



# PICKLEBALL Press

Happy New Year - may 2025 ring in your best play ever!

## C O U R T C O M M E N T A R Y



While Helene has changed many things, rest assured that APA continues to move forward with key initiatives.

One of our initiatives is to build a better community for both AVL and AVL pickleball. We have planned a fundraiser for the AVL community in order to raise funds for working folks impacted by Helene.

As far as building the AVL pickleball community, we've followed up on the recent bond which gives \$20 million to Asheville Parks & Recreation (APR). Knowing APR has many needs, especially after Helene, we continue to push APR to honor their commitment to pickleball.

Earlier this month, some APA board members met

with D. Tyrell McGirt, APR Director, for a Park Bench Chat. We were assured that the approved bond projects are continuing to move forward in tandem with the massive recovery efforts underway. McGirt explained how the bond project for the new pickleball complex will be rolled out in 3 phases - Planning, Design, and Building.

The planning phase will occur this year and will include public engagement. APR made it clear they would value APA input for suggestions regarding any available space to build an 8 to 10 court complex (with room to grow). Therefore, we are asking each of you to funnel your suggestions to us immediately via our email address of [apainfo@avlpa.org](mailto:apainfo@avlpa.org) (please use

Pickleball Complex Site as the subject). In the future, APR will need design ideas for our new complex, so be thinking about what pickleball should look like in AVL.

Look for another APR interview in the February APA newsletter for additional updates on the Planning Phase and the status of our proposed recycling project.

Please visit the final page of this newsletter for details on our upcoming get-together and fundraiser at Asheville Sports Club for ReGroup WNC on February 12 from 4 to 7 PM. Feel free to invite anyone you think would be interested.

**Christina Dupuch**  
*President*

# PICKLERS CLUB

We would like to recognize our Picklers Club members for their elevated membership in the APA!

## Dink Level - \$500 and above

Nancy Carr	Allison Grant	Jane Lawson
Deborah Crabtree	Audrey Hodel	Mark Livingston
Christina Dupuch	Bonnie Knox	Mimi Sexton

---

## Paddle Level - \$250 to \$499

Anonymous	Dee Pierce
Tom Hardecker	Howard Waxman
Lois Penn	

---

## Pickle Level - \$100 to \$249

Anonymous (3)	Janet Hart	Terry Roberts
Liz Button	Kerry Levin	Stefanie Roemer
Cindy Cardinal	Claudia McGrath	Kathy Rubendall
Ken Cardinal	Molly McMillan	Julie Wander
Rhonda Egerton	Kirit Naik	Alice Weldon
Stephanie Fish	Esther Nevarez	
Andrew Hart	Lynn Roberts	

---

If you'd like to learn more about the Picklers Club, [click here](#).



Jill Fletcher aspired to become a physical education teacher, and her enthusiasm for sports led her to explore various athletic activities during her teenage years, with lacrosse being her first passion. Born in central England, specifically The Midlands, she has resided in the United States for half of her life and specifically in Asheville for 19 years. Jill’s ardor for sports and teaching makes her an extremely valuable volunteer and supporter of our community.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

# JILL FLETCHER

With contagious enthusiasm and unwavering dedication, Jill successfully participated in six beginner pickleball clinics in 2023/2024, creating a warm and welcoming environment for new players to grow and thrive. She shared, “I really enjoy volunteering at the beginner clinics. It is so rewarding to see the newbies find their feet and discover what fun pickleball is.”

Jill was also part of our after-school pickleball program conducted at Issac Dixon elementary school in the

---

“I really enjoy volunteering at the beginner clinics. It is so rewarding to see the newbies find their feet and discover what fun pickleball is.”

---

spring of 2024. She was fun and very dedicated in every clinic. She provoked a spark of excitement in every kid she coached, leaving a lasting impact and inspiring them to

reach their full potential on the court.

“Retirement has brought newfound freedom, and pickleball has enriched it tenfold. This supportive community gives me companionship, laughter, and the satisfaction of seeing each other excel. We’re all on an upward trajectory, and it’s exhilarating to experience!”

We are fortunate to have her in our community. She radiates positivity and provides tireless support with a warm smile.

“The purpose of life is not to be happy, but to matter– to be productive, to be useful, to have it make some difference that you have lived at all.”

– Leo Rosten

# CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

As we grow our membership to speak as a unified voice for pickleball, we also grow our APA volunteers, who are a mix of creative, fun, retired, and still working pickleball-loving folks that come when called.

We have taught free clinics at the Asheville Parks & Recreation outdoor and indoor facilities, offered after-school activities through Bright Ideas at Isaac Dickson Elementary, and conducted a summer program for Big Brother Big Sister.



Our August initiative, accomplished only by the help of volunteers and a board member, provided a new restaurant venue for pickleball: Taco Boy in West Asheville. While the manager plans to get rollaway nets, for now, bring your own net, paddle and balls, sip a nice drink, have a taco, and play some parking lot pickleball on us.

Our activities don't stop there, though. Our next goal is to help provide courts at Eliada Home for Children.

We also have upcoming conversations about programming at the local prison system, hoping to partner with a nationwide program called PICL. PICL was established to “introduce pickleball programs into correctional facilities, offering a holistic approach to rehabilitation that encompasses physical activity, skill acquisition, mental well-being, and social reintegration.”

Don't be dismayed if you've missed out on any of our earlier opportunities. We have several more in the works as can be seen above. We also have a specific need for volunteers with Wix web skills. To volunteer for APA, please send us an email at [apainfo@avlpa.org](mailto:apainfo@avlpa.org) and let us know about your skills and how you'd like to assist.

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a light blue sleeveless top and dark shorts, is smiling and looking towards the right. She is holding a blue pickleball paddle. A green pickleball is visible in the air above her. The background is a bright, hazy sunset with warm golden light and some blurred greenery.

# JOIN US

Mark your calendars! The Asheville Pickleball Association (APA) is excited to host a fundraising party on Wednesday, February 12, from 4 to 7 PM at the Asheville Sports Club, 137 Coxe Ave. This event will raise funds for ReGroup WNC, a local nonprofit dedicated to helping working families after the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene. Bring your paddles and be ready to play pickleball, weather permitting! It's a wonderful opportunity to have fun, connect with fellow members, and support an important cause. One hundred percent of the proceeds will go directly to ReGroup WNC.

Good news for members: if you haven't renewed your membership yet, we're extending all memberships through February 28, 2025. Join or renew your membership by the end of February to continue enjoying all the benefits of being part of the APA family. Your membership dues have made a difference. APA recently purchased six new nets, which will soon be installed at the Murphy Oakley, Malvern Hills, and Weaver Park courts. We are also working with Asheville Parks & Recreation on installing recycling boxes for damaged pickleballs.

APA is continuing discussions with Asheville Parks & Recreation about the dedicated pickleball facility mandated last fall when the bond issue passed. Pickleball remains a top priority in the city's rebuilding plans following the hurricane, and we're advocating for the best possible outcomes for our members and the wider community.

Your participation makes all the difference. Whether you attend the fundraising party, renew your membership, volunteer on a committee, or invite friends to join APA, your support helps strengthen our community and improve the sport we love. Let's come together on February 12 to show our support for storm ravaged Asheville and reconnect with our fun-loving pickleball community. We look forward to seeing you!

[Click here to join.](#)

# STAY WARM!

by Nancy Carr

We all love pickleball, but this time of year presents some challenges for playing outside. Here are a few tips from [www.allstartennisupply.com](http://www.allstartennisupply.com), which will help make you more comfortable in these winter months.



## Dress in Layers

Start with a moisture-wicking base layer to keep sweat off your skin. Follow this with insulating layers like fleece or wool. Use an outer layer that's windproof and waterproof; be sure to wear gloves and a headband or hat to keep hands and ears warm. Don't forget to adjust layers while playing so you don't get overheated.

## Choose the Right Footwear

As the weather gets colder, the ground can become slippery, so be sure you have shoes with good grip to maintain traction. Consider shoes with extra insulation if the weather is particularly harsh. Keep an eye on your footwear and replace shoes with worn-out tread.

## Use Cold-Weather-Appropriate Balls

Use balls designed specifically for the cold

weather. Also, bring extra balls since you may need to replace them more frequently. Store balls at room temperature when not in use, because bringing colder balls directly onto the court may increase the likelihood of cracking and inconsistent bounces.

## Stay Hydrated

Sometimes it's easy to forget about hydration in the cold, but it's just as important as it is in the hot months. Keep water bottles close and don't forget to take sips between matches.

## Consider Shorter Game Intervals

Cold weather may lead to stiff muscles and joints, so don't forget a proper warm-up and stretching during breaks to decrease the risk of injury. Also consider shortening game intervals and taking frequent breaks to avoid overexertion.



# STEPS *to* SUCCESS

by DAVID KELLY



“Make sure your worst enemy doesn’t live between your own two ears.”

– Laird Hamilton

Introducing something new into your game is fraught with anxiety and often a sense of incompetence; those that persist and are willing to sit with the uncomfortable, invariably emerge with a valuable tool and elevated confidence.


My current project is exploring all the benefits of having 2 hands on the

paddle for backhands. I can’t think of a more versatile action in all of pickleball. It’s impressive utility can be seen at the kitchen in dinking, volleying and speed ups, in mid court, both defensively and offensively, and of course from the baseline with drives and drops. There’s a reason all top women use it, and now, the vast

majority of top men also embrace it. For those with a limited tennis background, the challenge is shifting from one hand to two hands seamlessly, as some situations absolutely favor the traditional one hand.

Try it, risk looking foolish. Have a learner’s mindset, settle for delayed satisfaction, and watch your game grow!

# LET'S SHOW WNC SOME LOVE!



Join us to raise funds for the 501(c)(3) hurricane relief organization, ReGroup WNC!

**Why ReGroup WNC?** They work locally to help working folks impacted by Helene get back into stable, secure living conditions through immediate, direct financial assistance.

**WED, FEB. 12**  
**4-7 PM**  
**ASHEVILLE**  
**SPORTS CLUB**

**Light finger foods provided • Beverages for purchase. Prize drawings for attendees!**

**Bring your paddles!** Weather permitting we will play! A donation of \$10 per person at the door will go directly to ReGroup WNC to fund local recovery.

Please consider making an additional donation [online](#) or at the event (make checks payable to ReGroup WNC).