in Sept ... introduced all newsletters in library on website ... October King & Queen tournaments run simultaneously ... Introduced the Glare court policy for Falcon... Tue & Thu lower travel matches began ... 10/23 73 Picklers at Falcon signed Chuck's sign-in sheet) with 30-60 min wait between games so I asked the PPD for more playing times. Birchwood was the appreciated answer. Oct membership hit 600 ... fun shirts featured in Dec ... 16 played for lower & 29 played for upper travel team in Canlan ... ping pong tournament.



John



Kate



Mary



Lisa

## 2018

Turned reins of Div 1 travel league over to Jim and Brigitte Latal ... party at Portillo's ... Greg Kuhs became MailMaster – He had me send him our Newbies' info and he added them to a MailChimp list. Then I sent him each newsletter, and he got it out. Unfortunately, once past 2,000 recipients, MailChimps cost became prohibitive so more than half our club has to go to the website each month to read the current newsletter and any Tweener Memo I may write between newsletters. That really saved me time. ... I continued to put all newsletters in a binder at the Falcon desk, for anyone interested or without email ... King & Queen tournaments for those 63-72 ... raised shirt options to current level ... April Photo Day ... Olive Garden lunch ... another skinny singles tournament ... Suggested to PPD a contrasting color for Hamilton kitchens ... May's newsletter included my poem about the US Open & a ton of license plates there ... 50+ Queen of Court tournament ... Any age King tournament ... May lunch at Lamplighter ... June 721 members ... King 65+ tourney ... July 50-59 K & Q tournaments ... Famous Pinehurst Resort in NC traded me for 4 PPC shirts ... Bought Locust lockbox and filled with balls ... Began sending Picklers to Locust, when Sycamore got too crowded ... Had 32 attend a mentoring session – I took newest 8 to Locust (soon went to invitations to two, 90-minute sessions each for 12 students) ... 8/1 welcomed 800<sup>th</sup> member ... Sept – Oldest 8 men & Oldest 8 ladies' tourneys ... Co-ed skinny singles tourney (1 man & 2 ladies in top 3) ... attached purple Crown Royal bag to my chair for anonymous, ball donations.

OOPS ... Reformatted this newsletter a couple times. Now I'm ready to send it to Greg to get out at his convenience, and I discovered this giant, white space. I'm thinking that getting it out a bit early would be a good idea, as it gives couples more time to sign up for the Red & Pink tournament. So please forgive this pretty useless space-filler. Sorry.





Mary



Lori



Lynn



Mary Jo

## 2019

Holiday Party winners ... smallest chair, best eye protection, goofiest headwear, most frequent player, Energizer Bunny, Social Butterfly, woman n black, tiniest Pickler, Man in black, best Pickler President, Best paddle donor ... lefties men and ladies tourneys ... Chicago Metro league for 3.75-4.25 players starts in LV w me as one of 4 Captains ... shared pics of 5 pb license plates in Falcon lot ... Jan saw 920 members ... raised \$1200 for Tucky's charity ... up to 389 shirts ... created 5 dry erase scoreboards for various tournaments ... held post-Canlan lunches ... closest to 60 tournament ... Feb Bear was put on PPD's Wall of Fame (Volunteer Honor Roll) ... Highlighted the best pics from 4 years. Another closest to 60 tournament ...



Ladies 60-69 ... 70+ King ... 60s Queen ... added talent separation to Birchwood evenings with middle court alternating between rec and competitive ... July Family

PALATINE PICKLERS'								FAMILY FUN DAY								TOTALS
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
1. Adam & Denny	😊	8	5	8	8	1	8	1	8	3	8	0	8			66
2. Beau & Kim	7	😊	0	8	8	6	8	4	6	3	8	2	8			68
3. Cathy & Luke	8	8	😊	8	8	5	8	3	8	8	8	5	8			85
4. Cathy & Margaret	3	0	0	😊	7	4	2	1	3	4	6	2	6			38
5. Donna & Courtney	7	4	1	8	😊	3	8	5	1	5	8	3	8			61
6. Elise & Cora	8	8	8	8	8	😊	8	4	8	8	3	8	8		2nd	92
7. Jeff & John	3	1	5	8	6	6	😊	0	8	4	8	0	8			57
8. Jim & Jimmy	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	😊	8	8	8	8	8		1st	96
9. John & RJ	3	8	1	8	8	5	4	3	😊	5	8	4	8			65
10. Kim & Kristine	8	8	7	8	8	2	8	3	8	😊	8	3	8			79
11. Lynne & Howard	3	2	0	8	1	2	1	3	1	5	😊	1	5			32
12. Masato & Jeff	8	8	8	8	8	7	8	1	8	8	8	😊	8		3rd	88
13. Susan & Brett	3	0	0	8	5	2	0	1	0	0	8	0	😊			27



Fun tournament for non-spousal relative partners (see scoreboard) ... created directory of Picklers willing to play afternoon at Sycamore ... KQ skinny singles tourney ... Contracted Jim Blair to make the PVC paddle troughs at Hamilton ... Staged Hamilton's 2-day grand opening ...

Tuesday 70 Picklers and Wednesday 61 Picklers came. I hit 1<sup>st</sup> serve on the new courts, bought 72 donuts, and gave away 44 large Crown Royal bags (photo of attendees above) ... Lefties tournament ... Mentorees Tournament ... 55-65 ladies' tournament ... sweatshirts added ... Baimbridge bricks purchased and engraved at birthplace of pickleball ... Twin Lakes picnic ...



70+ King ... Bionic Bodies tourney for those with replacement hip, knee, or shoulder. Pong tournament. Created Hamilton policies ... Somehow became the Pickleball Police for those not following our sensible policies. About the same time somehow became the unofficial rules official. Rained the top end of talent range to 4.25 for 4-club league. Stared the lower intermediate travel league with matches against both Midtown and Barrington. That sort of worked for a year, though I frequently had to supply Palatine Picklers to fill their rosters (One such replacement required me to try 56 ladies, before I found one.) Website updated. Kept supplying Hamilton, Sycamore, and Locust with balls in locked boxes, with Picklers given the combination (same for all). Added logo patches to what we sold. 60s Queen tournament. Held our 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019 Mentoree tournament, for the outdoor students. Tried in vain to start a mixed doubles, Sunday afternoon league. Added more discounts to the newsletters. Introduced separate newsletter section for Newbies. I kicked tires of three potential ping pong venues, since our first went out of business. None were affordable. In September I introduced the "Glare Court" policy at Falcon. Gave away a lot more Crown Royal bags. Held our first Untall Ladies tournament. Created 5 different dry-erase scoreboards for various tournaments. 549 shirts sold.



April



John



Chris



Doug

## 2020

Managed both Tuesday and Thursday travel leagues. Held first Tree Toppers tournament for men at least 6' tall. We had our first Feed My Starving Children afternoon. Created the competitive and rec cages and the "lose 3 in a row in competitive or win 3 in a row in rec, paddle up in the other cage policy." Had 2<sup>nd</sup> Photo Day. In May we lost Dennis Girandi to COVID and participated in a house drive-by with decorated cars. Hosted our first Pajama Party Tournament. 10 Pickler Volunteers attended our first, PPD Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. Held 1<sup>st</sup> Widow Tournament. Paid \$75 to register us for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade. Due to COVID it never happened so I donated the fee to the JCs. Made Seymour Rifkind's book available to borrow (Hall of Famer who is beyond an overachiever – still have it for you.) Staged our first Wrong hand tournament. 30 Picklers attended Feed My Starving Children. For COVID I made policies (touch only your ball, put balls back to owner (Jaime raised bottoms of nets), mask



properly, don't bunch up at paddle troughs, touch only your paddle). We survived the pandemic pretty well, losing only one Pickler to COVID. June featured our COVID quarantine pastimes. 70+ King tournament. Ignored PPD's order to have me stop taking pics and signing up members on PPD property. Ping Pong tournament. (two of several reasons I decline their request to have our club affiliate). Held a semi-impromptu Subway lunch. Revised mentoring again, to accommodate COVID. Had 75 Newbies in June. Widow tournament & dinner. In August I posted a COVID risk table. In August, held "Set your own time" skinny singles tournament. In September I handed the scheduling of Menorees over to Robin Dubin. Held Wrong Hand tournament at Neal Harris's court. Held "Kyle Yates Challenge for bouncing ball on edge of paddle. (our usual action shots layout editor Jonny Storm won with 192). We were up to 549 shirts sold. Over 1700 members. Held 94<sup>th</sup> birthday drive-by for George Cridland ... Of course, I held summer Mentoree tournament 1<sup>st</sup> week of November. In December I began writing Pickler profiles. (I have now written 61 of them.) Showed 30 Picklers at 30 degrees at Hamilton. That started the name Polar Picklers who are now playing in much colder temps.



Chris



Garth



Jim



John

2021

Profiled four more Picklers. Promoted getting vaccinated. Showed 30 of us playing at Hamilton when it was 30 degrees. Our magazine article prompted 30,000 page views. Had another movie and ad quotes quiz. Began promoting 12/23 Jamaica pickleball week. Challenged Picklers to beat my best day steps (ongoing newsletter section). Wrote Darrell Rutter eulogy. Membership topped 1800. Movie quotes volume 2. Created another movie quote & commercial quote quiz. Wrote eulogy for Darrell Rutter. Membership hit 1800. Pushed for Jamaica participation 12/23. More than 525 Palatine members. Gave Elke 2 NE Hamilton courts on Monday mornings for 4.5+ players. (Later successfully argued that this was only 2.3% of pb court availability ... until 3 lady Picklers pestered them enough to have me kick them out). Men's closest to 60 tournament. Ladies 8 closest to 60 tournament. Summer skinny singles tournament. Made a new, lower intermediate league. Movie quotes volume 3. Introduced walk-on, Thursday mentoring at Hamilton. Hit 2,000 members. Summarized my 60 tournaments to date. I did an interview podcast for the Park District on pickleball in general and our club in particular. Oldest men tourney. Youngest Ladies tourney. Lower and upper

intermediate updates. Pickler shirts folded competition. (Yeah, Lynne Weisbart held Page 16 of 32  
2<sup>nd</sup>.) Profiled Tracy Weslager, our happiest Pickler yet. Held Ugly Holiday Sweater judging &  
tournament. Annual Untall Ladies tournament. Started Canlan indoor season mentoring.

## 2022

2<sup>nd</sup> Tree Toppers tournament for 6'+ guys ... Singles tournament. ... COVID update ... Started  
3.0-3.5 intramural every other week matches for Whippersnappers vs Wise Ones (based on  
age each match) ... Singles tournament. ... Introduced car window decals. Skinny singles



tournament run by Alberto (I was out of own). 70+ Men's



tournament. 70+ Ladies tournament. 65+ Ladies tourney. Crosstown Pickler Cup tournament by PPD ... I worked hard to fill all events with our best pairs (lots of playoffs), but it never happened. Dennis and I helped AH Sr Center get their first fund-raiser tournament off the ground ... 60s+ Ladies tournament. Hosted RUSH's first pickleball-oriented workshop. 2<sup>nd</sup> Widdowriffic tournament and sharing lunch.

Palatine Scarecrow building contest ... built in our garage & trucked to downtown Palatine. (When an elderly judge looked at our Pickler wearing his PPC shirt holding paddle and ball, with knee support, headband, gym shoes, tendonitis band, etc. and asked if there was a theme to this scarecrow. Really? I vowed never again. IMHO we absolutely should have been in the top 3. At any rate it was a great, collective effort, worth sacrificing my green shirt.



Joanie



John



Dan



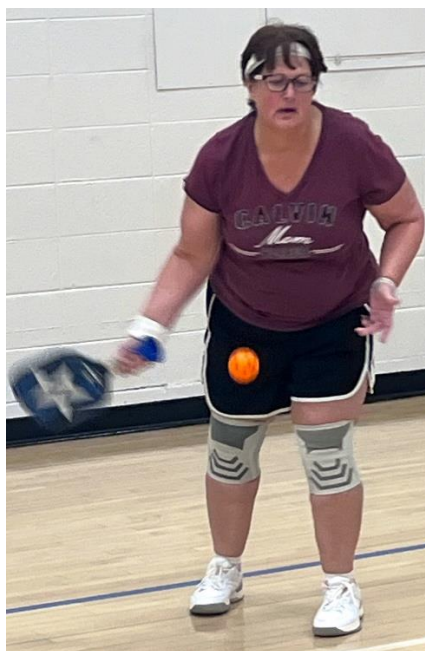
Dick



I turned the job of ordering, picking up, bagging & tagging, and delivering shirts to Linda O'Connor. I compiled an ongoing list of Palatine residents who became Palatine Picklers. Introduced "strikes" to combat the disrespect of Picklers in tournaments, intramurals, or mentoring who ask to be put on an Expect To Be Available list and then aren't available. 1<sup>st</sup> strike not forgiven but overlooked. 2<sup>nd</sup> strike earns a 6 month ban from that event. Suggested to PPD that pb courts could be installed at Eagle Park where they'd be far enough away from homes not to be much of a nuisance. (Nope) Showed pics to reinforce our Mentors' preaching of never run backwards. Pics showed blood on court and victim being tuned into a mummy and taken away on paramedics' stretcher. PPC caps were introduced. Explained that the only tournaments I'll promote are those run by a Palatine Pickler. Planned another RUSH, stay healthy workshop, this time on stretching. In November I ran this year's summer Mentoree tournament for the first 24 to sign up. Refilled the ball containers at Hamilton, Sycamore, & Locust. Held Halloween costume tournament. Held Ugly Holiday Sweater tournament.



Carol



Jenny



Jim

## 2023

Coverage of the December, Jamaica pickleball week for 18 Palatine Picklers. Changed indoor mentoring from 2 shorter sessions to 1 longer one. Upper Intermediate update with Bob Bregenzer at the helm. Ugly Holiday Sweater winners and tournament results. RUSH clinic on shoulder injuries this time. Held annual Bionic Bodies tournament. Had our first 30k steps walker. Hosted another Red & Pink Valentines tournament. Another Feed My Starving Children afternoon. Wrote of the most annoying habits on the courts. In May hosted the indoor Mentorees tournament for the first 24 to apply. In July hit 3300 members. Pat Morgan created "Plat to 9, win by 1" woodworked sign for Hamilton. Palatine residents in PPC hit 1000. Mg ary Werling volunteered to edit and layout both our Newbies and our walkers for the newsletter,



and Jonny Storm volunteered to add names and layout for action shots. Big help to Page 18 of 32 both Petite Picklers and Heavy Hitters tournaments. Outdoor Mentoree tournament In November. Introduced I have 3 expensive paddles for trial, before ordering them. Had the Neal Harris good bye breakfast attended by 3 dozen Picklers. Was honored at fall Forest Preserve picnic with financial gift and great, poster poem.

## NON-NATIVE (to Illinois) TOURNAMENT

This was a first-time tournament, but it will surely be an annual one. A couple 11<sup>th</sup> hour dropouts necessitated a couple of us Illinois natives to fill in. Let's see who started life where.



Kneeling: Bob (Chicago), Kate (Pleven, Bulgaria), Jack (Paris, France), Ming (Mong Cai, Vietnam), Standing: John (Minneapolis, MN), Ann (South Bend, IN), Gerd (Bremerhaven, Germany), Kathy (Steyr, Austria), Scott (Authur, IA), Patti (St Paul, MN), Bear (Elmhurst, IL), Deborah (St Louis, MO), Gail (Menasha, WI), Kevin (Richmond, IN), Rune (Moegeltoender, Denmark), Michael, Fairmont, WVA).



. Scott 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ming 1<sup>st</sup>, Gerd 3<sup>rd</sup>



14 of us enjoyed lunch after the tournament



There were 84 maximum points. Ming had 76, Scot had 71, and Gerd 68. For the last 6 of 32 had 59 and Ann and Pattie tied for 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> with 54.

## 2024

Reviewed 2023 Ugly Holiday Sweater judging and tournament. Unshort Ladies tournament. Hosted first Pickle Haus tournament for 24 Picklers. I profiled our 50<sup>th</sup> Pickler. Annual Untall Ladies tournament. Held another Photo Day. Introduced white logos for shirts. Oldest 12 men and 12 ladies tournaments. Annual Bionic Bodies tournament. Least Young Men and Least Young Ladies tournament. May Mentoree tournament for first 24 to apply. Ran another singles tournament. Held another ad quotes quiz. Sheila Lullo volunteered to intercept online membership applications and forward them to me, when GoDaddy stopped liking me. Had Jacquie survey neighboring towns to confirm we're last in providing pickleball courts for park district members, despite having far more players than any other suburb. Met with new PPD Exec Director – he's aware of the problem, and can't help this year, but 2025 may make us happy. Held Teachers tournament. Held lefties tournament. Held Most Grandkids tournament. Hosted Armed Services tournament. Held health care workers tournament. Was honored at 2<sup>nd</sup> Hamilton Picklers Forest Preserve picnic. Another Feed My Starving Children afternoon. Oldest Men and Oldest Lady Picklers tournaments. Halloween Costume judging and tournament. Was invited to Mentor Appreciation lunch which turned out to be more of a Happy Birthday, Bear lunch at Joanie Willmeth's. Ugly Holiday Sweater judging and tournament & holiday lunch. Enjoyed Clay's Holiday luncheon at Schwaben Athletic Club for 80 or so Picklers on 12/19.

## 2025

Hosted Non-Native (IL) tournament. Promoted February's Red & Pink Valentine's couples tournament and Untall Ladies tournament to be held this month. That brings us current ... 30 Picklers' emails a day is normal. That can rise to 100+ after a newsletter.



Virginia



Tina



Tim



Tom

How I determine who participates in intramurals and mentoring is simple though time consuming. I have my Expect To Be Available spreadsheets. For intramurals I write in a notebook the names of each man and lady who signed up for the upcoming date. Beside each name I mark three figures, either an X or an O, to indicate if they participated in any of the last three matches. Most selections are based on frequency and recency of their playing. For indoor mentoring, I send the ETBA spreadsheet to Scheduler Kathy. On Monday she sends me the names of 24 Mentorees (selected mostly on basis of frequency and recency). I then do a lot of research based on past sessions court assignments (with my notes indicating where they should be if not ideal) and membership applications for 1<sup>st</sup> timers. I then assign each to whichever of six courts I feel appropriate, based on what I think is their skill and experience.

Over the ten years, I've published 121 newsletters, shared \_\_\_\_ pics (98% taken by me) over \_\_\_\_ pages. I've welcomed more than 4200 members, more than 1300 Palatinians. We had more than 20,000 website visits in 2024.

## COINCIDENCES



At Harper Anu and I were sent out to the court. Wow! We're both wearing the same, rare shirt, we're among the few wearing long pants, and think we have the only 2 of these paddles in the club.



Bill & Jenny Buesing ran into Anne Stein in Siesta Key

Love these impromptu meet-ups that happen in other states fairly frequently.

**DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER FOR THE RED & PINK 2/13 COUPLES TOURNAMENT**

**REMEMBER, IF QUALIFIED, TO SIGN UP FOR THE 2/27 UNTALL LADIES TOURNAMENT**





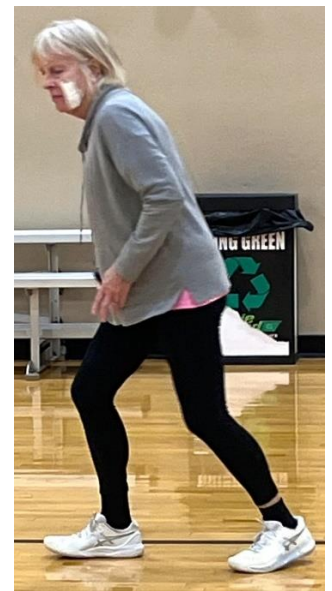
Cindy



Cindy



Lisa



Mardy







Marge



Mary



Lucy



Kevin



Marci



Kadee



Kathy

DID I MENTION ... GO BUY YOUR CLUB T-SHIRTS & SWEATSHIRTS ... [PalatinePicklers.com](http://PalatinePicklers.com)

## IT'S WALKER RECOGNITION TIME

**SUPER STEPPERS (20K+ in a day)**



29,577

Natalie Silverman



26,152

Ben Farb



25,582



Karyn Picchiotti

20,409



Lois Farb

### WORTHY WALKERS (15K+ in a day)

19,823



Ben Farb

19,101



Lois Farb

18,073



Anne Stein

17,439



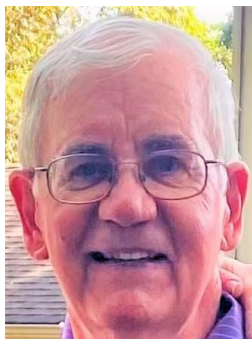
Marcia Cohen

16,854



Jeff Greenberg

16,727



Bob McGowan

16,191



Bear Shatwell

## **CHECK YOUR PHONE (LITTLE RED HEART) & JOIN US HERE**

Many of you don't realize it, but your phone may be tracking your daily steps. If you have a little, red heart icon, that's where you'll find your daily steps. If you get 15K or more, just take a screen shot and email it to me at [aokbary@yahoo.com](mailto:aokbary@yahoo.com).

## **WE COULD SERVE MORE MENTOREES**

You beginners and newer players could have a LOT more fun, if you really know the rules and get a grip on the basics of strategy, court position, and shot selection. We're here to help and for free. During our indoor mentoring season (every other Tuesday morning through April), you'll be with four of your peers, while you get helped by each of six Mentors over three hours. Our sessions are in the Canlan Sportsplex in Lake Barrington. Get there by 8:45 to pay their \$10 fee and warm up. I'll get things going at 9:00. This IS the absolute best learning experience you can find, regardless of price. Ours is free. You'll be put with three others of your perceived skill and experience. It doesn't get better than that. Just email me at [aokbary@yahoo.com](mailto:aokbary@yahoo.com) the days you expect to be available to participate. The remaining indoor dates are Feb 11 Feb 25 Mar 11 Mar 25 Apr 8 Apr 22.

## **HOW 'BOUT JOINING THIS PICKLERIFFIC GROUP ?**

So far I've given you an "up close and personal" look at 59 Palatine Picklers. If you email me that you're ready to have your peers get to know you a bit better, email me at [aokbary@yahoo.com](mailto:aokbary@yahoo.com). I'll send you a sheet I call the Profile Prompter. It's helped all those below to give me what I needed to make them more than just a pickleball player. After each Pickler's name is the year and month in which they were profiled.

<b>Ann Buras</b>	<b>23-4</b>	<b>Hayden Harris</b>	<b>22-11</b>	<b>Mary Knight</b>	<b>21-07</b>
<b>Anne Stein</b>	<b>21-02</b>	<b>Howard Rosenberg</b>	<b>21-05</b>	<b>Melody Woodsum</b>	<b>21-04</b>
<b>Ari Cohen</b>	<b>21-05</b>	<b>Jaime Sandoval</b>	<b>21-01</b>	<b>Nancy Smearman</b>	<b>22-8</b>
<b>Bear Shatwell</b>	<b>20-12</b>	<b>Janet Parry</b>	<b>21-05</b>	<b>Natalie Silverman</b>	<b>24-5</b>
<b>Bill Buesing</b>	<b>22-6</b>	<b>Jeff Degner</b>	<b>20-12</b>	<b>Neal Harris</b>	<b>20-12</b>
<b>Bill Myers</b>	<b>23-3</b>	<b>Jenny Buesing</b>	<b>20-12</b>	<b>Nicole Verlotta</b>	<b>22-2</b>
<b>Bill Parry</b>	<b>21-08</b>	<b>Jim Blair</b>	<b>21-11</b>	<b>Pam Sammons</b>	<b>22-5</b>
<b>Bob Goldstein</b>	<b>21-02</b>	<b>Jim Musgrave</b>	<b>21-04</b>	<b>Pat Morgan</b>	<b>22-4</b>
<b>Bob McGowan</b>	<b>21-02</b>	<b>Jim Simmons</b>	<b>22-10</b>	<b>Pat Taylor</b>	<b>21-09</b>
<b>Brad Nahrstadt</b>	<b>24-12</b>	<b>Jim Sulzer</b>	<b>24-9</b>	<b>Patrick O'Connell</b>	<b>21-11</b>
<b>Chris Burbidge</b>	<b>22-9</b>	<b>John Evans</b>	<b>23-2</b>	<b>Robin Dubin</b>	<b>21-03</b>
<b>Clay Farnsworth</b>	<b>20-12</b>	<b>Julie Ganzer</b>	<b>22-1</b>	<b>Ryan Dreier</b>	<b>22-7</b>



Connie Kus	21-04	Karen Koziol	22-3	Scott Brown	23-6
Dave Shoemaker	24-7	Kristine Oliva	21-06	Scott Pfeifer	24-4
Don Bextel	21-07	Kurt Conrath	23-5	Sheila O'Gara	25-2
Fred Phillips	24-1	Larry Shoemake	21-04	Terri Stein Merrill	21-04
Gary Thompson	21-01	Lynne Weisbart	21-01	Tom McNulty	21-06
Gene Grochowski	21-10	Marcia & Jesse Cohen	22-8	Tracey Grady	24-1
Gerd Looff	24-4	Marsha Miller	21-03	Tracy Weslager	21-12
Gillian Steele	21-02	Marv Zwass	21-01		



Chris



John



Heather



Scott



Linda



Jay



Patti



Jossie



Patty



Mike



Sheila



Justin



Michelle



Gerd

## GOTTA **LOVE** PALATINE PICKLER **DI\$COUNT\$**

**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](mailto:grtfuldad@aol.com).

**20% OFF anything** at engagepickleball.com, with the code **20jon**.

**25% OFF anything** from Gammasports.com, with the code **ba\_soderborg25**

**\$10 OFF** Vatic Pro paddles ... [https://vaticpro.com?sca\\_ref=3606076.ir5retg8qU](https://vaticpro.com?sca_ref=3606076.ir5retg8qU) Use code **CHICAGO**

**5% 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



# JANUARY NEWBIES



CHERYL



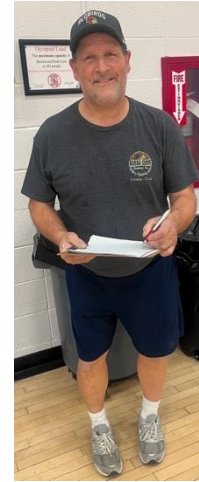
CONNIE



DALE



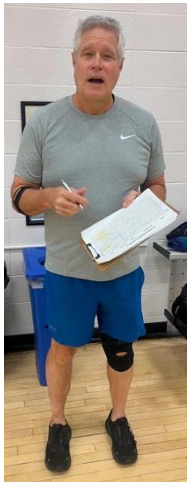
DAN



DARYL



DEMI



DON



ELIZABETH



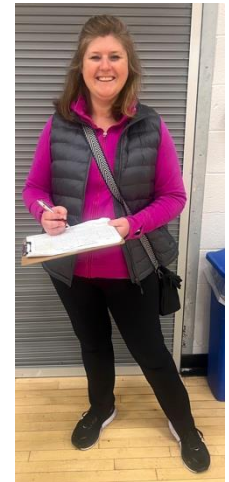
EMILY



GAGAN



GERRI



HILARY



IVAN



JUSTIN



KATHY



KAUDEE



LISA



MARGE





MARTHA



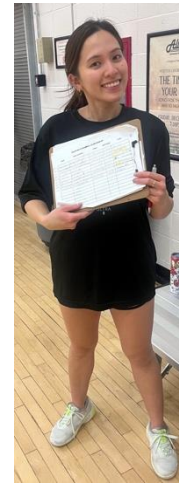
MARY



MATTHEW



MAY



MICHAELA



MIKE A.



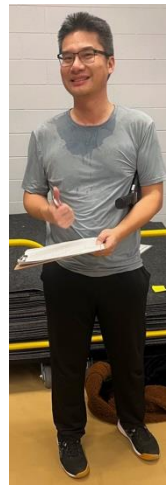
MIKE J.



NANCY



PAUL



PING



RAM



RENATA



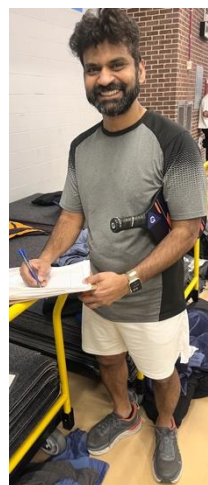
RYAN G.



RYAN N.



SHERI



SRINI



SRINIVAS



STEPHEN





STEVE



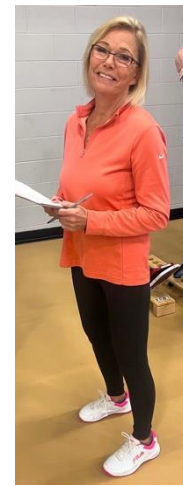
SUNI



TIM



TOM



VIRGINIA

## WE LOVED PB IN JAMAICA – NEXT WILL BE PB IN MEXICO

In January Pickler John Schehl had his second visit to the Tres Palapas Pickleball Resort about 45 minutes north of Cabo. He's working to find some options for 30-40 Palatine Picklers, between November and January. Check it out – you may have to copy and paste this link.

[https://www.trespalapasbaja.com/?utm\\_source=Tres-Palapas-Global&utm\\_campaign=b0eb467d3d-Susannah%26Dom-Nov-26-2024&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_b0eb467d3d-620293529](https://www.trespalapasbaja.com/?utm_source=Tres-Palapas-Global&utm_campaign=b0eb467d3d-Susannah%26Dom-Nov-26-2024&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_b0eb467d3d-620293529)

I hope to have some details in the March newsletter. Whether within a year or later in 2026 or early 2027, our time here may be even more rewarding than the wonderful week 20 of us enjoyed in December 14 months ago. This may well be limited to the email me their interest, once I give you the details John is collecting.

## HOPE YOU ALL HAVE A HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY



Kenny



Silver



Pat



Laura





Jack



Scott



Stephanie



Mike



Phil



Steve



Soo



Therese



Steve



Judy



Steve



Jeff





John



Rune



Chris



Kent



Tom



Ted



Fred



Lori

**GO TO PALATINEPICKLERS.COM & FOR SHIRTS. Photo Day is coming.**



## • Thank you, Anonymous Donor

While I was working on this newsletter in our media room, a lady came to the front door with 2 new paddles for me. Told Kathy she joined while walking her dog. Enjoyed playing with 1 today.



## Nostalgic Neal

Ran into Neal Warner at Canlan during our Non-Native tournament. A former regular at Falcon, hadn't seen him in a decade.

Think I have created five over the years, but can think of only these at the moment.

“Migrate” ... Move from one court to the next, when it opens up.

“Glare court” ... The Falcon court closest to the lobby. Named for the glare when on the side that faces the lobby. As reviewed somewhere above, teams should split their time on that side.

“Power dink” ... When a firmly hit ball strikes the net cord and dribbles over.

“If it isn’t in an email, it never happened” ... I check email a lot. I check texts a few times a week. I forgot most of what Picklers tell me. I react to each email, chronological order.

## **OUR FIRST DECADE IS A DONE DEAL**

In our first ten years, I have written 121 newsletters. They consumed 2194 pages. They contained 18,382 edited photos (98% taken by me). 42 newsletters were at least 20 pages. 7 were at least 30 pages. One (September, 2024) was 45 pages. 33 newsletters contained at least 200 photos. That September, 2024 newsletter contained 542.

As I write this on January 24<sup>th</sup>, I have welcomed 4,209 members, 1,312 of whom (almost 1/3) reside within the Palatine Park District.



My welcome email to groups of Newbies claims that we are surely the most welcoming, most nurturing, and most event-oriented club around (maybe anywhere) and, we believe, we’re also the friendliest and most fun. YOU are why I can make these claims. THANK YOU, Picklers.

I began the Palatine Pickleball Club as a continuing effort to “pay my dues” for all with which this life has blessed me. So many of you have rewarded me with your thanks and appreciation. In turn I thank all who have volunteered to help with the tasks needed to keep us what has to be a contender for the best pickleball club on Earth.

I really would like to finish my “Guide for the Newly Widowed” book. I’d also like to give Kathy more of what

she thought she was signing up for when she married me. So, one of these days in the not too distant future, I’ll seek someone to run intramurals, someone to run mentoring, someone to create/run fun tournaments, someone to gather walker stats, and someone to send even a photoless, monthly newsletter. This could well be a committee.

**Bear Shatwell**

**PicklersPrez**

[aokbarry@yahoo.com](mailto:aokbarry@yahoo.com)