

HOA breathes life into dying tennis courts

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Tom Fahey, left, Brad Richards and Tony Gleadhill, longtime board members for the Villages at Green Valley HOA, stand on the new Pickleball courts that grew out of a defunct tennis court.



A before shot of the cracking and breaking apart tennis court that the Villages at Green Valley rehabilitated last summer.

Save

When a combination of environment and age give an HOA both a failing and failed tennis court, there is only one option.

Well, technically there are three — but only one that completely solves the problem.

That's why the Villages of Green Valley spent nearly two years debating and saving more than \$100,000 to repair one court and turn the other into four Pickleball courts.

The amenities for the 475-home HOA were built in the late 70s and early 80s, and the two courts were in rough shape. The problem was the claylike ground they were built over. When it would expand or contract, the slab would move with it, causing it to crack and break apart.

The problem was so bad that one of the courts has been out of commission since at least 2005, when Tom Fahey moved into the Villages. A member of the HOA board for several years and a former president, he threw himself into researching what could be done.

The asphalt of the operational court would need repair every five years or so, and the HOA would have to pay \$10,000 each time.

“It was like throwing good money down the hole,” said Tony Gleadhill, another past HOA president and longtime board member.

Over the course of 18 months, the HOA considered three options: Keep patching the court every five years; using an interlocking tile system that would go over the court, but not do anything for what's underneath; or what they eventually went with – a post-tension concrete slab that would replace the original asphalt.

As part of these discussions, it was eventually decided to rehabilitate the failed tennis court into four Pickleball courts. Current HOA President Brad Richards said the decision was made to help accommodate the Villages 40-member Pickleball club and to provide one of the basic amenities people are looking for in a neighborhood now.

“You need tennis courts, Pickleball courts and a pool,” he said.

Once the decision was made, Gleadhill spearheaded the logistics of the six-week process that had 27 trucks come last summer to pour the nearly million pounds of concrete into the 14,400-square-foot slab.

In all, the complete project came in with a \$110,000 price tag from the HOA's replacement repair fund, which the board had been squirreling money away into for the past couple years.

It was costly, but Gleadhill and the rest say it was worth every penny. Most people in the neighborhood had given up asking when the courts would be fixed, Fahey said.

“They were all talking about after they died,” he said.

While the playing surface will need some maintenance every five years or so, the slab itself should be good for more than 20 years, and a 50-year life isn't unheard of, according to Gleadhill.

Though the 30-day curing process was completed in June – and people were playing on it – the HOA is waiting until Friday to have its official ribbon cutting to make sure the most members are there for the occasion.

What will be the HOA's next project? Well, Richards says he's getting a bit of the short shrift – Gleadhill and Fahey got the big, splashy projects. His job is now to tackle dry rot and replacing the HVAC system in their clubhouse.

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