



PalatinePicklers.com

MAY, 2026 NEWSLETTER

MENTORING HAS MOVED OUTDOORS

Except for our May 5th Mentoree Tournament in Canlan, Mentorees are now honing their skills enjoying the great outdoors. Our most popular sessions are Wednesday mornings at Sycamore on Carpenter at Clark. There are two, ninety-minute sessions – 9:00 to 10:30 and 10:30 to Noon. These are BY INVITATION ONLY. If you'd like to participate in any of these free mentoring sessions, **email Rune at Rune.Karsbaek@gmail.com (not me)** with the mornings you expect to be available AND your phone number. If you HAVE to have either first or second session, let him know. Then just check your email on Monday afternoon each week. That's when invitations are emailed. Just be sure to accept yours before 10:00 a.m. Tuesday. Failure to do so earns you a dreaded "strike." Two strikes, and you're benched for six months from all Palatine Picklers events. If you need to be removed from an ETBA (Expect To Be Available) list, email Rune prior to noon Saturday before your session.

If you do not have a paddle, no worries. I have several loaners and will always be there to make announcements and assign courts. You do not need a ball. I supply them. Just bring a beverage and your enthusiasm. You will spend you ninety minutes sharing courts with three students I believe to be of similar experience and ability. You will spend 30 minutes with each of the day's three Mentors. Over the years, almost 1,000 students have benefited from these, free sessions.

NOW HOW 'BOUT SOME INTERMEDIATE LEVEL PICKLERS?

For four years, year-round, we've had every other Tuesday competitions between 3.0-3.5 level Picklers. FYI that includes 50% of our membership. For each match the younger half of the 16 invited (Whippersnappers) will compete against the Wise Ones. Each team will have four men and four ladies. You will partner with each of your seven teammates for one game. IT'S FOR FUN. No one cares how you perform, though it is interesting and fun that, over the four years, the teams are VERY close in wins. You can consider the three hours of pickleball (9-12) a warm-up for the fun you'll have bonding over lunch a mile away. (Yes, lunch is optional.) Several hundred Palatine Picklers have enjoyed participating in intramural matches.

Are you good enough or too good? No worries. If so, we're still glad you participated. We just won't invite you back. No harm done. To get on the Expect To Be Available lists for any match, email Chrissie at TonyandChrissie@earthlink.net. Our next, every other Tuesday morning match is May 12th. Chrissie will invite 16 Picklers over the weekend before each match. Be sure to let her know, if a conflict arises, and you need to be taken off that ETBA list.

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.

NEW WEDNESDAY MENTORING MANAGER

For indoor Tuesdays and outdoor Wednesdays, you have sent me your availability. I've then forwarded that ETBA (Expect To Be Available) spreadsheet to Rune who has made his selections and sent 24 invitations, found subs as needed, and sent me back the final roster/s. I then do the research to assign courts to keep similar abilities and experience on the same court. STARTING NOW THIS CHANGES. Rune will be handling it all, until he sends me the roster/s for me to work on court assignments. SO email Rune at Rune.Karsbaek@gmail.com with your **available dates and times AND your phone number**. He'll invite 24 Mentorees each Sunday and/or Monday. Let him know if you need to be removed from an availability list. (Yes, I know this is redundant, but it's enough of a change it deserves repeating.) This news will be repeated later in this newsletter, as it's that important.

ANYONE OK AT CROPPING AND EDITING PICS ?

Among the jobs I'm shedding is that of Action Shot Editor. I'll send you a folder of the pics I've (and/or anyone else) has taken, along with their names. You cut them to size, do any editing you feel helpful, and create whatever layout you like. Jonny has kept them in alpha order. I like mixing them up for color and action and having each face toward the middle of the page. There is no wrong way. Put them on a Word page with 14pt Calibri type, and send your pages back to me at aokbarry@yahoo.com. This will be another big help to keep things going.

LADY PICKLERS CREATED THIS PICKLEBALL MONSTER

Chris Evon and Terri Graham joined the Palatine Pickleball Club in our early days. Then inspiration hit, causing them leave their careers. Check out this Naples News article by David Wasson.

They were the crazy ones. Because, really, who leaves secure jobs in the sporting goods industry for a dream centered around a sport that barely exists?

Chris Evon and Terri Graham were the crazy ones back in 2015, executives at Wilson Sporting Goods when they sat down and sketched out the first kernels of an idea that became the Biggest Pickleball Party in the World: the US Open Pickleball Championships right here in Naples, this year's version of which opens Saturday, April 11.

"Some people, in so many words, said that exact thing to us," Evon said. "But we believed in the concept so much and felt like we could make it work. We just never dreamed it would become what it became."

What it became was nothing short of a revolution, in so many ways the very platform for a sport that was on no one's radar 10 years ago but is now the fastest-growing sport in America. To say the US Open Pickleball Championships is pickleball isn't blasphemy in the slightest, because without Evon and Graham's creation, who knows if the sport would have taken off the way it did?

"In 2015 and 2016, Sports & Fitness magazine, which does a participation study every year, didn't even include pickleball in their questions," Graham said. "I don't know how many times we told people we were leaving Wilson for pickleball and people would say, 'What is pickleball?'"

"Fast forward just 10 years, only 10 years, and now it is the most popular sport around the country and gaining internationally. When did we realize that? Maybe five years in, thinking, 'Wow, this sport is taking off.'"



Chris Evon and Terri Graham believed in the concept, and their dreams more than came true.

Photo courtesy of Terri Graham and Chris Evon

From 0 to 60 quickly

Taking off is an understatement, both with the US Open and with the sport itself. As of 2024-25, an estimated 19.8 million people play pickleball in the United States, which marks a 45.8%

increase from 2023-24 and more than 300% growth since 2021. Reports also indicate nearly 50 million adults have played at least once.

That wasn't the case a decade ago when Evon and Graham went before the Naples, Marco Island, Everglades Convention and Visitors Bureau in 2015, soliciting a potential home for their creation.

"We went to the CVB, and at the time Jack Wert was the executive director," Graham said. "We went in with knowledge of the sporting goods industry, 49 years combined at Wilson. So we knew what we were doing to a certain extent. They said, 'We will let you know in 48 hours,' and it took 24 hours to send us an offer.

"The first year was good, but credit to Commissioner Donna Fiala and Commissioner Penny Taylor back then. Commissioner Fiala helped us pioneer it, building more courts and putting up the original shade structure over center court."

Still, no one quite knew what to expect when the first tournament was about to begin at East Naples Community Park in 2016. Graham said they were planning for about 500 players that first year, and virtually no spectators. But instead ...

"That first year was bigger than we ever imagined," Graham said. "That first event, we had 854 players and were looking for about 500. And we probably had around 10,000 spectators.

"I remember setting up on that first day, and the line of cars to get into the park was backed up for a mile or so. We were wondering why they were all there, and they were coming to watch. After that, it kept multiplying and we kept trying to keep up with it."

Evon and Graham put in thousands of hours leading up to tournament week for eight years, and countless more during it to grow to the point that, as Graham said, "We created the biggest party in the world, and a pickleball match broke out." It shows with the current iteration set to take place April 11-18, with 3,750 players winning spots via a player lottery and thousands of spectators set to stream into Collier County from all over the world.

"One of the things that always interested folks is what makes it tick," Evon said. "There are so many things. But one of the main things that we talk about and that always blows our mind is the volunteer support we got. We created this great group of people who were excited about it and were as proud of it as we are. That was so great to see. We became good friends with all of them, and we truly couldn't have done it without them."

Evon and Graham stepped away from the US Open Pickleball Championships two years ago, selling to Spirit Promotions, something Graham said they never planned to do and that was a difficult decision before finally settling on an exit plan. And while they won't be in Naples this week to witness the 10-year anniversary of their creation, you'd better believe they will be paying attention with immense pride.

“The future of the US Open is bright. It is not going anywhere,” Graham said. “There are many, many cities that are drooling to get the US Open into their city. But I don’t see it leaving Naples. Naples has been very, very good to the US Open, and the US Open has been very, very good to Naples. I hope it doesn’t go anywhere.”

“It is so neat to know we were the first to get [pickleball] on TV and were at the front line of the sport’s explosion,” Evon added. “Pickleball is such a unique animal. I’m not sure we will find another one. It is just neat to have been a part of it.”

For more information about the US Open, see usopenpickleball.com.

Chris Evon and Terri Graham left their jobs in the sporting goods industry to take a chance that a national pickleball tournament would draw players and fans.

Photo courtesy of Terri Graham and Chris Evon



ANNUAL PICKLERS PHOTO DAY STILL FUN

This year our participation was down a bit – school vacations, actual vacations, conflicts, and too many injuries were to blame. Still we had a happy crowd, as you can see.



OK, Come on ... Are these dozens of players happy to be Palatine Picklers? Oh, yes. They love being part of what may be the largest club in the country and is certainly the most welcoming, most nurturing, and most event-oriented club in the country. Darn, we're lucky to have us.



After a morning of pickleball (and photos), our "Brunch Bunch" (open to all Palatine Picklers) enjoyed eating together at Jelly Café (68 & Quentin). This is **EVERY Friday at 11:15.**

How 'bout joining us? We even have a special sub-\$10 menu.

The last to arrive pays for the group each week.

Just kidding. Individual checks.

"UNTALL LADIES" TOURNAMENT

Eight "Untall Ladies" competed to see who would come out **BIG**. After playing one game partnering with each opponent, Diane came out on top and Kim took second. There was a three-way tie for third and Judy, Natalie and Karen were thrilled because it was the first time any of them had placed in the top three.



Front Row: Dorie, Eileen, Kim, Diane, Sue, Judy, Natalie and Karen
Back Row: Fun Tournament coordinator Bob McGowan feeling tall at 5'7"



Eileen



Natalie



Diane



Judy



Karen



Dorie



Sue



Kim



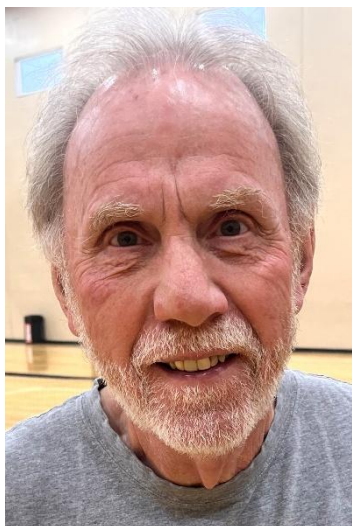
SAYS IT ALL



Kim 2nd, Diane 1st, Judy/Natalie/Karen 3rd

Interesting coincidence – Kim’s sister (long time member) was in from Santa Barbara a few years ago and participated in that year’s Untall Ladies tournament. She finished 2nd also.

MEET OUR NEW MENTORING MANAGER (for invitation days)



You have always emailed me your availability for Tuesday (indoor) and Wednesday (outdoor) mentoring sessions. For the last couple years, I have sent that updated spreadsheet to Rune Karsbaek, our Mentoree Scheduler. He’s made his selection of 24 Mentorees and sent them invitations. Then on the day before mentoring, he has sent me the 24 who are coming and, for summer, when.

He has now volunteered to do everything up to his sending me 24 names for me to assign courts. SO do not email me your availability any more. Give Rune your desires. He’s at RuneKarsbaek@gmail.com. ALSO be sure to include your phone number. He has to call a few Mentorees each week who don’t respond to email expediently.

LONG LAST NAMES TOURNAMENT NEEDS YOU

Our 2nd, Long Last Name Tournament (**at least 8 letters**) will be **Thursday 5/21** from 9:00 to Noon in Canlan. There’s still room on the roster. You’ll partner with each of your fellow competitors for one game. To register just email our Fun Tournament Manager Bob at BobMcGowan1946@gmail.com . Of course, you can enjoy a LONG lunch afterward a mile away at Kelsey Road House where you’ll get to know more about your lengthy-named peers.

SOCK IT TO ME



For the first socks are now among our offerings. Hype Socks will incorporate our logo & blue & yellow color scheme and copy on high-quality, performance socks. I have samples of both long and ankle-covering socks. If I’m ever back on courts, ask me. I’ll keep one of each in my backpack. Personally, I like the shorter ones, as I don’t usually wear long socks with shorts. Our logo would great on the front of these.

These socks are 80% nylon, 15% spandex, and 5% elastic. Sizes (mens) are Youth (<3), Small (4-7), Medium (8-10), Large (11-13), and X-Large (14+).

We have to have 24 prepaid (to me), to place an order. With 24 pairs, the cost is \$13 per pair. It gets a little cheaper with each large jump in quantity. We'll receive our order within 4 weeks. Their website is WWW.HYPERSOCKS.COM.

Let me know your preference – long or short, size, and number of pairs. If we get enough to order, I'll ask you to pay me. Email me at aokbarry@yahoo.com.

PICKLERS IN ACTION

I haven't played since January so I haven't been there to take many pics. I've been to mentoring and one tournament to see Bonus daughter compete. Here's what I did get ...



Dorie



Allen



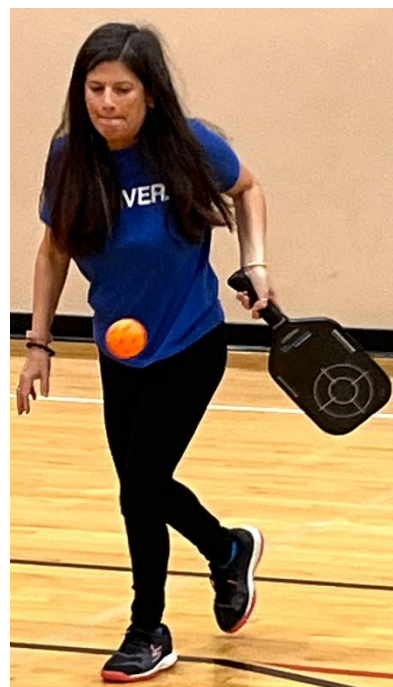
Kathy



Dale



Karen



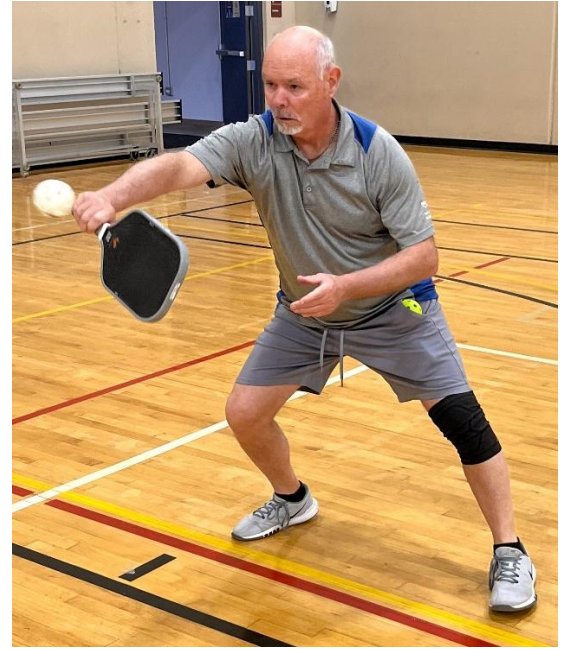
Natalie



Sheila



Rune



Tommy



Noreen



Eileen



Kim



Diane



Judy



Diane



Sue



Rose



Jim



Kim

JAIME VOLUNTEERED TO TAKE A FEW PICS TOO

I LOVE volunteers. I didn't ask him, Jaime Sandoval just told me he could take a few pics at pickleball sessions I wouldn't be attending. He started slowly, but we hope he keeps it up, as we don't know how long I'll be out of action. His pics appear on the next page.

Thanks, Jaime.





Barb



Mike



Janet



Jim



Gerd



Mary



Dan



Susan



Ann



Tom



Debbie



Frank



Kevin

LOOK AT IT THIS WAY ... YOU NEED EYEWARE

Eyeglasses are good, but pickleball goggles are a LOT better. I didn't really shop around. I went to Dick's and couldn't find them. Tons of shades and a large pickleball section, but no goggles. I asked and learned they can't keep them in stock. However, they ordered on their website with no shipping fee. They cost me \$38. I haven't checked if that's a lot, but I don't care. I like them, and am totally confident my vision will remain unimpacted by pickleball. Please get goggles, if you haven't yet. We have enough pickleball injuries. Don't add your eyes to them.

IT'S WALKER RECOGNITION TIME AGAIN

SUPER STEPPERS (20,000+ steps in a day)

25,521



Pam Tallarito

22,847



Scot Shatwell

WORTHY WALKERS (15,000-19,999 steps in a day)

17,829



Pam Tallarito

16,600



Scot Shatwell

15,532



Bob McGowan

MAY STILL BE TIME, CANLAN MENTOREES

Our 20th Mentoree Tournament will be held in Canlan on Tuesday, May 5th, from 9:00 to Noon. It is limited to those who participated in any mentoring sessions from November through April. If that includes you, and you've yet to sign up, don't waste this opportunity to enjoy 11 shortened games with each of those in your 12-Mentoree division. THEN ll whose schedule allows go to lunch a mile away at Kelsey Road House. We will get a final confirmation and inquire about lunch a few days before the tournament. Register by emailing Rune at RuneKarsbaek@gmail.com. Thanks. Since writing this, he's accepting only Alternates.

THIS MONTH'S MEDALISTS



Dan Schuurmn & Dave Cappello
Pickle Barrel Classic,
Sun Lakes, AZ
Men's Doubles
4.0
Silver



Melody & Greg Woodsum
Franklin US Open Championships,
Naples, FL
Mixed Doubles 3.0
65-69
Bronze

IF YOU MEDAL IN A TOURNAMENT, SEND YOUR NAME, PARTNER, TOURNAMENT, LOCATION, DIVISION, COLOR OF MEDAL, AND PHOTO TO aokbarry@yahoo.com.

ANY NEWBIES THIS MONTH ?

Newbies yes. Photos no. All of the last month's new members joined online. Usually half come online, and half I sign up in person. Again, I haven't been around to sign anyone, and I can't take pics over the internet. Consequently, I'll introduce you to a bunch of Newbies, once I'm around to take their pics. Sorry for the wait.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 3 MORE FUN TOURNAMENTS

All our fun tournaments are held in Canlan Sportsplex in Lake Barrington, from 9:00 to NOON. Unless otherwise stated, they are round robins so you'll partner with everyone for one game. All are also followed by lunch a mile away, for those able to add this to their schedule.

Thursday, June 11 ... **SINGLE ADULTS** – This will be our second year for this one. Email Bob at BobMcGowan1946@gmail.com to register.

Thursday, June 18 ... **BIONIC BODIES** for all who have metal in their bodies other than in their mouths. We've done this one for years. To register email Bob at BobMcGowan1946@gmail.com.

Thursday, July 2 ... **RED, WHITE, & BLUE** (attire). This will be a new one for us, but very timely. Just email Bob at Bob McGowan1946@gmail.com.

STARTING A NEW SHIRT ORDER

Linda O'Connor picked up our last order last week. It's time to begin contributing to our next one. We need a minimum of 12 shirts to place our next order. On your computer, not phone, go to PalatinePicklers.com and click on SHIRTS. Select your style, color, size, and navy or white ink. At the bottom of the page, place your order. That will go to Linda. She'll contact you asking you to pay me directly or write a check to me (Bear or Barry Shatwell) and send it to her. She'll eventually get it to me. Once 12 or more shirts have been ordered, she'll place our club's order.

THINKING OF PALATINE PICKLERS SHIRTS, I'm curious who has the second most club shirts. I'm pretty sure I'm in a league of my own, but, if you email me at aokbarry@yahoo.com, with the number of PPC shirts you own, I'll identify the top three shirt owners in the June newsletter.

MAY ALSO BEGINS OUR FREE, WALK-ON MENTORING

As always, we'll have walk-on (no invitation needed) mentoring at Hamilton (across from Sundling Jr High on Smith) through October. On both Thursday and Saturday, it runs from 3:00

to 5:00. It's very important you arrive early. Once I assign courts, it's a hassle to squeeze late comers onto an appropriate court. Just bring water or other hydration. If you need a paddle, I have loaners you can use for the session.

Our first date will be Thursday, May 7th. Our first Saturday will be May 9th.

Just FYI, if we're really tight on courts on Saturday, those who work, babysit, golf, or otherwise are unable to attend either Wednesday or Thursday sessions will have priority. They'll stay on courts for the full two hours. Others may have to rotate in and out.

Let the Hamilton season begin.

FULL TIME FRESH AIR PLAY FINALLY

Yes, several Polar Picklers have been playing a lot through the winter at Hamilton. Now the weather is finally welcoming to all of us. For those new to Hamilton play, get your name upside down on both sides of your paddle on the blade where the handle meets it. Then, after each game, stand it on its head in the top rack if you won and the lower PVC trough if you lost. Paddles are inserted on the right side of the troughs and are moved left as four paddles are removed for players heading to an open court.

PALATINE PARK DISTRICT COURTS CLOSING

Falcon ... Last (8:30-12:30) day will be Friday, May 29th.

Birchwood ... Last day (11:30-3:30 Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu) will be May 28th.

Community Center Thursday morning ... Last day will be May 28th.

Community Center Monday evening ... These evenings will be year-round.

Harper College for May Tu & Th 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.

- . Mon 6:00 – 8:45 p.m.
- . Wed 6:00 – 8:45 p.m.
- . Fri 6:00 – 7:45 p.m.
- . Sun 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

We'll hope to have future months in the next newsletter.

LOVING OUTDOOR MENTORING

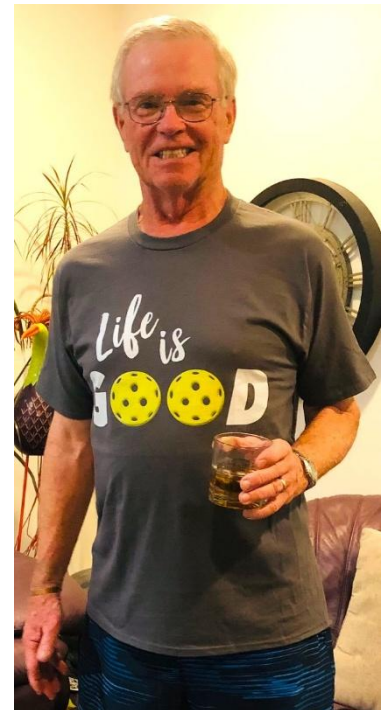
We're moving intramurals outside – Yea! Every Wednesday morning through the end of October. See details in two articles above.

'TIL NEXT MONTH ...

I'm beyond thrilled to now have three, terrific volunteers handling tasks that have been on my plate for years. Chrissie Looper is handling Intramurals 100%. Bob McGowan is handling our fun, Thursday tournaments 100%, including photos and write-up. Now Rune Karsbaek has become our Wednesday Mentoring Manager, accepting availabilities, recruiting as needed, inviting 24 on Sunday or Monday for Wednesday, and sending me the names of 12 Mentorees for each session. He's even scheduling the Mentors. All I have to do now is spend Tuesday evening finding compatible court mates and showing up to make announcements and assign courts, even if I'm not mentoring that morning.

After being off the courts since January, with a couple mentoring exceptions, I'm really looking forward to mentoring at Hamilton on Thursdays and Saturdays. May even be able to demo dinking. Hopefully, July 4th will be my "Independence Day" and I'll be playing again.

Having Chrissie, Bob, and Rune handle so much of the workload will allow me to do things that have been on hold. Can't forget Linda O'Connor who handles all our club shirt orders. Thanks to them, just last week I cleaned out my closet, donating 41 T-shirts, 25 long sleeve shirts, 10 short sleeve shirts, 2 sports jackets, and 3 pair of slacks/jeans to Goodwill. Also recycled 30 pair of socks. This clean-out has been on a back burner for years, but pickleball didn't give me the spare time. Now I can attack our office closet and file cabinet. Then the garage which is overflowing with pickleball balls, paddles, and miscellaneous equipment.



Now, if some volunteer Pickler will accept the role of Action Shot Manager, cropping, editing, and laying out those pages, I may even get back to working on my half-finished book that I haven't touched since starting the Palatine Picklers in 2015.

Just to review the contents above, we can now order club socks. We have the 8+ letter last name tournament. We also have tournaments for Single Adults, Bionic Bodies, and those wearing Red, White, & Blue. Details in article above.

Here's to a pickleriffic spring for all Palatine Picklers.

Bear Shatwell

PicklersPrez

aokbarry@yahoo.com