***President’s Message October, 2022***

**Linguistics have long been one of my fascinations. The interplay of meaning, structure, and syntax can be ‘music to the ears.’ Words can mean different things, can have more than one pronunciation, and can be part of language irregularities. As we have entered a new season, time is ripe to discuss the word*, Autumn.* Does it mean the same as the word, *Fall*? An investigation reveals that the word, *Harvest* was used before the others came into vogue. Cultural differences, personal preferences, and random selections all influence how, why, and when many words are used.**

**For over twenty-five years I have been privileged to be part of broadcast teams for racquetball events; throughout the USA and abroad. As an advocate for sharing anecdotes in geography, history, and sport, I offer examples, metaphors, and personal experiences to help enhance enjoyment and value to the viewing audience.**

**Bolivia is one of my favorite countries. I have enjoyed my 14 visits. I served as Bolivia’s national racquetball team coach in 1994. One way I have explained differences between the altiplano cities, such as Cochabamba, La Paz, and Sucre versus cities close to sea level (Santa Cruz de la Sierra) follows: The former group has colder and dryer climates. Shift to the Amazon basin, an area of land with dense, tangled vegetation and a hot, moist climate. A word I have used for 25 years is, ‘jungla.’ Santa Cruz sits close to the jungle.**

**In trying to be ourselves in the age of social media excess, we can become a dartboard for assumptions, innuendos, and verbal attacks at a heartbeat. Things are so fragile and liquid; one moment we are gleaming and the next moment we are screaming. At the World Racquetball Championships in San Luis Potosi, Mexico this past summer, I was approached by a small group of administrators who shared with me that my choice of a word on air did not bode well with a group of stream-happy Bolivian viewers. My use of the word *jungla*, evidently was perceived as a slight, or an offense. WOW! I was ‘being myself’, as I aspire to be on air. Should I jump into a cocoon in order to travel the straight and narrow highway? Why such a reaction after all these years; especially from my *friends down south!* After I gave myself a reset, I explained to viewers that my intentions were without any bias or malice, and I offered an apology to those who may have been offended. I also sought out a Bolivian national team player, whose name was mentioned as one who took offense to my comment. We greeted; then I explained my intentions to her. She was surprised and told me that she had no clue about this ‘issue.’**

**In closing, we cannot nor should not walk in silk sneakers. We can control our own actions. We cannot control what others do, feel, think; or, how they interpret the spoken and written word. We must be ourselves and strive to continue to be professionals.**

**Upcoming:**

***October 29 National Paddleball Warmup; El Gancho, Santa Fe***

***November 4-6 NPA Nationals (Paddleball Singles & Doubles); Midtown, Albuquerque***

***November 19 NM Racquetball Squash Racquets; El Gancho, Santa Fe***

***December 17 NM Racquetball Handball; El Gancho, Santa Fe***