



February 2024



New Member Party

On January 17th the HPA held a party to welcome new members to the HPA pickleball fold. You know, the kind of party where people mill around holding glasses of red punch and overbaked cookies talking to each other for a few minutes.

Gradually the talk dies off and people drift away and all that's left are a few tables covered with paper tablecloths and some empty overturned Solo cups.

No? It wasn't that kind of party? **NO!** Anyone who knows Tom Harris or Nicolette Smith knows they would never let an HPA new member party turn into some boring country club event. Check out photos from the best new member event in the Highlands.



Nicolette Smith making sure everything is going to plan.



Mike Cravens and friend. Mike is on the right.



Perry and Gretchen running drills. Look at all that stuff on the court.



People are lining up to have fun at this party.



Perry trying to help Darlene when she clearly doesn't need any.

Annual Meeting and Dinner

The Highlands Pickleball Association would like to invite all members and guests to their Annual Meeting to be held on Sunday, February 18, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the Highlands Ballroom. Dinner will follow at approximately 5:00. The menu will consist of chicken marsala, salad, roasted potatoes, vegetables and rolls. The dinner cost will be \$15.00 for members, and \$24.00 for guests. Checks or cash will be collected when you check in at the beginning of the meeting. Checks should be made out to the Highlands Pickleball Association (HPA). The deadline to sign up for the dinner is Monday, February 12.

To sign up for the dinner please visit the website:

highlandspickleball.com/rsvp. You will be instructed how to RSVP.

We look forward to seeing you. It's been my pleasure to serve you as President for the past 2 years.

Respectfully,

Mike Cook

HPA President

Guest Column

I asked Katri Noid to do a short write up about how she got started in pickleball. She gave me one and thought this might be better, since she had a similar story to Kimberly Bowman. I liked both, so here's an article about pickleball and your heart. Check out her story below.

Playing Pickleball is Good for Your Heart!

February is a month many people reflect on matters of the heart including love and relationships. A fitting opportunity to also emphasize the importance of heart health. **February is American Heart Month**-a time when the nation spotlights heart disease. It is a reminder to prioritize heart-healthy lifestyles.

The good news is that there are many ways to reduce your risk of developing heart disease, and exercise is one of the most effective ways to do so. [In a study published in the Journal of Aging and Physical Activity](#), researchers found that older adults who played pickleball for eight weeks had significant improvements in their cardiovascular fitness, muscle strength, and agility. The study concluded that pickleball is an effective form of exercise for improving overall fitness and health.

Reasons Why Pickleball is Good for Your Heart Health

Increases Heart Rate

Pickleball is a high-intensity sport that requires quick movements and fast reflexes. It involves a lot of running, jumping, and swinging, which can significantly increase your heart rate. When you play pickleball, your heart pumps more blood to supply oxygen to your muscles, which improves your cardiovascular fitness. Regular participation in pickleball can help lower your resting heart rate and reduce the risk of heart disease.

Improves Aerobic Capacity

Aerobic capacity is the ability of your body to use oxygen efficiently during exercise. Pickleball is an aerobic activity that involves sustained movement for an extended period, which can increase your aerobic capacity. As you play pickleball regularly, your lungs become more efficient at taking in oxygen, and your heart becomes more efficient at delivering oxygen to your muscles. This improvement in aerobic capacity helps your heart work more efficiently and reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Promotes Weight Loss

Pickleball is an excellent form of exercise for weight loss. It is a high-intensity activity that burns a significant number of calories in a short amount of time. A 150-pound person can burn up to 350 calories in just 30 minutes of pickleball. Losing weight is one of the most effective ways to improve your heart health, as it can reduce the risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and heart disease.

Lowers Blood Pressure

High blood pressure is a leading cause of heart disease. When you play pickleball, your heart rate increases, and your blood vessels expand to deliver more oxygen and nutrients to your muscles. This expansion of blood vessels reduces the resistance to blood flow and lowers blood pressure. Regular participation in pickleball can help lower your blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart disease.

Reduces Stress

Stress is a common factor that can negatively affect heart health. Pickleball is a fun and social activity that can help reduce stress levels. The social interaction and physical activity involved in pickleball can stimulate the release of endorphins, which are natural mood-boosting chemicals. This release of endorphins can help reduce stress and anxiety, which can benefit your heart health.

Enhances Overall Fitness

Pickleball is a full-body workout that involves multiple muscle groups, including the legs, arms, and core. Playing pickleball regularly can help improve your overall fitness level, which can benefit your heart health. A stronger and healthier body can support a healthy heart, reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease.

The Sport of Pickleball is Your Heart's Best Friend

Pickleball is an excellent sport for your heart health. It can increase your heart rate, improve your aerobic capacity, promote weight loss, lower blood pressure, reduce stress, and enhance overall fitness. By participating in regular pickleball games, you can improve your cardiovascular health and reduce the risk of heart disease. So, grab a paddle and hit the court to improve your heart health while having fun!

From The Committees

HPA Board Elections

All HPA members will receive an email that includes a link with instructions on the voting process.

The email will be sent on 8 February. Votes may be cast from that date until 15 February. No votes will be accepted prior to or after these dates.

Declared candidates for each position will be listed, there will also be an opportunity to write in a candidate if you so desire. You must also include your lot number, but not your name on the ballot.

There may be multiple votes per lot number, as each HPA member is allowed to vote. Each HPA member is allowed to cast a single vote.

Meet your Candidates

President

Tom Harris

I'm Tom Harris running for president of the Highlands Pickleball Association. Before moving to the Highlands six years ago we were snowbirds—Denver during the warm weather and San Diego during the winter. My pickleball journey began at a San Diego happy hour event. Someone mentioned there is a sport with a funny name called pickleball at the local recreation center and we all ought to try it. I watched a video, went to a sporting goods store, bought a cheap paddle and ball and started going to open pickleball play around San Diego. Little did I know how this casual mention of pickleball at a happy hour would change my life.

The Highlands Pickleball Association philosophy has been to play pickleball but to also provide opportunities for people to improve their skills. I have improved my game as a result of these skill sessions and now lead skills clinics to help others as I was helped. I participated in several Pickleball tournaments and two seasons in the Arizona Association of Pickleball League. I currently am a member on the social committee and am serving as the vice president of the Highlands Pickleball Association.

I have a history of volunteerism: as coach for my daughter's soccer team, as a volunteer instructor with the Over the Hill Gang (age 50+ skiers) at Copper Mountain Ski Resort, and as a board member for the Copper Mountain Ski Team. At a silent auction fundraising event to support a scholarship fund for Columbine High School, a colleague and I offered a gourmet meal for 8 people in the host's home. It was a tremendous fundraising success and we continued this annual offering until we moved to the Highlands. I currently volunteer at All In Youth Pickleball at the Pascua Puebla Yaqui Boys and Girls Club introducing pickleball to 7-11 year old children.

Professionally I was a financial advisor for 40 years. I helped advise and counsel clients on how to best achieve their personal financial goals. I believe in open communication in a collaborative and cooperative decision-making process. I adhere firmly in the fiduciary principles of putting the client's interest number one. I would appreciate your vote and your support for president of the Highlands Pickleball Association.

Vice President

Helen Yarmoska

Like most people at the Highlands, my pickleball life started with a class from Coach Dave Epperson. Once I started playing, I was hooked. Not only on the game, but the people involved. Eager to help, and to play more, I volunteered with the HPA several different ways over the last three years – Women's Drop In Coordinator, Team Drills Assistant, Holiday Lights Float Coordinator, New Member Ambassador, newsletter assistant and Host to Sunday Mixed Doubles.

I was on last year's 50+ 3.0 Arizona Peoples Pickleball League (Highlands Hotties) and on this year's 50+ 3.5 APPL League team, Highlands Hot Shots. I have participated in several tournaments and hope to share those experiences and assist Highlands Pickleball players should they decide to pursue competitive pickleball play.

In addition to Highlands pickleball volunteer work, I also help teach children how to play pickleball at the Pascua Yaqui Indian Reservation Boys and Girls Club.

I am a current member of two quilt groups -- Highlands Quilting and Santa Catalina Quilters. My time is concentrated on providing quilts to those in need in the local Marana and Tucson area. I'm also a fitness instructor for the Highlands Fitness Center.

In the past I have volunteered as a board member of the American Heart Association Twin Cities chapter, board member Edina Chamber of commerce, Master Gardener, Loaves and Fishes, member and president Edina Garden Council, Blood Donor Coordinator, Religious Education teacher. There are

probably more volunteer activities, but I think this proves that I reach out to help my community.

My career path was sales. And a good salesperson knows that you have two ears and one mouth. You should listen more than you speak. So as your Vice President, I will continue that skill. I will listen to each member that wants to provide their opinions to me; make thoughtful decisions and do what is kind and right for the organization.

Ira Levy

My name is Ira Levy and I'm running for VP of the HPA. My wife, Robin – whom almost all of you know – and I have lived in The Highlands for close to 8 years. I have been a Pickleball member and group leader for the past 5 years, including organizing the successful “late morning” Sunday Mixed Doubles group.

I've come to love the game of Pickleball mostly because of the great people I've gotten to know on and around the courts. I care deeply about our community and want to be a part of creating positive change within the HPA to ensure that everyone feels welcome no matter what their skill level. I've played sports my entire life, was a coach for many years, and would love the opportunity to apply what I know and continue to learn to help make our association as strong as it can be.

In short, I'm a “get it done” kind of guy who will work hard on your behalf and I'm asking you for the chance to prove that to you.

Thanks for your consideration.

At Large Member

Tara Macari

My name is Tara Macari. I hope to represent you as a Member at Large for the Highlands Pickleball Association.

Full disclosure, I am Canadian, typically we are known as a peaceful and conciliatory people. My husband and I spend six warm months in Ontario and six warm months in Arizona. We are not so far north that we can't communicate via email, internet and cell phone. Just because you can't see me for twelve months doesn't mean I'm not there.

I've lived in the Highlands since February 2018. I had my first pickleball lesson in December 2019. I was hooked at zero-zero two. I can honestly say I was once a beginner and I have advanced my skill set to play in the State Championship with

the Arizona Pickleball Player League. I believe I can be a voice for all players at all levels, as I was there too.

Volunteers make the world go round, in my opinion. They invest their time and past experience to make things happen.

Currently, I'm volunteering for an opportunity of a lifetime. I am navigating the intricacies of raising two elderly adults through their declining health. As my mother once said, "getting old is not for the faint of heart".

In years past, I have been volun-asked to participate in mentoring fellow pickleball players at the Highlands. I have enjoyed these opportunities and I always appreciate being asked to help.

Previously, I was a volunteer for my son's hockey team, I was the treasurer, for four years. During my tenure I developed systems and procedures that were open and transparent. We went from, "Hey, Tara I spent \$12.15 on hockey tape, can I get my money back? To, "Hey, Chuck, yes you can get your money back, when you provide me a receipt". Checks and balances were my motto.

Going further back in time, my first foray into volunteering was jury duty. I was selected and was chosen among my fellow jurors to be their "fore-person". I was responsible for promoting open discussions, to analyze the evidence and eventually make a unanimous decision.

I hope to bring that same sense of experience and fairness to the HPA Board as your Member at Large.

Donna Hover

Hi, everyone! I'm Donna Hover (which, weirdly enough, rhymes with clover and not cover) and I'm running for Member-at-Large. My husband and I retired down to the Highlands in 2021, so we are fairly new to the community. But we started playing pickleball pretty quickly, and I started my first group when the schedule was kept on a paper on the breezeway bulletin board.

I was born and raised in Colorado but moved to Arizona to attend ASU (sorry to all you Wildcat fans, but go Sun Devils!) and stayed another five years teaching in an elementary school media center. I moved back to Denver to be closer to family and sort of fell into the mortgage business when I joined a start-up mortgage bank. During the 27 years I was with them, it grew to be the largest privately owned mortgage bank in Colorado. I was the head of operations and, as such, I worked with every department representing their needs, issues and ideas to the rest of the management committee.

That is exactly what I envision the job of Member-at-Large to encompass, representing all of you to the HPA Board. I believe we already have a great amenity with many dedicated volunteers and an A-1 coaching program unique in all of Tucson. With the addition of our four new courts, I think we have a lot of opportunities ahead of us. If elected, I look forward to talking with each of you to learn your needs, issues and, most of all, ideas.

See you on the courts!

P.S. We have a golden retriever named Sophie, if that helps sway any votes!

Standings - Arizona Peoples Pickleball League

The Highlands ladies teams are off to a HOT start. With about a third of the games in, they are making a mark in the Southern Region.

Highlands Hotties (50+ 3.0)

Second place of 14 teams

Highlands Red Hots (65+, 3.0)

Fourth place of 6 teams

Highlands Hot Shots (50+, 3.5)

3rd place of 12 teams

Come watch our ladies. Check out the schedule below. Bring a chair just in case, encouragement appreciated but no coaching. (At least don't get caught)

APPL Womens 2024 League Team Schedules (remaining games)

Note: Regional Playoffs March 17-30 @ Udall & State Championships Apr 3-7th @ El Mirage

Women 50+ 65+: 3.5 Flight > Highlands Hot Shots 50+

02/09 Fri (**Home**) The Pickle Pack @ Gallery Sports Club
Marana 12:30 pm

02/13 Tue (Away) Paddle Up @ Rincon Country W RV Resort 4555 S Mission Rd Tucson 01:00 pm

02/23 Fri (**Home**) Picklicious @ Gallery Sports Club Marana 12:30 pm

02/28 Wed (Away) Hot Shots @ Udall Park – 7200 E Tanque Verde Rd Tucson 12:00 pm

03/08 Fri (**Home**) Sun City Blazers @ Gallery Sports Club Marana 12:30 pm

Women 18+ 50+: 3.0 Flight > Highlands Hotties 50+

02/09 Fri (**Home**) Desert Dinkers Oro Valley Com Cntr Oro Valley 11:00 am

02/23 Fri (**Home**) Legally Brined Oro Valley Com Cntr Oro Valley 11:00 am

02/28 Wed (Away) Pickley Pairs Corbetts Restaurant & Pball 340 N 6th Ave Tucson 10:00 am

03/08 Fri (Away) Binge Dinkers Saddlebrooke Ranch 31280 Amenity Dr Oracle 02:00 pm

Women 65+: 3.0 Flight > Highlands Red Hots 65+

02/07 Wed (Away) Not Today @ Quail Creek Courts 1461 E Quail Crossing GreenValley 01:00 pm

02/12 Mon (**Home**) Everything But the Kitchen Dink @ Oro Valley Com Cntr Oro Valley 01:30 pm

02/19 Mon (**Home**) Paddle Up 2 @ Oro Valley Com Cntr Oro Valley 01:30 pm

02/28 Wed (Away) Volley Llamas @ Oro Valley Com Cntr Oro Valley 11:00 am

03/04 Mon (**Home**) Dill Me In @ Oro Valley Com Cntr Oro Valley 01:30 pm

03/11 Mon (**Home**) Not Today @ Oro Valley Com Cntr Oro Valley 01:30pm

Marketplace

Reminder: This is the catchall section of The Prickly Pickle, and readers are encouraged to submit tournament results, stuff for sale, photos, etc. Submit your contributions to newsletter@highlandspickleball.com.

Next Month in The Prickly Pickle

Next month in The Prickly Pickle - an all (mostly) photo edition. In order to make this work, I need photos, and most of them have to come from you. Send your photos to bechler7734@gmail.com.

I can't promise that every photo will get published, but there won't be a photo issue if I don't get photos. Thanks in advance.

Help Wanted

"The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers."

William Shakespeare, Henry VI, Part 2

What's the difference between a lawyer and a vampire? A vampire only sucks blood at night.

Is that too much?

Any current or former lawyers out there, a question - does the HPA need to copyright our Prickly Pickle logo? If so, can we get some free advice/help on how to do that?

Yes, I said free. If you're interested, contact Mike Cook or Tom Harris.



Lost and Found

If you lost it at the pickleball courts, we found it. So dig through the lost and found box and take your stuff home. We don't want it. I've been to the French Quarter and this is pretty tame, so come get it and the rest.



New Rules!

Here's a contribution from an anonymous HPA player named Gary Thalman. All I can say is I didn't make this up, it's in the rule book, so -.

Here is some info on Rule Changes

From an anonymous player
2024 Rule Changes

27 new rules were put in place for 2024. A lot of them are minor corrections, several of them are just slight word changes, but there are a few worth noting:

- Rule 7.L has been updated and 11.A has been updated with the word “deliberately” taken out. Rule 7.L is the “Carry Rule” and 11.A is the “Double Hit” rule.

Any “Carry” is now a fault, whether it’s done on purpose or by accident, as the word “deliberate” was taken out of the rule. Now, the referee doesn’t have to decide the intent of the player’s shot. If it happens, it’s a fault. “Double hits” are still permitted as long as it happens in one, continuous motion. Rules 3.A.1 and 3.A.8 explain the differences between a “Carry” and “Double hit.”

- Rule 11.E has been amended. In tournament play, a replay of a completed rally is permitted if a ball is cracked or broken.

All players must agree the cracked or broken ball affected the outcome of the rally. Again, it has to be a completed rally. If the ball is damaged or just “soft,” no replay of the rally is awarded.

If you’d like to look at all the specifics and all the changes and non-changes proposed for 2024, you can do that. [Check out all the details here.](#)

Here are a few new rules specific to the Highlands.

1. - Because of excessive height, the kitchen line for anyone named Jeff is 6 inches behind the current kitchen line
2. - If leading by more than 5 points, Stephen, Karl, and Ira have to play the rest of the game with their right hand. Just like the rest of us.
3. - Deliberately stalling rather than hustling to your court, after the next game is announced results in a \$2 fine. (Bill, Robin)
4. - Lobbing up into the sun is okay, but only on days that start with T.
5. - “Mostly out” balls can be called out.
6. - Canadian windsocks are no longer allowed.
7. - Hairstyles that distract play will have to be covered by a hat.

New Shirts!

If you're reading this, you likely got an email announcing the new HPA shirts. First to order was Mike Cohen. Congrats on being a first mover, Mike!

We couldn't insert a photo of a shirt in the email, but here's an idea of what one looks like:



This is a cheap, homemade version on an \$8 Target shirt, but it should convey the idea.

Order now! Be like Mike!

Just in case you missed the email, you can order men's and women's short sleeved T shirts. You can also order men's sleeveless shirts, and women's racer back shirts. Time from order to delivery is about 2 weeks, and **we'll make our first order on February 5th**. All proceeds go back to the HPA.

Colors are White, Black, Red, Cardinal, Texas Orange, Graphite, Columbia Blue, Royal and Pink. Cost is \$20 for XS-XL, and \$22.50 for XXL, cash upfront when ordering. Contact Melinda Norris at melinda.norris1@icloud.com.

HPA Court Maintenance



Wayne - "I'm good with tools"



Jackie Craig lending a hand.

Volunteers make all the difference. Thanks to all of you who keep our courts playable.

How I Got Started In Pickleball

From time to time we like to highlight some of our members and let them say a few words about themselves. We did this in November, and I liked what people had to say. So here are more stories.

Kimberly Ann Bowman

My husband and I moved to the Highlands in the spring of 2021. We felt compelled to try out one of the many athletic offerings in our new active adult community - pickleball. Having limited experience with racket sports (I flunked racket ball in college,) I didn't think pickleball would be my "thing" but wanted to give it a try.

Coach Dave wasn't there the day we started. A happy fellow carrying a paddle introduced himself when he realized we were newbies and invited us to join him on the court for a quick lesson. Little did I know Lonnie Leiffer would continue to motivate and assist in my development as a player for the next 20 months!

Coach Dave spent a lot of time that first summer teaching me the fundamentals with a commanding voice and a great deal of patience. He continues to support me from the sidelines, often reminding me to relax.

Robin welcomed us with hugs and kisses, always saying hello and remembering our names. That helped me feel connected to this community.

Of course the drill opportunities with Tom Harris, Jim Widdows and Marissa Buell can't be forgotten. There is so much talent and generosity in this community.

I have met some of my dearest friends (and fiercest competitors) through pickleball. You know who you are! The Bobbleheads and Hotties have given me so much more than pickleball skills. Thank you!

I am grateful every day that I get to play with so many of you wonderful people here at the Highlands.

Katri Noid

On Monday morning, Kimberly Bowman and I were talking, and we realized you had asked both of us to do a write-up for the newsletter. At that time, Kimberly had already submitted her article. During our conversation, I discovered she had

written much if not all of what I was working on. You see, Kimberly and I started pickleball the same month, and just two months after Ted and I moved to the Highlands.

Our journey follows the same path. We both started with Dave Epperson's lessons, joined the Hover group, became a part of Lonnie's Bobbleheads, drilled with Tom Harris and Marissa, and now play on the Hotties league team. We are grateful for all the folks who taught and encouraged us along the way. Since we were by each other's side, those folks are the same.

We have become dear friends, and without pickleball I am not sure our paths would have passed. Kimberly, and so many others, have made my pickleball world a happy place, and have brought much joy to my life off the courts!

Friar Thomas of Harris, Derbyshire

I first came to hear about pickleball during a pilgrimage to Santiago del Compostela in the Year of our Lord 977. When I heard that the remains of Saint James had been discovered there, God put it on my heart to follow the Pilgrim's Way to honor the blessed Saint.

While traveling along the Camino de Santiago, I heard rumors of a game that had been proscribed by the Holy Church. Further investigation revealed this secret game was called pickleball, and had fallen into disfavor after the Roman Emperor Theodosius had put down pickleball riots in Thessaloniki and killed thousands of players and spectators many hundreds of years earlier.

Naturally this intrigued me and after several discreet inquiries a strange lady known only as the Cat Woman agreed to conduct me to a place high in the mountains where pickleball was still being played. The place was flat, with a net stretched between two poles. A square was outlined in the dirt, with the net set in the middle.

Sometimes two but usually four players faced each other and hit a ball painted yellow back and forth. The object was to hit the ball so that the other player could not return it over the net. If a player hit the ball so that it hit outside the lines, or hit the ball into the net, the point was over. Scoring was difficult to understand at first, so I will not relate it here.

The participants seemed happy and hearty. They spent time outside in God's creation, and I could not understand why Mother Church was opposed to such an obviously beneficial activity.

I decided to interrupt my pilgrimage in Pamplona to consult with the local bishop and the church library. It was there I found the ancient manuscript describing Theodosius' anger and anguish over how a sport caused him to murder so many of our faithful brothers and sisters. It was clear to me that his genuine repentance led him to grievous error. However, he was the Emperor, and his word was law. I knew that pickleball was a wholesome activity blessed by God. If only we could keep the sport alive until the scales fell from Mother Church's eyes, we could reintroduce this wholesome activity back to polite society.

I am ancient beyond counting now, 70 plus years. I never returned to Harris in Derbyshire, but have devoted my life to shepherding my flock and working however possible to keep the pickleball flame alive. I am turning my activities over to my acolyte, Kvas of Garie. He's a Bohemian, which makes him a weak reed to lean on, but he's our best hope.