



April 2024



Ken and Barbie fashion faux pas - non matching paddles



After and long and productive career in the toy business, Ken and Barbie have moved to the Highlands

Pickleball From Away

Mike Frere and Tara Macari summer in Canada. They winter here.

I knew they built their own pickleball court, so I asked Mike for a short writeup. Pay attention to the Inspector Gadget aspect of his writeup. I don't know of anyone who incorporates more tech into his life. It's fascinating to talk to him about the fully automated car wash, or the window washing gizmo, Fogo Island and so much more. Ask him about it sometime.

I've always been curious about where everyone plays when they leave in the summer months for cooler climates. Scott suggested we write a little blurb on our own court we built back in our hometown in Ontario Canada, so we figured we'd share ours.

The idea of building our own court came to me while sitting around the pavilion in April 2021 and wondering where we were going to play back home that summer. We do have four very busy public courts that are built directly adjacent to homes, causing a lot of friction between players and homeowners, something we wanted to avoid going forward. It got me thinking that our property layout would work well with a sports court. Using Google Earth's distance measurement tool, I discovered it would fit perfectly at the end of our driveway, adjacent to our pool fence. So we got busy and enlisted a local contractor to install the pad. Less than a month later, we were playing on it!



The location wound up being perfect! It's well sheltered from the predominant south west winds and so didn't require additional fencing and wind screening. We just needed to install a fence to prevent the ball from rolling down the driveway and a short retaining wall. Plus, we could now do ATPs with a 'Tuck & Roll' into the grass!

We chose asphalt as the base, so future owners could more easily remove it or repurpose it as an extension of the driveway. We couldn't initially paint it, as asphalt excretes oils for about a year, but during that time we discovered that it actually plays very well on bare asphalt. So we just painted the lines for now. We plan on completing the painting this year, but mostly for aesthetics.

So far we have only had one HPA guest play on it, our own HPA Prez Tom Harris, who visited last summer. Many of you travel north during the summer and if you're in the Toronto/Montreal/Upstate NY area and need a pickleball fix, hit us up! We also have a pavilion and refreshments 😊.

Finally, we call it 'Lily Pad' as we live in an area called Lily Bay, so it seemed fitting.

Mike & Tara (aka Tweener & Sheriff)



HPA Nuptials

Who says pickleball isn't a social game? And who doesn't love a good romance? Joe Scofield and Kim Freeman are getting married! And they like pickleball.

Where, you might ask, did Joe and Kim meet? At our own pickleball courts. And what event brought them together? Margaritaville, of course.



Margaritaville is where people of questionable character and poor judgment play. Nicknames help provide some anonymity to the players to hide their shame.

Because of Margaritaville's don't ask/don't tell policy, sometimes players bring liquid refreshments that may contain "electrolytes".

All that to say that if you're of questionable character, poor judgment, and are willing to assume a nickname, Margaritaville is a good place for you. It worked for Joe and Kim. They both seem to be high character individuals so it's not clear how they got in.

As far as I know, this is the first official romance that started at the Highlands pickleball courts. Both Joe (Easy Rider) and Kim (Torvi) are great for each other

and the community. If you know of another pickleball love story, let's get it out there for everyone.

Wedding details are scarce and unimportant, because it'll be a small family wedding. But maybe? there'll be a party after the happy couple settles in.

Congratulations, Joe and Kim. We're very happy for you and wish you many long, happy years. They're the nicest people

Pickleball in a wheelchair

By Gary Thalman

Our friends visiting from Colorado are starting to look for a retirement community. They stayed with us here in the Highlands for a few days and really enjoyed the hospitality everyone showed them and wanted to leave a thanks to everyone they met.

This was a unique visit because one of the two women has been confined to a wheelchair since she was 21 years old. Kirsty is an avid downhill skier and ski instructor, both before and after the accident that left her paralyzed from the waist down, she also remains active in most outdoor activities including kayaking, hiking, swimming, biking, and like many of us here in the Highlands is addicted to pickleball.



Kirsty shared her talent of pickleball with many of the pickleball club members and expressed her gratitude for the warm welcome she received.

We also thank you for sharing your time and making them feel so welcome.



The Highlands Women Highlands Red Hots



Daphne Hetherington, Lisa Leiffer, Laurie Grossmann, Lisa Flesher, Barb Olsen, Nicolette Smith, Cyndi Thalman, Shelly Maki, Joyce Krebill, and Robin Levy.
Missing from the photo are Shelley McDowell and our subs, Mo Larmour and Joni Hansen.

The Highlands Red Hots are the 65+ 3.0 flight of the AZ Pickleball Players League. This is our first year playing in the league and we have learned a lot playing teams that have different 'styles' of pickleball.

We have also learned more about being a team and being a good partner, and had a lot of fun doing it!

We finished our season in third place.

Highlands Hot Shots

The **Highlands Hot Shots** are the first 3.5 womens APPL league team fielded mostly by Highlands players. We had a great first season with 6 wins and 4 losses, and we had a blast upping our skills, making new friends, and competing in the big wide world of pickleball outside of Camp Highlands!

Team members included Highlands gals Amy Haugen, Cheryl Antognoni, Jane Linton, Linny Norris, Marci Imbriaco, and captains Marissa Buell and Helen Yarmoska.

Our home games were played at the Gallery this year. We hope to compete next year on our true home courts, here at the Highlands!







Highlands Hotties

The Highlands Hotties, Women 3.0-50+ Flight

The Hotties had a fantastic season, finishing with a 7-1 record, earning them second place overall in their division of the Arizona Pickleball Players League (APPL).



Left to right: De Hamann (Captain), Gail Epperson (Co-Captain), Kimberly Bowman, Darlene Lawson, Mo Larmour, Katri Noid, Joni Hansen, Barb Farr.



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.

How Many People Read The Prickly Pickle?

Several people have asked that question. I was a bit surprised at the question, because I thought maybe I was the only one interested. No one wants to spend their time writing something nobody reads.

So if you wanted the answer to that question, who would you ask? I'd ask Mike Frere, because he knows how to obtain that info. I did ask Mike and the answer is around 125.

I think that's a decent number, but I've never published anything before, so maybe it's an embarrassment and I'm too clueless to be embarrassed. But I'm thankful for those who contribute and those who read. Keep up the good work.

Players Wanted

Calling all lady pickleball players age 75+!!!! We are looking to see how many would be interested in playing as a group. How many would play for fun, how many competitive, how many for fun and competitive. For now, feelers are going out just to see the interest. Please call/text either Etta Hensler 920-470-9493 email ettahensler@gmail.com or Sue Cook 920-277-1975 email cookpose@gmail.com Happy Pickling!

More Shirt News!

The new Highlands HPA shirts are out. Here's some pictures of members wearing them. But first, here's a picture of the original - it's still a good look. And let's be honest - Greg is a fine figure of a man. He's on the next page.

One thing we found out on our first order is that the Badger brand shirts run large. Some people have ordered theirs only to find out the fit is one size too big.

We'll place an order on April 5th, and here are the rules:

1. Contact Melinda Norris with order details.



2. Pay Melinda in cash. No cash, no order.
3. Receive shirt.

It takes about two weeks to get shirts, so don't forget that.

Here's what we offer:

Long sleeve men's and women's (**new**)

Short sleeve men's and women's

Racer back (women's)

Wife beater (men's)

And don't forget about the iron on logos. They come in 4 ½" and 9". The 4 ½" logo costs \$3, and the 9" logo costs \$5.

Why two sizes, and why get a logo instead of a shirt?

As cool as the 4 ½" logo is, the 9" logo is awesome. Second, let's say you want a Highlands Pickleball logo on a sweatshirt or on a shirt made of different fabric. Cotton, maybe, a cotton/poly blend, a different kind of synthetic, or a shirt with a different color than we offer. Get the shirt, get the logo, spend two minutes with an iron, and voila! Super cool and original too. We're not a clothing company so we don't deal with sweatshirts. So think about that logo

Contact Melinda Norris at melinda.norris1@icloud.com. All proceeds go to the HPA. Just remember, if you're in doubt about size, order one size down.





Milk Carton Kid



Have you seen this woman? Not if you looked in the Prickly Pickle last month. I had pictures of the Annual Meeting and Election Results and got photos of our new EI Presidente and Vice President, but not our new member at large, Donna Hover. Many apologies. As you can see, she landed on her feet.

How I Got Started in Pickleball - Frank Morgano

I'm always interested in how people got started playing pickleball. Frank Morgano is 84 and plays like someone 20 years younger, so I asked him to share his story. Frank's a Yankees fan, which is unfortunate because I'm an Orioles and Mets fan. Damn Yankees.

In my younger days (after retirement), I began to play tennis because I was better at that compared to golf. Sooner or later my commitment to both got to be too much and I had to choose one or the other.

Moving to the Highlands and being introduced to pickleball made my choice easy. No regrets in my decision to go all out with pickleball.

I can honestly say compared to other sports, at the age of 84+ it is never too late to pick up the game.

Good choice Frank. Now let's talk about baseball.

Patrick Callahan

Why Pickleball?

It was December 2019 and I was on a smooth glidepath toward retirement, spending more hours walking with my chocolate Labradoodle, Sherlock, than worrying about face time at the office. Those long walks frequently took us through Concord Community Park (CA), past the ball fields and batting cages and next to the fences that ran alongside the tennis courts.

There was something odd going on inside those fences. People were getting instruction in a racquet game that utilized oversized ping pong paddles and a weirdly colored wiffle ball. This was Pickleball and after about 10 minutes of watching it, I decided it was something I would take up as soon as I retired. We moved here in March 2020 just as Covid slammed the door. Pickleball was going to have to wait.

Fifteen months later, Liz and I walked onto the courts for our first lesson with Coach Dave. A few months after that, Dave invited me to join a group he was part of, and as my confidence increased, I moved into a men's drop-in group. Day-by-day I was getting to

know Pickleballers of all stripes, abilities, and agendas. Friendships were developing and deepening.



As my 75th birthday approached in August 2022, Liz decided to host a get-together at the club to celebrate that milestone. Invitations went out to my Pickleball (and a couple of water volleyball) friends. The event gave my friend, Lee King, an idea. Apparently, he and others had noticed that I invariably wore a white shirt and dark pants on the court. Maybe it was the influence of twelve years of Catholic school that pointed me unconsciously toward that “uniform,” but he contacted everyone on the guest list and persuaded them to show up dressed in white shirts and dark pants. The event wasn’t a surprise but that stunt sure was. (See photo below)

So, if you ask, why Pickleball? Fuhgeddaboutit! The answer is obvious – great friends.

What a great writeup. Thanks Patrick.

Guilty Pleasures

I've already betrayed my lack of culture with an admission of how much I love Godzilla, Dune, Alien, John Wick and other kitschy pop culture symbols.

I love giant monsters. And I love giant robots. And what could be better than giant monsters fighting giant robots?

So, when you get **Pacific Rim**, a monster vs robot movie written and directed by Guillermo Del Toro, you've got something. This is the best of the genre, as Gipsy Danger, the last of the Jaegers, battles it out with ever more powerful kaiju from an interdimensional portal.

Naturally Gipsy Danger saves the day while leaving room for a sequel. There was one which we'll politely gloss over and propose a real sequel with Del Toro back at the helm.

We even have concept art, courtesy of Amy Haugen.



What do you think? Gipsy Danger vs the kaiju champ, best two out of three? Call it **Pacific Rim 3.5?**

Acknowledgements

This is the last issue until next November, so I wanted to thank some people along the way. The Prickly Pickle seems like it's been successful, and the single biggest reason is that everyone has chipped in to help. It's a lot of work to put out a newsletter as bad as this, so I'm grateful to those who have helped share the load. I'm sure I'm going to miss someone, so I'll apologize up front. Here's some of the people who have contributed this year.

First, my co-editor, Melinda Norris. It doesn't happen without her help. Gary Thalman has contributed excellent several articles, along with Mike Cravens. There's quantity and there's quality. Gary provides quality and Mike provides what Mike provides. Which is great.

Then, in no particular order, the following: Helen Yarmoska, Katri Noid, Kimberly Bowman, Marissa Buell, Frank Morgano, Laurie Grossman, De Hamman, Friar Thomas of Harris, Derbyshire, Amy Haugen, Mike Frere, Lonnie Leiffer, Jane Linton, Ira Levy, Tara Macari, and Donna Hover.

That's a big group of people, and soon we'll be scattering for the summer. Stay safe and come back in the fall so we can do it again.

Postscript

We'll be in France this summer on a river cruise. I've already sent out feelers for pickleballers in France, sans succes jusqu'a present. But I haven't given up.

We plan to see the end of Stage 16 of the Tour de France at Nimes, eat a lot of French food, see the Pont du Gard (it's Roman), visit lavender fields and a soap factory, and do all of the other things tourists do at the height of a crowded tourist season. I've wanted to go to France nearly all my life, and it looks like it might happen. If I can find some pickleball while I'm there, that would be incroyable.

Your job is to document your summer pickleball vacation and report back for a possible special summer edition in August or September. If we have enough feedback.