



# Center Court

NOVEMBER 2012

## Tennis Thanks the Troops

Tennis Fest is an annual event at Balboa Tennis Club which draws nearly 1000 participants for a day of complimentary drills, exhibits, instruction and fun for all who attend. While planning Tennis Fest 2012 with the committee, Tennis



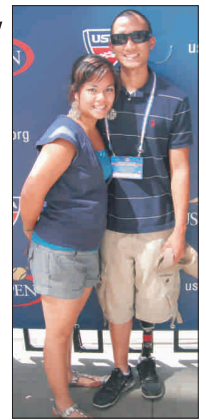
Director Geoff Griffin pushed hard for this year's event to be a part of the USPTA/ThanksUSA program called "Tennis Thanks The Troops." Money raised by tennis players around the country is used to send the spouses and children of

active duty military personnel to college. Geoff asked for a stipulation that whatever money was raised during Tennis Fest would go to someone locally. When Tennis Fest was over, the San Diego District sent a check to ThanksUSA for \$3350. Geoff was informed that Tennis Fest raised more money than any other event in the country. Not only would the \$3350 come back to someone in San Diego, ThanksUSA would also send a couple from San Diego to the US Open for two days with expenses paid. The San Diego District Tennis Association chose to send Lam Le and his wife. Lam is a long time participant in the Balboa Wounded Warrior Tennis Program. He is a Marine and an amputee. He and his wife had a wonderful time. A few weeks later, the District received a wonderful letter of thanks from Kara

Andryushina, who applied for the scholarship. She was extremely appreciative of the scholarship. San Diego District President, Steve Kappes, invited Kara and her family to a District board meeting where they presented her with the check.

### Thank You from USMC Sargent Le

*"My wife and I would like to extend our sincerest gratitude for the once in a lifetime opportunity you granted us to watch the 2012 US Open Tournament . . . Tennis has played a significant role in my life, more particularly my rehab to adapt to my adaptation. Thanks so much!"*



Sgt. Le and wife Holly

## inside...

### ARTICLES

Balboa's Sister Combo	4
BTC Employee Marci Michelson	4
New Board Members	5
Romeo Matias Weight Loss	6
In Memory of Frank Milon	6
Lessons from	7
Hip Replacement	
Tennis Tip	7
Florida Canyon Restoration	8

### DEPARTMENTS

President's Chatter	2
Director's Report	3
Calendar of Events	8

## Congratulations Geoff Griffin for USPTA Community Service Award

Congratulations to BTC Tennis Director Geoff Griffin on receiving the President's Award at the United States Professional Tennis Association World Conference on September 19 in Monterey, California. This award is a combined USPTA and USTA accolade, which is usually given out to someone for Community Service. Geoff was honored for going above and beyond in all aspects of the tennis industry. The award is given out to only one person nationally.

We all know how many countless hours of service Geoff gives to the poor and homeless at Christmas, the kids on a regular basis, Tennis Fest for all ages and of course his most recent involvement with the Wounded Warrior Athlete Program. The Club is proud of your achievement and happy for the deserved recognition.



Geoff Griffin with representatives from USTA & USPTA

## The President's Court Chatter

by Dwight Van Slyke




We have started the remodel of the clubhouse by pulling up the carpet to the cement base. The facility committee recently met and started putting together a plan along with discussing options for flooring, furniture, lighting and paint, etc. The committee also reviewed the bathroom and locker room remodels as well. All the tiles in the showers will be replaced. Other additions will include grab bars, new plumbing, fixtures and other accessories.

Park & Recreation told me that they would not object to moving their workshop area, which is located at the west end of our reservation building, but cannot consider it until 2016 when the Centennial Celebration of Balbo Park is over. That would be the best plan, in part because it is much larger and has a 1/2 bathroom. In the meantime, we hope to add on to the West end of the club and build a permanent tennis center, as approved by the Belinsky family.

We are putting together a master list of all the projects we would like the City to approve. In addition, the Donor Brick Project is still a top priority. Once the necessary funds are acquired from brick sales and approval is received, we will move forward. Additional fencing is also part of this project. You will be kept informed every step along the way.

Holidays are upon us and tis the season for giving! Having a gathering, holiday party, or simply do not want to bake? CALL Babycakes and let them do all the work and you take all the credit! Babycakes offers holiday cakes, celebration cakes, cupcakes, cookies and many other baked goods. Babycakes Hillcrest and Babycakes Balboa Park are also available for onsite events- call 619-296-4173 for more details! You can also give the gift of YUM by purchasing a Gift Card at Babycakes Hillcrest. Happy Holidays from Babycakes! 619-296-4173 [www.BabycakesSanDiego.com](http://www.BabycakesSanDiego.com)




# SHIRT RULE TALLY

November 1, 2012



**32** voted for shirts off on the lower courts only  
**64** voted for shirtless anywhere at the club  
**209** voted for proper tennis attire at all times



2221 Morley Field Drive  
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 295-9278  
[www.balboatennis.com](http://www.balboatennis.com)

**President**  
 Dwight Van Slyke

**Vice President**  
 Peter Conneely

**Treasurer**  
 Jane Pulliam

**Secretary**  
 Janene Christopher

**Board Members**

- Ruben Carriedo
- Mary Gunset
- Dan Hays
- C.T. Martin
- Pat Mason
- Mark McDonough
- Gregg Ward

**Director**  
 Colleen Clery Ferrell

**Tennis Director**  
 Geoff Griffin

Board meetings are at 7 p.m. every third Tuesday of the month in the BTC Clubhouse. All members are welcome.

The BTC Main Office is open Monday through Friday.

The reservations desk is open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday; 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

The club is closed on Christmas.

Reservations & Info...	295-9278
Director's Office.....	295-4242
Pro Shop.....	291-5248
Babycakes.....	220-4990

Submissions to the newsletter are welcome.  
 Call 295-4242

## The Director's Report by Colleen Clery Ferrell

This is only the second newsletter of the year because we are striving to keep you informed more regularly through the Weekly Updates. Nonetheless, there's still a place for more biographical and personalized articles, which is the goal for Center Court. Hope you enjoy the November issue.

As announced, the BTC Membership voted in favor of PROPER TENNIS ATTIRE at all times on the courts. (See Tally Votes) This rule will be enforced and we hope to receive full cooperation as this was a membership vote, not a BTC Board decision. To give a little history, the Board voted over 10 years ago to have a shirtless rule at the club. During the last few years, many members have been complaining about players on the courts not looking appropriate. So the Board amended the rule, limiting shirtless play to the lower six courts only. One of our members was adamant that the Shirt Rule couldn't be amended by the Board. He was right. According to Robert's Rules of Order, which governs our Board of Directors, a rule voted on by the members can only be changed by the members. So we sent out a survey to find out what the current member base wanted and they voted for Proper Tennis Attire on all courts at all times. Thus the new ruling has been formalized. Thanks to everyone who took the time to vote.

In looking back over the last year, the Club has taken some huge steps towards overall improvement. Thanks to BTC Board member Dan Hays and helper Kay Davies for all their hard work and efforts. The landscape surrounding the club and the new planters on the courts has added a new element of beauty never before seen at this club. Special thanks to President Dwight Van Slyke for his tireless efforts at overseeing every detail regarding facility matters, landscaping, communications with the City of San Diego and internal staffing issues as well. Dwight is a total "hands on" President who has been instrumental in helping improve every aspect of the club. We are also grateful to new BTC Board Member Janene Christopher and employee Rob Abbott who have put BTC on Facebook and opened up communications with the world. The more people who know about our great club the better!!!

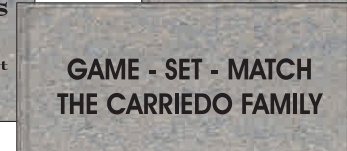
The generous grant the Club received from the Belinsky family to upgrade the clubhouse, locker rooms and build a permanent tennis center will be utilized in 2013. Under the careful guidance of your wonderful and caring Board Members, every detail will be thought out and planned for the betterment of the Club. Stay tuned for the exciting detail and results. Thank you finally to the members of BTC for your financial and moral support. We have a great club with so much to be proud of and appreciative. As the saying goes, "Life is good" at BTC.



## Donor Brick Project

Balboa Tennis Club's "Paving the Future," a Commemorative Brick Donation Project has accumulated almost \$15,000 of the \$40,000 goal. The funds are needed to replace the old, badly cracked concrete at the entry to the club, add bricks onto the west end of the Reservations Building for a Tournament Desk and add ornamental iron fencing to secure the area around our three buildings. We're asking members, friends and business operators to purchase bricks which will become a permanent part of historical Balboa Tennis Club. The engraved bricks will be installed between courts 8 and 9. Engravings can include names, messages, and commemorations, or for

additional fees, business logos, graphics and other promotions. Three sizes are available: 5x8 titled GAME for \$100, 8x11 titled SET for \$200 and 14x11 for \$500 titled MATCH. Tax deductions for your donation are available. For questions, please contact Colleen at 619-295-4242 or send her an email at [director@balboatennis.com](mailto:director@balboatennis.com).



# Balboa's Sister Combo

Eight years ago, Lani and Oksana West discovered the great game of tennis by chance. A friend of their mother suggested bringing the girls to Balboa for Geoff Griffin's Free Tennis Clinic on Tuesday's for kids. At the time, they were at the impressionable ages of 7 and 11 with no family tennis history or exposure. They both fell in love with the game of tennis. They have been involved at Balboa in many capacities ever since.

"The tennis courts are a second home to us," says Oksana. "Knowing all the people here makes us feel like part of the Balboa family."

Both girls played in the clinics for a few years and then took some private lessons with Geoff. In addition to their court activities, the girls recognized the need to help out. They immediately started volunteering with the Holiday Drive, Tournament Desk, Military Outreach Program and eventually back to their roots at the Free Tennis Clinic. Like Geoff, the girls are always looking for opportunities to give back to the game which has given them so much pleasure.

"The girls started out doing free lessons and now they are the perfect role models other kids who play here today. They help me with everything I ask of them. Not only can I always count on them, but they



are full of fun and energy. It makes volunteering much more rewarding," says Tennis Director Geoff Griffin.

Oksana continues to compete in tournaments and work at her game. She says, "I am a very competitive person. You are either a winner or a loser. I think tennis is like life where you have your ups and downs, yet either way the games make you stronger. Tennis overall is a great stress releaser for me."

Lani's path in tennis has taken her to employment at Griffin Tennis Pro Shop. "Lani now works for us in the shop. She has creative ideas, is great with our members and customers and is eager to learn everything about retail and teaching tennis," says Geoff. She works 32 hours a week, stringing, selling clothes and making suggestions to customers. "I enjoy helping the customers," she says. In addition to working the shop, Lani teaches clinics and specializes in helping smaller children. "I like to see the little kid's progress over the years." Lani hopes to eventually get her USPTA teaching certification.

The Sister Combo made appearances in the movie 16 Love, which was filmed at BTC and they have also been in a root beer commercial in Old Town. Oksana is still being home schooled and is working towards a career in Journalism. "Oksana is a charmer and will go far in whatever she wants to do," says Geoff.

Their future looks bright in whatever path the "Sisters of Balboa" choose in life. Our club is lucky to have Lani and Oksana West as part of the BTC tennis family.

## BTC Employee Marci Michelson



Marci is the daughter of BTC President Dwight Van Slyke and Gloria Bowling. She was born in San Diego and has spent most of her life here. She attended massage school in 1997 and was married in 1998. She and her husband

Brandon moved to East Texas, where he acquired a truck driving license. They went on the road and traveled with their doberman pincher for several years. In 2008, they came back to San Diego and now Marci is working at Balboa. She "enjoys working around all the people" at the club. She loves dogs and would like to someday work with animals.

## Facebook For Balboa Tennis Club

BTC Board Member Janene Christopher and daughter Sydney have been filming Bag Check Videos and adding them to the BTC Facebook page. They are funny and entertaining.

For viewing our Facebook page, sign up or be a member of Facebook at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

Put in the minimal info you wish to share and once you are signed up, enter Balboa Tennis Club in the search bar and the page will come up.

Bag Check videos are accessible through the BTC Facebook page. Have fun and stay in touch with the latest club happenings!!!

# Meet Your New Board Members

## Janene Christopher

Janene Christopher lives in University Heights. She has been a member (BTC) for past 16 years and been playing in the 8:00 am Saturday morning clinic for even longer!! She is a partner in the San Diego based architectural firm of RJC Architects. The firms work includes the County Operations Center in Kearny Mesa, the Chargers Training Center and the Coronado City Hall & Civic Center complex. She currently serves on the board of San Diego Pacific Children's Theatre and has served on the North Park Community Association and the Port's Advisory Committee for Public Art. Her most recent volunteer work for the club includes helping her daughter with the BTC Bag Check videos on BTC's YouTube channel. Her favorite tennis players are Rafa, Roger, Sam Stosur, Aggie Radwanska, and BTC's Alex Magtanong.



## C.T. Martin

C.T. Martin has been a member at BTC for almost twenty years. He retired from the San Diego Police Department as an Investigative Sergeant and worked for the U. S. Marshals at the Federal Courthouse until three years ago when tennis became a full-time endeavor.



In 1955 C.T. joined the USMC and after being discharged stayed in San Diego, making it his home and raising a family. C.T. and Lois now live in Santee, with five children, seven grandchildren, and three great-granddaughters not too far away. Volunteering for the Board to finish another members' term was an easy choice and a way to contribute his experience and expertise in overseeing club activities and objectives.

## Membership Dues Increase for 2013

The BTC dues for 2013 will increase by \$25 for Adult and Senior, new and renewal memberships beginning January 1, as voted on by the Board of Directors. The increase is necessary as the windscreens need replacement and the courts are required to be resurfaced on a regular basis. As you have seen, the club is in the process of converting all the courts to the blue/green colors. This will take several years. Early renewals at the current prices will be accepted until December 31. Three years is the maximum amount of years the members can renew ahead. Until they run out, an environmentally friendly water bottle with the new court colors and a unique BTC logo will be offered complimentary at the time of renewal. You are encouraged to write your name on this bottle and use it for water or sports drinks at the club. For your information, those environmentally friendly cups we now offer in the clubhouse cost .12 each so please think twice every time you toss one away and grab a new one.

Thank you for understanding the financial challenges at BTC. With the generous Belinsky Donation, the club will be renovating the clubhouse, locker rooms, rest rooms and building a permanent Tennis Center in 2013. Great achievements are in store for this club and we thank you for supporting our path along the way.

## Mark McDonough



Mark McDonough has been a member of Balboa Tennis Club since 1986 with a sabbatical in the late 1990's. Some pesky consulting job in New York City creating business applications for Chase Manhattan Bank and Harvard University dragged Mark away for a while until he got his priorities straight. Mark

has now been back in sunny San Diego and a member of the Balboa Tennis Club since 2000 and nothing is dragging him away from either ever again.

He has a Masters in Business Administration in Finance from Boston University and currently is the Vice President of Operations/Information Technology for Foresters Equity Services, Inc. a national mutual fund broker/dealer with 500 representatives across the United States. Foresters is a non-profit fraternal benefit society which donates earnings to charities such as the Children's Miracle Network, etc.

Mark would like you all to know that he is a terrible tennis player, isn't getting any better, and is absolutely allergic to playing with anyone who makes bad line calls or arrives late to a match.

## Romeo Matias Weight Loss Story

When Colleen asked me to share my story on my weight loss, I thought of how I could approach it without being preachy. I, as much as anyone who has ridden the rollercoaster of weight loss can appreciate how difficult it is to lose weight, and just as importantly, to keep it off.

In July 2012, I was 270 lbs. The weight came on slowly over the years, and I didn't realize that I had hit my "personal worst". It wasn't until I was on the scale at my doctor's office, a week after tearing my meniscus in the San Diego Open July 4th weekend tournament, that I could no longer ignore my weight problem. My knees and shoulders had been going bad for the previous two years. Tack on the low self-esteem, and I felt that I had hit rock bottom (or at least I hope so).

The doctor's appointment was on a Friday. That following Monday, my partner, Jorge, and I went to Medifast in Mission Valley. After hearing the advertisement on the local radio station, I researched their program and thought it was worth a shot. I signed up that day. In the first month I lost 27 lbs. without any exercise. In fact, I didn't really get to do any strenuous exercise for about 8 months, while I waited for my knee

to recover from the surgery, and for my shoulders to get stronger with physical therapy. It really was like the old saying, "one day at a time". It helped that I had awesome support from Jorge, my family and friends.

Altogether, I lost 70 lbs. I've maintained that weight since January. I see my weight counselor, once a week to weigh in or to do a body composition scan. She is slowly working me off meal replacements, and I'm starting to eat "real people" food again. I'm still a work in progress, and always will be.

While I'm going to fight hard not to regain the weight, I can share what is probably most obvious: my self-esteem is up, my tennis game is almost back, and the aches and pains are significantly reduced, as much as they can be for this 47 year old body. I hope those of you dealing with the same issues as I do, will find a solution that works. Of course, tennis is a great way to keep the pounds in check. It's never too late, so never give up!



## In Memory of Frank Milon



Francis Joseph Milon, known to most of us simply as Frank, died in his Florida Street home, steps away from the Club, in the early morning hours of Tuesday, October 23 of this year. The cause of his death was cancer. He was 73.

Frank was born in 1939, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

He was educated at St. Vincent College and Temple Law School. From 1961 to 1967 Frank was an officer in the US Navy. He was discharged a decorated veteran of the Viet Nam war. Thereafter, he had a long and productive career as a civilian lawyer managing Navy procurements, first in San Francisco and then in San Diego.

Frank was a clinic regular, remarkable for his roars of self-directed disapproval when he muffed a sure volley or netted a well-struck forehand. He was a private, exceptionally good-hearted, and highly intelligent man, with a taste for professional sports, fast cars, French food and wine, jazz, art, and, of course,

tennis. He was also possessed of a well-sharpened wit.

None of these pleasures left him in his dying days. When informed that one of his tennis friends was still playing seven days a week, he called him a "lucky [unprintable]." When, on the 19th, the San Francisco Giants beat the St. Louis Cardinals 5-0, he rejoiced. When the tennis director, who made it a point to visit as soon as possible with a small photograph at Frank's bedside, Frank shrugged and said that was only what you could expect if you invited a "a bull to a china shop." Even as he succumbed to morphine, Frank expressed anxiety about the adequacy of his supply of bourbon and tequila, and so much enjoyed a serving of crème brûlée at one of his last meals that he asked if, in the morning, he might have the remains of it made into an omelette.

Frank is survived by his nephews William and Christopher, and his niece Deirdre. There will be a mass in his memory on the 24th of November in Glenshaw, Pennsylvania. Arrangements are being made to have his remains buried at sea. One of his friends at the Club has seen fit to have his name placed on a tile in the new pavement. Those of us who knew him are grateful to have that reminder of his presence in our lives.

# Lessons From A Hip Replacement

by Charles Hoskowitz



Colleen asked me to write about my hip replacement for the club newsletter. Without thinking I said, "Sure." Then it occurred to me, "Gosh, I don't know what I'm going to write." After thinking about it for a week

or so, I decided the best thing to write about would be the lessons I learned from the experience.

**Quality of Life Decision:** For me, deciding whether or not to do the hip replacement surgery was a difficult one. I based my decision purely on my quality of life. I could no longer enjoy stepping on the tennis courts and hitting balls, playing a set of doubles, never mind playing a set of singles. Getting in and out of a car became a chore as well. As a real estate agent it was necessary for me to be able to show properties, set up open house signs, stand for long periods of time during open houses, etc. It got to the point where walking a couple of blocks was unbearable.

**Risk vs. Rewards:** Even so, I still had difficulty accepting what the surgeon was about to do to my body that would alter it - FOREVER. There was no going back. My life would never be the same, whether for better or for worse. A piece of Titanium would be placed in my body and I would be setting off alarms in airport security lines for the rest of my life. Surgery aside, there were other risks to consider as well: post operative pneumonia, infection, mal-alignment of the prosthesis, adverse reaction to anesthesia, etc. I had to come to terms mentally and emotionally with the risks as well as the rewards before moving forward with the surgery.

**Surgery:** The surgery itself went without a hitch...or at least that's what my doctor tells me. Once the anesthesiologist started the sedative, the lights went out and I woke up about 3 hours later in post op. I can remember saying to myself, "Oh my gosh! What have I done?" There was no going back now. Was it a mistake or the right thing to do? Only time will tell.

**Recovery:** The first few weeks of recovery saw huge improvements on a daily basis. Then about 3 weeks post-surgery, the improvements slowed to a crawl. Now the hard work would begin. The daily grind of doing the exercises and stretching were

beginning to wear thin. I must find a way to push through and continue strengthening and stretching until such time as I no longer think of myself as having a hip replacement.

**Friends:** I cannot conclude without saying how wonderful the members of Balboa Tennis Club have been in supporting me during this challenging period of my life. There were a number friends from the club who visited me in the hospital, called to see how I was doing, came by my house with food, picked me up at my house and brought me to the tennis courts so I could watch the Metro tournament. Everyone has been very generous with their support and well wishes and in expressing their eagerness to see me back on the courts. Thank You! I look forward to being out on the courts again ... soon!



## Tennis Tip from Mike Rogers

When hitting the ground stroke, it is commonly believed that using more wrist while coming over the top of the ball will produce more topspin. But in observing Rafael Nadal or Maria Sharapova during the 2012 French Open it is clear that these world class players do not employ more wrist nor do they excessively come over the top.

Watching their strokes in slow motion we see that the wrist is laid back right before contact. The top players have a long "hitting zone" which allows good, solid ball contact. The ball itself makes contact with the strings for roughly one-fourth of a second - Approximately the length of an eye blink.

It is important for recreational players to practice drop hitting the ball and lengthening the hitting zone. Visualize the ball traveling through a tunnel a foot in length. Let the racket stay vertical longer. It is possible to learn from watching the pros, but impossible to see ball contact. I recommend recording your stroke with a top grade digital camera set to slow speed. This will permit the eye to see that invisible millisecond of contact. **REMEMBER: WRIST SNAP DOES NOT EQUAL POWER**

"Video Analysis" with a take home CD of yourself.  
*Diffrent angles of all the strokes in freeze frame format*  
 \$75.00 - Contact Pro Mike Rogers  
 858.361.1135

# Calendar of Events

## November

17-18	TAF Charity Tournament
17	Turkey Shoot Social – 3:00 p.m.
22	Thanksgiving Day – Reservations Open 8:00 – 2:00 Courts open until 8:00 p.m.
27	BTC Board Meeting – 7:00 p.m.

## December

12	Volunteer Appreciation Party – 6:00 p.m.
25	Reservations Closed for Christmas Day Courts open until 8:00 p.m.

## January

1	Club Open for New Years Day
18	San Diego District Annual Dinner – 6:00 p.m. La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club



## Restoring the Garden Adjacent to BTC in Florida Canyon

by Peter Conneely

Restoration of the California Native Plant Demonstration Garden (CNPDG) is well underway in the Florida Canyon section of Balboa Park - also home to Balboa Tennis Clubs' Courts 19-24 west side. Today, Florida Canyon has about 150 acres of the 1400 acres of Balboa Park.



Florida Canyon might well be considered the backbone of Balboa Park because of its location and relatively undeveloped character with chaparral and coastal sage scrub plant alliances. It's truly the "heart" of Balboa Park, for its location, beauty, and history. The Friends of Florida Canyon want to preserve, protect and enhance the historic character of the canyon and ensure its beauty, diversity, trails that provide for physical fitness, and educational opportunities to be enjoyed by our children and grandchildren.

Friends of Florida Canyon offers a work

"party" every second Saturday of the month, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The group welcomes all members of Balboa Tennis Club to help with an Exotic Eradication Effort (EEE) on Monday and Wednesdays that starts at 8:30 and goes until noon. If you can help out for an hour

or two before or after your tennis matches, your help would be greatly appreciated.

We used the work "parties" to prepare the garden for viewing on Veterans Day. A mass planting of native varietal vegetation took place with the name of a fallen veteran permanently tagged to one of the plants to commemorate their service and memory for our country. There is no cost for the dedication of these native plants which will be growing around our lower west courts. Anyone interested in further information should contact Alan Bennett at 619-955-3275 or alanbennett@hotmail.com.