

Center Court

MAY 2016

USTA Tennis Family of the Year - 2016 - Griffin Family

Acceptance Speech by Geoff Griffin



Front Row L to R: Shane, Stan, Jo and Nick Griffin
 Back Row L to R: Chaz, Sunya, Keira, Jack, Palia, Amy, Ben, Manuela and Geoff Griffin

My father started tennis pretty late in life, at about 21 years old. While growing up in Cheltenham, England, WW II had just ended and he was a soccer player. He decided that he didn't like soccer anymore after breaking his hand. His father was very upset when he decided to give tennis a try. He and a lifetime friend took tennis up together, both learning on their own. One day a man noticed them playing and saw they had a lot of talent so they were invited to play at the best club in Cheltenham called East Gloschester Club. Within six months my dad was representing the club in team play.

Tennis began at a very young age for my mother. Her parents both played a little and that changed when they decided to convert some of their land into tennis courts. West Toronto Tennis Club had 7 courts and was a popular place for locals to play. My mother started playing tournaments at age 12 and became good enough to be invited to be a guest member at the Toronto Tennis Club. My mother won the Canadian juniors at age 16. She went to the Orange Bowl representing Canada.

My parent's paths crossed at the West Toronto Tennis Club. My dad was a part of a large group of English engineers who traveled to Canada at that time. They met on the tennis court and married in 1955. The U S was hiring large numbers of aeronautical engineers at the time, so with many cities that wanted him, he decided to move his new wife to the one furthest away from Canadian winters. They chose San Diego.

My brother Chaz and I were playing tennis in our diapers. Balboa Tennis Club was a common place for my parents to play back in the 60's. The grass area to the side of the Pro Shop has not changed since my mother left us there in a playpen while she went off and played tennis. All three boys became accomplished tournament players. Jack, the youngest was a very successful tour player. The grandchildren are now all playing and competing.

The Balboa Tennis Club has been our home for a very long time. My parents still work in the Pro Shop two days a week. Chaz has been a pro here for 20 years and he also coaches the boy's tennis team at San Diego High School, where son Shane plays on the team. His wife Sunya, went from a seamstress in Thailand to an expert stringer in our Pro Shop. My wife, went from a store manager in Austria to Pro Shop Manager in San Diego. 19 year old Palia teaches adult and kids clinics while going to college. Even little 10 year old Keira is a hit with 4-6 year olds in our weekly free kid's clinics.

Volunteering was instilled in us at a very young age. My parents have been there for us since the beginning. Covering teaching and shop hours for free has allowed us to have more time to do more for the community.

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President Serves it Up

By BTC President Janene Christopher



There's always a lot going on at BTC, be it the facilities, the courts, the staff and the community! We are in April and already have the lower courts resurfaced, removed the ficus tree in front of the Pro-Shop (which was causing tripping hazards and damaging the planters); an "angel donor" funded the majority cost for the "Veteran's Tournament Pavilion" which we are hoping to start by phasing its construction. The Pavilion will provide an attractive area for tournament registration and associated activities and during the off season a great place to relax and enjoy our

club. We have instituted a ball recycling program at the club. Our first box of 400 balls was collected and sent via pre-paid label to Tennisballrecycling.com. Recycling will work if we work together as community. Thanks to Geoff for sorting the collected balls and shipping them back East.

We will continue to work on upgrading the upper court lights. Our submittal to SDG&E to partially fund the new lighting with Ecolighting was rejected and we are working to resubmit in the hopes of finding the right payback periods which will make our submittal "approvable" with them.

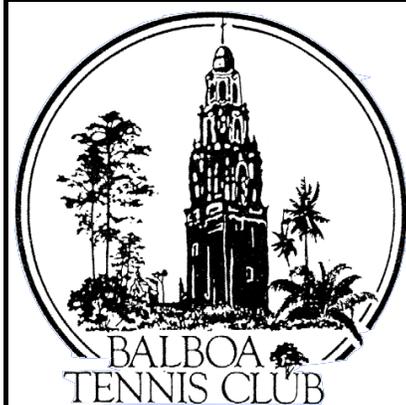
I'd like to thank our Treasurer, Julia Gregory, for working with Colleen and our accountant to categorize and group our expenses. We now have access to budgets and expenditures with the touch of a button....well maybe 3 or 4 buttons.

We have revamped the membership renewal form in an effort to get current contact and emergency number information. In this way we have real data on the membership (age group, location, gender etc). Hopefully we create a great database and we can use this info to understand the needs of our membership.

Many of you have no doubt noticed the Café is still not open. This has been due to the City's slow process of renewing our Special Use Permit (SUP). We (as do many other public clubs) pay the City a fee to operate the club to serve the community. We operate as a 501 c4 non-profit. The Café and the Pro Shop operate under our SUP. Thus the Café's opening has been postponed due to City's delay in finalizing the SUP. So stay tuned for that development.

(Continued from page 1) The Balboa Tennis Club was not given the 2003 USTA National Award for Large Public Facility of the Year without reason. Being the Director of Tennis here for 27 years has been an incredible journey. The Club and its members have always backed us up whenever asked.

We are honored and humbled that the USTA even considered us for this award. To actually win it is unbelievable. So many great tennis families out there. This recognition will keep us very motivated to continue our efforts to get people hooked on our great sport: from high school kids, to Wounded Warriors to babies in diapers. Thank you!



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Esther Leeflang

Director
Colleen Clery Ferrell

Tennis Director
Geoff Griffin

Reservations & Info 619-295-9278

Director's Office 619-295-4242

Pro Shop 619-291-5248

Club hours of operation:

Monday - Friday 8am – 9pm

Saturday & Sunday 8am – 8pm

The Director's Report

By Colleen Ferrell



Ribbon cutting ceremony for lower six courts.

Saints and Our lady of Peace Academy (OLP), both financed the resurfacing project in exchange for a lengthy contract to continue playing tennis at BTC.

A few upcoming events to note include the first ever "Town Hall" meeting at BTC with board members, tennis pros and interested people regarding the club, leagues and whatever participants want to chat about. This meeting will take place in the BTC Clubhouse on Sunday, May 22 at 3:00 p.m.

The 2016 National Open Hard Court Championships will be played May 30 – June 5. With a Memorial Day start, this great event which attracts players from all over the country represents a kickoff to all summer sanctioned tennis tournaments. The Club will be busy with all levels of tennis this summer. Take advantage of the numerous opportunities to compete or just enjoy this wonderful sport of a lifetime.

Lastly, farewell and good luck to BTC Tennis Pro Ron Seno who is moving back to Hawaii which is his homeland. BTC members were lucky to enjoy Ron's tennis knowledge, the beautiful music from his Sugarcane band and sparkling personality for 10 years. Thanks and best of luck Ron!!

Balboa Prodigy Loving Tennis - Stephen Montiel



Many great tennis players named Agassi, Chang, Sampras and Sock at one time in their careers hung out at a club and played tennis as much as possible, eventually becoming professional tennis players. Eight year old Stephen Montiel is hoping for the same stardom, thanks to "Uncle" Santos Gomez who introduced Stephen to tennis and has been bringing him to the courts for the past three years. "My uncle has been coaching me from the beginning," said Stephen, who participates in clinics, hits with the pros and frequents the Challenge Court as well. "I want to be a pro," he says with a boyish smile.

His favorite player of course is the number one player in the world – Novak Djokovic – who as Stephen noticed is a nice guy, yet very competitive on the court. "I like his forehand and he has good footwork too," he says. As a former soccer player, Stephen likes this association with Novak, yet also understands how important good strokes are to becoming a pro. "My backhand is my best stroke right now. I know I need to practice a lot to become a pro," he says. When asked whether Stephen will attend high school before turning pro, Stephen had to think for a minute before answering when told how local talent Taylor Fritz finished high school before making the transition to the pros.

Two more important ingredients Stephen agrees are necessary on his way to pro tennis are heart and focus. He says "heart" is very important and is working on keeping his focus without getting upset. He recently played a 14 year old in a 10 and under tournament, barely losing 6-4. "He was bigger than me," said Stephen.

According to his mother Bernice, "Stephen has passion, is self-motivated and would love to live across the street from Balboa Tennis Club so he could play every day. You don't have to push Stephen."

BTC Pro Eduardo Afini has observed Stephen in clinic each week and says, "It is such a pleasure to work with Stephen. He brings joy and happiness to the tennis court in that sincere and honest way that only kids can do. The loving support he receives from his family allows him to do what he loves most, which is spending his free time at Balboa practicing, playing with adults, or simply watching his Uncle Santos in action on the Challenge Court. This is a great path not only to the making of a good tennis player, but also to a person with great character."

Here are a few words of encouragement. "Keep on moving forward Stephen. You have an entire club cheering for your development and future success. Make us proud!!!"

Lani West – Upstart Teaching Professional at BTC



Members at Balboa Tennis Club may only know Lani West as the friendly and knowledgeable person who used to work in the Pro Shop for Griffin Tennis. After four years in the shop and training behind the scenes, Lani is branching out and set to become a full time tennis teaching pro and Cardio Tennis instructor. Her career path has been calculated and full of energy as she moves forward to follow her dreams and spread the good word about the great game of tennis to all the students she encounters.

Lani was originally adopted from Russia. “I didn't know that tennis existed until I stepped my foot at Balboa Tennis Club at age 11, only after a few months being in America,” she said. She started off by taking Tuesday free kids classes taught by Geoff and his volunteers. “I started to fall in love with the sport and began taking more lessons,” she said. As she got older, Lani volunteered at the free tennis clinic on Tuesday's to help other kids learn to play tennis. Lani continued to work more hours for Tennis Director Geoff Griffin by coaching kid's classes and summer camps, which gave her more exposure to the teaching world.

“Coach Geoff,” as Lani calls him, gave her a solid foundation in teaching tennis by observing his teaching techniques, drills and games. He gave her additional responsibilities to do clinics and also opportunities to work with adults as

well. “Coach Geoff gave me the confidence to pursue a teaching career and to also join the USPTA,” she said.

After graduating from high school, she started working in the BTC Pro Shop and decided to pursue a career as a tennis teaching professional. She worked hard, passed her USPTA test to become a certified teaching pro and has been on the court ever since. “I've definitely become more serious about coaching and learning more about the sport, from doing video analysis, watching endless YouTube videos on tennis strokes and spending more time on lesson plans. My boyfriend helped me design my own website www.laniwesttennis.com, and I recently became a licensed Cardio Tennis instructor,” she said.

She has found her niche in specializing with beginner adults, kids, and toddlers. “I love coaching beginners because I love introducing someone to this sport and teaching them from the start. I am very patient and encouraging, and I feel that makes me a good choice when a beginner is looking for a tennis coach,” she said. “I think being a young tennis teacher is advantageous because the little kids can look up to me. I try to make the lesson fun and use modern methods of instruction.”

In November of 2015, Lani enrolled in a Cardio Tennis course at La Quinta to become an authorized Cardio Tennis instructor. This specialized workout emphasizes heart rate and calories burned, with the students wearing heart monitors and the results being transferred to an Ipad for individual viewing. Music is played throughout the workout with emphasis on cardio while hitting a tennis ball. “I think there is definitely a future for me as a Cardio Tennis instructor because I enjoy the fitness part of tennis, and my goal is for everyone to think that tennis is fun. It's a different atmosphere compared to your normal clinics and even total beginners who know zero about tennis can have fun during a cardio tennis class.”

Lani's continuing education as a tennis enthusiast was highlighted last year by attending the BNP Paribas Open at Indian Wells for the first last year and watching the pros up close while practicing, which was very motivational. “Seeing the professionals in action made me want to improve my own game so I could help others,” she said. Lani also had the opportunity to broaden her tennis experiences by playing on grass and clay for the first time in her life. Now she can relate to the endless rallies on clay and the fast match play at Wimbledon. “I think the experience on different surfaces will help me become a more complete pro,” she said.

Lani has started incorporating video analysis into her lessons. “I like to film the students during the lesson and then playing it back at the end,” she says. “Then I compare their strokes with someone like Roger Federer and show them the comparisons. The students get surprised when they see the contrast.” This great learning tool is helping Lani acquire and retain students, in addition to fitness gadgets such as using heart monitors. By teaching Cardio Tennis classes, Lani added a fitness slant to her regular lessons as well. “Some students like to see what their heart rate is and also how many calories they are burning.”

It's all part of the experience this new up and coming teaching professional is offering for students. The old days of “bend your knees, that will be \$50 please” has been expanded to include video analysis, fitness, heart rate monitoring, calories burned and much more. Of course smiles, encouragement, caring and knowledge still count in the total tennis lesson experience. Lani West is on her way to offering the full package and much more.

BTC Senior Judy Janc Late into Tennis, yet Still Getting Better

Judy Janc performed as a jazz dancer in high school and college. Having been raised in Hammond, Indiana, she stayed in the Midwest and graduated from Purdue University. She toured the country with the USOC – the United States Officers Club, taught Physical Education for a few years and eventually met her future husband Al while working a summer job at the local swimming pool. It wasn't until she married in 1960, produced four children in five years and then decided to take a tennis class. She hit some balls with her brother at Pacific Beach Tennis Recreation Center, followed by six lessons from Ben Press, read a book about tennis her husband offered and declared, "I have the bug!"

As her children grew up and discovered volleyball, Janc stayed with tennis. She was a founding member of the P.B. Tennis Club in the 70's and continued to play tennis as an outlet. She competed mostly in singles and tried to stay competitive while also dealing with family challenges. In her 40's, Janc became involved in USTA tennis. She captained two teams that advanced to nationals. She also played her first national tournament at the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club and won the back draw with doubles partner Virginia Blanchard.

For the next 15 years, Janc worked in real estate for Caldwell Banker. Her kids were growing up, yet still needed attention. In her 60's with more time to play, she traveled to all the national tennis tournaments and played on all four surfaces, winning her first silver ball in Seattle with a pickup partner. Despite a large gap in between national wins, Janc recently picked up the bronze ball at 75 years young in Kansas City with fellow BTC member and friend Ruth Nutt. The winning streak continued when she won a bronze ball with Norma Veal from the Palm Springs area in the National Hard Courts. Winning has been fun, yet Janc concedes she still wants to get better, especially with her mental game. "I need to learn to focus," she says. "I've been up two breaks and then I lose the match. I need to stay in the moment."

Something special happened recently to Janc. She added her name to a lottery of players vying for the opportunity to play in Portsach, Austria as part of the 2016 Wilson Friendship Cup Team and she was one of the lucky ones selected. Buffalo Bills owners Ralph and Mary Wilson started this tradition many years ago and Janc will be one of the 10 representatives pitting the USA vs. Europe in 75 women's tennis on clay. This is the first time Janc will play tennis in Europe and she is excited. "I am going a week early with my husband to enjoy the area as well," she said. As for her goals in tennis at this stage of life, "I want to stay healthy and keep enjoying tennis. I always think I can do better."



Meet the Newest BTC Board Member Andrew Macfarlane



"I was born and raised in the Washington, DC area. I took up tennis at age 13 after a soccer injury and played through high school. After a dozen years away from tennis, I moved to San Diego in 2012 and soon restrung my old racquets. I immediately found a warm welcome at BTC and began playing most evenings after work. BTC is unique in San Diego in that at nearly any time during the day one can show up with a racquet and balls and there will be members at the courts ready to play.

I work as an attorney at Rosenberg, Shpall and Zeigen, a downtown San Diego law firm. My practice involves primarily representing doctors and other professionals in licensing, business and litigation. When not at work or BTC I try to get out to surf as much as possible.

After several years playing at BTC, I am excited to now contribute to the club as a board member to help ensure the club continues to be great and grows. I play at BTC mostly after work. As a night player myself, I hope to bring to the Board a voice for the concerns and suggestions of night players. If you see me on the courts or anywhere else, please don't hesitate to stop and say hello."

Player on the Move – Kim Pathammaung



Born in Laos in 1968, Kim Pathammaung is the younger of two children who were raised by Laotian nannies. Her father was a brigadier general in the Laotian army at the time. Both parents are now retired and living in Connecticut. Kim arrived in the United States in 1975, being fluent in Laotian and Thai languages. She graduated from Kearny High School in 1986 and then studied Marketing and Hospitality Business at Mesa College, graduating from Career College in 1988. She currently works as an office administrator and manager.

Kim's tennis career started at age 12 when she used to hit against a wall at the apartment complex where she lived. She played high school tennis and also played on the Mesa College tennis team. It wasn't until she was living on the Big Island of Hawaii in 2005 when Kim started playing 3.0 tennis and getting the competitive fire to improve. Twice her team on Oahu went to qualifiers and another time they were finalists. After moving back to San Diego, Kim played 3.5 tournaments, leagues and reached her first pinnacle in tennis by winning the 3.5 National Championship at Indian Wells in November 2015. She credits team captain Priscilla Umel-Martinez for navigating the team to win the big prize of a national

championship. Kim is currently ranked as a 4.0 with sights on continued improvement. "I want to keep playing tournaments and improving," she says. "I am very enthusiastic about tennis and I'm having so much fun too."

Here are a few Questions and Answers for the rising star Kim P:

1. **Did you ever play any other sports?** "Yes, both volleyball and badminton which are both court sports. What a coincidence! Yeah, it's all about getting something over a net and not letting it come back."
2. **Have you always been competitive?** "I have always been competitive. Life has had one lesson for me: DOMINATE or LOSE."
3. **Do you specialize in doubles or do you also play singles?** "I like singles because I love taking control of the court. But I have a hot tip for rising doubles players: BE A NET MONSTER"
4. **What do you like about tennis?** "I like winning and wearing branded outfits."
5. **As a member since 2013, what do you like about BTC?** "It's a good club where people aren't too snotty."
6. **What are your tennis goals?** "I would like to earn a 4.5 ranking."
7. **If you don't take lessons, how do you keep improving?**
"I meditate on my opponents' weaknesses."
8. **Are you improving because of mental toughness skills?**
"The biggest improvement in my game over the last year is determination. I never give up. I refuse to lose."
9. **What is your best stroke?** "My best stroke is my swing volley which I use to take command of the center of the court in singles play."
10. **Who are your favorite pro tennis players?** "My favorite tennis players are Maria Sharapova and Ana Ivanovic because they are both graceful and play with style."

Annual Run and Roll Tournament Returns to BTC

By M.A. Hillier



The annual Run and Roll Tournament returned to Balboa Tennis Club on Sunday, January 17th, 2016. There were a total of 28 participants (14 wheelchair and 14 able bodied players paired up together) on 6 courts playing in 3 divisions, between 3.0-4.5 NTRP rating. After the tournament, an awards ceremony was held in the clubhouse with winners in each division receiving \$50 gift certificates and finalists receiving \$25 gift certificates to the Griffin Pro Shop, followed by a delicious catered dinner by Ohana's Café.

Tournament director M. A. Hillier would like to thank the sponsors of this year's tournament, including SDDTA (balls and \$400 grant), Balboa Tennis Club (reduced court rental fees), Ohana Café (catered dinner), Active Duty Sportswear (t-shirts), and Griffin Pro Shop. The tournament was also a fundraiser for Wheelchair Tennis San Diego (WTSD), which is a tennis program that utilizes the Barnes Tennis Center twice a week for wheelchair tennis practices. Thank you to all the participants that made an additional donation to the program. The tournament raised \$300!!! These funds will be used for tennis instruction, tubes and tires, balls, and other badly needed equipment and maintenance repairs. For more information on this program, or to make a donation, please contact Bryan East at 619-991-6250.

The participants all had a great time playing in the tournament and making new friends. After watching the wheelchair (rolling) players maneuver around the court, it gave the able bodied (running) players a new found appreciation for their legs and ability to run around the court unrestricted. Members of Balboa that participated in the tournament included John Dodgen, Todd Linke, Mark Yambor, Pat Newman, Carol Jory, Rancy Breece, Rory Tarrantino, Teri Howard, Peter Stiehle, Laurie Mychaels, Jeffrey Light, Suzanne Lindemann, and Judy Janc.

The tournament will be back again next year, possibly in February, and M. A. promises to try and avoid the football season!!

Congrats to SDDTA 2016 District Winners from Balboa Tennis Club

- ◆ **Sportsmanship Award - Steve Kaplan** - Tournament player at BTC.
- ◆ **Community Service Award - Manuela Griffin** - Well deserved for all the giving and preparing she does all year long for Warriors, Tennis Fest and all planned BTC events.
- ◆ **Volunteer of the Year - Ohana Café - Becky Kuba** - Future operator of BTC Café – donates regularly to local events.

BTC Spring Tournament Results

- Women's 3.5 Singles – Olsen def. Perry 6-1, 6-2
- Men's 3.5 Singles – Hill def. Armstead – 6-3, 6-2
- Men's 4.5 Singles – Crozet def. Tafui 6-4, 6-1
- Women's 3.5 Doubles – Pathammavong/Martinex def. Griffin/Khaotham 6-1, 6-4
- Women's 4.5 Doubles – Park/Zarbo def. Araceli/Chung 6-3, 7-6
- Men's 3.5 Doubles – Spurgeon/Watts def. Hill/Manes 6-4, 6-2
- Men's 4.5 Doubles – Sabio/Martinez def. Carter/King 6-4, 6-1
- Mixed 3.5 Doubles – Pathammavong/Madrano def. Lang/Armstead 6-2, 6-4
- Mixed 4.5 Doubles – Eldad/Chung def. Park/Carter

MAY 2016

Calendar of Events

May

1	Tennis Fest	Noon- 4:00 p.m.
9-12	CIF HS Boys Tournament	
15-20	4th Annual Wounded Warrior Camp	
17	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
22	Meet the Pros/League info meeting	
30-June 5	USTA National Open Hard Court Championships	

June

21	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
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July

2-4	SDTF Championships	
8-10	K&W Junior Tournament	
15-17	Hendrickson Wheelchair Tournament	
19	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
22-24, 29-31	Balboa Open Tournament	
25-29	Balboa Junior Tournament	

August

16	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
27	SD Tennis Hall of Fame Celebration	4:00 p.m.
26-28, Sept. 3-5	San Diego District Championships	

September

13-15	Senior Olympics	
10	North Park Car Show	
20	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
23-25, 30-Oct. 2	San Diego Metropolitan Tournament	

October

8-9	Junior Satellite Tournament (Geoff)	
15-16	Cal Cup - SDTF	
18	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
22-23	SD Tennis Federation Tournament	
28-30	K and W Junior Tournament	