

Center Court

NOVEMBER 2017

The President Serves it Up

By Janene Christopher - BTC Club President



Happy November... and once again, the year has just zoomed by. Who knew more than five years ago when then BTC President Dwight Van Slyke asked if I'd be interested in serving on the Board, I'd now be serving my 2+ year as President and five years on the Board of this great Club! Thank you for putting your trust in me, the six other dedicated volunteer BTC Board Members and our wonderful Club staff! We serve to represent the best interest of Club members.

The Club's transition to all US Open blue courts is complete, shade canopies have been installed

throughout, metal benches were refurbished, roof leaks fixed and flowers are still blooming. We have been continually working towards improving the Club and it shows. Visitors often remark on "What a nice facility!" The next "big thing" on our improvement list will be the Press Family Pavilion, which has now been fully funded by generous donors. Phase I consisted of removing the invasive, destructive fig tree in front of the Pro Shop where pavers have been placed. Phase II is underway; engineering drawings are being prepared. RJC Architects has donated services to compile and prepare the documents for City approval. Kelsey Structural has been retained for structural engineering services. The simple canopy structure (The Press Family Pavilion) will provide needed shade in front of the Pro Shop. During tournaments, visitors and players will now enter the Club via the facility's main entry walk and the check-in desk will be located right there. A new water bottle filling station (with hi-lo electric water cooler) will be installed, along with a donor wall. A folding gate and perforated screens will provide security and attractive screening for the Pro Shop while allowing for merchandise display. The pavilion will also have an integrated photo backdrop for taking the tournament championship final photos. We are all excited to see this pavilion finally come to fruition and for it to be dedicated to a Tennis Titan – Ben Press!

In closing I'd like to thank the Board: Ruben Carrido, Julia Gregory, M.A. Hillier, Gary Smith, Esther LeeFlang and Andrew Macfarlane; Colleen our "Marvelous" Club Director, our hard working Reservation staff; Geoff our Tennis Director for all his good deeds which rub off on us. It's this teamwork and respect for each other that creates the progress we have made for the Club.

Members: Thanks for being part of our Club, your membership matters!

P.S. After the Pavilion – Upper Court Lights Project!

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The Director's Report

By Colleen Ferrell



With the holidays approaching, it's a good time to look back and reflect on the past year's accomplishments. BTC as a club, continues to grow in quality as the years go by. Instead of getting old and tattered, continual upgrades in every aspect of this operation are ongoing, thanks to a caring and progressive Board of Directors.

Of course the highlight from the past year was the implementation of online reservations. Employees and members often comment, "How did we function without online reservations?" I for one, was scared to death when the Board of Directors asked me to start researching online systems in

January. The thought of relying on the computer for booking, possible conflicts with members when making reservations from inside the office and outside, caused initial anxiety. Yet once the transition was made, there's been no turning back and everyone using the tennis booking system seems happy.

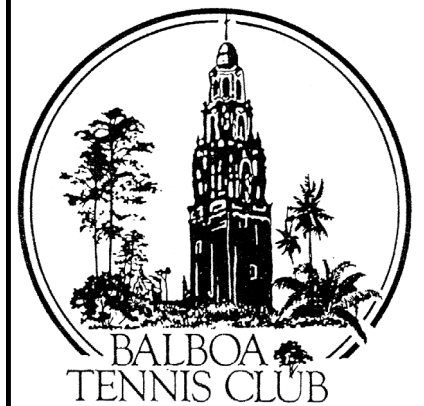
Kudos to our great staff consisting of Alex, David, Rob, Robert and Sean. These guys all realize the importance of customer service and follow up with members and guests on a daily basis. Lastly, thank you members for continued patronage of Balboa Tennis Club: one of the finest public facilities in the USA. We are a proud club and rightfully deserving of this distinction.

A Message from Social Media Director Julie Prichard

With Facebook averaging over 1.5 billion users per day, and Instagram following suit with about 700 million active users, many of us are probably using social media more than we would like to admit. Social media platforms allow users to keep in constant contact with city agencies, celebrities and sports figures for example. Businesses and brands are taking note of this trend and making sure that they place their messages where you are most likely to see them.

Last year Balboa Tennis Club activated two new social media channels to supplement our existing efforts. We currently feature club updates, photography and various newsworthy articles across our social media sites including Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Members and guests can look to Twitter for quick weather or parking updates, club closures etc. Upcoming tournament registration links as well as pro shop sales are often posted on our Instagram page. Facebook is where you can find tournament photos and other musings that we think our readership may enjoy. All of these social media channels are regularly updated for members and the interested public.

Social media is a fast and convenient way for you to stay connected with the club. Follow us on Facebook@BalboaTennisClub or on Instagram and Twitter@Balboatennis, we would love to see you there. We are happy to be able to provide changing and up to the minute information to you.



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Director
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Geoff Griffin

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Director's Office 619-295-4242

Pro Shop 619-291-5248

Club hours of operation:

Monday - Friday 8am – 9pm

Saturday & Sunday 8am – 8pm

Understanding BTC's Fiscal Operation

By Treasurer Julia Gregory

Each year for the term when I have been the Club Treasurer, I start preparation in early October for the next calendar year's budget. In conjunction with our CPA Jere Batten and Colleen, I put together a draft budget based on what has happened during the current year and a projection for any changes that might occur, and of course factoring in the expenses and revenues forecasted for the remainder of the current year. At our November board meeting, I present the proposed budget. Based on input from the Board, the budget is then finalized at our December meeting and adopted at the first meeting in January.

The development of our budget is based on categories of income and expenses. Each month there is a projected income and expense for each budget category, and if there is a deviation, positive or negative, I review what might have happened. Generally speaking, a current analysis shows that our projections are fairly accurate. This is because we know from past years how much money it costs for payroll, insurance, telephone, janitorial cleaning and maintenance of our facility.

For each vendor, whether it be landscaping or insurance, we have a contract for the current year. We send out RFP's as appropriate to determine that we are getting value for our dollars. We have check lists to make sure that our contractors are performing. For "unforeseen yet anticipated" expenses such as court maintenance, we allocate an annual amount. For example, we have a schedule for maintaining the courts, but sometimes a wind blast tears a hole in a windscreen or tennis court net poles collapse and need to be immediately repaired, causing a monthly expense for court maintenance. Hopefully the total amount allocated for the year will cover it.

So basic expense items such as insurance, payroll, employee benefits, utilities, janitorial, accounting, HR consulting, office supplies and waste removal are predictable. Court maintenance and building maintenance are less predictable. Who knows when someone flushes an errant object down one of the toilets and we have to spend hundreds of dollars doing the repair? We take pride in our landscaping. The club looks great. We maintain the planters and do the weeding, but when the city's irrigation system fails, we can have dead plants and shrubs to replace. We are just a permittee with the City, and you know from your own personal experience, perhaps with potholes on your street that timely action can be a challenge. Colleen does a wonderful job maintaining relationships with the appropriate city departments. A recent and successful challenge has been repairing the roof over the clubhouse. Water damage caused us unanticipated expenses in the clubhouse this year. The city has now repaired the roof and hopefully we are ready for the rainy season!

So now that I have given you a glimpse into expenses, let's see how we pay for them. Our total budget is approximately \$380,000. Of that, approximately \$300,000 comes from memberships and daily permits. Could we cut our budget so that our expenses equal our income from memberships and daily permits? Not really, our budget figure includes court maintenance and resurfacing. Out of this current budget, we allocated \$35,000 to resurface all the remaining courts which were not blue. We are hoping in subsequent budgets to allocate money for LED lighting which will enhance our courts at night as well as contribute to a sustainable society. How do we do this? We get money from tournaments, league teams and outside court rentals. Without these income sources, we would have to raise membership and daily fees. We are definitely committed to keeping Balboa affordable. It is a balancing act. We want to make courts available to our members and we want to keep Balboa a premier club. It takes a village!!



Route 6 Café

The BTC Café will soon be occupied by a new vendor. Projected to open in January 2018, Guillermo Sanchez will open Route 6 Café. The owner grew up living in the North Park area and frequently rode bus line #6, thus evolved the future name of his business. Guillermo has opened two successful coffee cart businesses in the UTC area and one in Escondido. More details will be forthcoming.

Thank you to Palia Griffin for the artwork that has been featured adjacent to the café door. She is truly an artist waiting to be discovered.

What Makes Balboa Great?

Tournaments, tournaments, tournaments.....to some reading this, a response might well be “Oh no, not another one!!! Again no courts at nine on Saturday and Sunday”. To others, a response might be “Great! A chance to see amazing competition! Balboa’s presence on the tennis stage!” For many of our 1,200 plus members, tournaments are a major part of Balboa’s role in both Southern California and national USTA tennis.

If you are a newer member, you might enjoy learning about our history through Clubhouse mementos and photos. The family of our most famous alum, Maureen Connolly Brinker for whom the stadium court is named, sponsors one of most cherished annual tournaments. For those of you too young to remember the amazing “Little Mo”, you might have seen Michael Chang, Vanja King or Gretchen Magers play here. Coco Vandeweghe, the recent grand slam semi-finalist, played here as a teenager, and Jack Sock, one of the top rated American men won here in 2010. Tennis legends like Franklin Johnson who served as president of the USTA, started his career as a Balboa junior, and dedicated his tennis life advocating for public court tennis. We have been an avenue for major players from junior to college to pro. With 25 courts in the heart of San Diego, we are the showcase for Southern California tournaments.

That being said, what benefits do tournaments provide members of Balboa? Fourteen percent of our net income comes from tournaments. These funds provide money for enhancements to our club which cannot be done with the current low membership fee structure. Tournaments attract new members who come first as spectators. They provide opportunities for our members to raise their own playing level. Foremost, tournaments enhance a club dedicated to affordable tennis for a diverse population. We support the Wounded Warriors weekly tennis clinics as well as the nationally acclaimed Warrior Tennis Camp held in May. Members join in the Hendrickson Wheelchair tournament as volunteers and players. This summer we were one of the host clubs for the National Girls’ 16-18 tournament whose winners receive a wild card into the US Open regular draw and the finalist gets into US Open qualifying event. Our National Open Hard Court Championships are a major draw for top college players and also lower ranked pros trying to break into the major pro events.

Putting on or supporting tournaments is a net revenue source and it could not be accomplished without tremendous effort on the part of our tennis director, facility staff, and pros. Some behind the scenes work includes sponsorship support, contacting college coaches and clubs personally to encourage high level competition, setting seeds, keeping the matches on time, organizing volunteers, doing follow up evaluations...and addressing player concerns.

But tournaments are not the only reason that we are a great club. Visiting the City? Check out our Facebook page which is continually updated and provides information about opportunities available to visitors. We offer day passes and clinics. If you don’t have a partner you can play on the challenge court or look on Match Finder, a complete list of players at the Club looking for partners. New to San Diego? Find players and have fun at our day, evening or weekend clinics. Competitive player? We have leagues for every level: Singles, doubles, mixed doubles. Day, evening or weekend, there is something for everyone. Working to get better? Start at a lower level and improve to a more competitive league. We are a proud supporter of league play. Try your hand at one of our local tournaments. Our tournament director even helps players find partners. On Monday mornings we provide opportunities for older players who may be recovering from injuries and don’t have a match. Our challenge courts are a real draw. Spectators enjoy the 4.5 and above challenge court on weekends. They are often a precursor to tournament play. We see juniors playing their seniors, and all sorts of rivalries. Our new online reservation system is used by 80% of our membership. Weekly updates to our email audience makes it easy to know what is happening at Balboa.

And we are doing all this at affordable rates, at a beautifully landscaped club, with friendly staff who make every effort to make our club the showcase of Balboa. Thank you to our staff, our tennis pros and our incredible volunteers for making Balboa Tennis Club great!

Mark Bauer Wins SoCal League Captain of the Year



In 2018, the USTA began a new recognition program for league captains. A number of Balboa players, club leaders and even peer captains from opposing teams felt strongly that Mark Bauer would be a wonderful nomination for this honor. These comments were submitted, detailing experiences with Mark over many years as a USTA Captain and his role as major contributor to the tennis community at Balboa Tennis Club. Many agree, he is one of the most involved, invested captains and a true class act.

Mark was in the company of many other great candidates. From San Diego, his nomination was submitted to the Southern California Section and caught the attention of the selection committee. Congratulations to BTC Captain Mark Bauer, as he was selected Southern California Section League Captain of the Year for the 40 and over Mixed Doubles League.

Profile on BTC Landscape Professional - Dan "Danscape" Hays



Dan Hays worked 40 years in the industry before retiring. He joined the club as a tennis player and then volunteered as a BTC Board Member from 2012-2013. His initial desire was to improve the landscape around the club, which he continues to do now as an outside contractor. Dan also deserves credit for the Donor Brick Program at the entry of the Club, which was instituted back in 2013 and keeps expanding.

Q – What specific changes have you made to the foliage of the Club?

A – "I brought over 20 six foot pots from the condo complex where I live, had them placed on the courts and filled with colorful, drought tolerant plants. All the flower beds that the Club maintains for the City have received upgraded plants as well. The Club has a fleet of power tools to use now, including a blower, edger, mower, weed whip and hedge shears to help keep the area looking good, in conjunction with the City workers."

Q – How many hours a week do you put into beautifying BTC?

A – "I work 5-6 hours per week, spent over two days, trimming, mowing and hand watering all the containers. I'm hoping for another rainy winter to aid the watering process."

Q – Have you always been passionate about gardening?

A – "For about the past 50 years. As a kid, I grew up in the Point Loma area. I was in charge of cleaning up pine needles and watering the plants. At 20 years old, I owned a nursery. I've also worked as a vendor for the City and Hotel Del Coronado from 1992-2000. Funny thing, I first thought I was going to be an attorney."

Q – How would you rate the landscape at BTC?

A – "We've gone from a 2 or 3 to a 7 out of 10. We are working with the City to get several other projects completed."

Q – How can we get better?

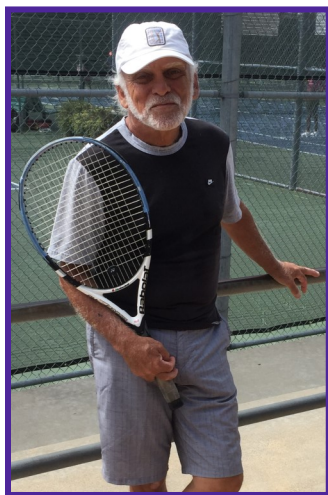
A – "I try and pick a different area of the Club periodically to upgrade. I've mulched most of the Club to give a finished look. This helps keep the moisture in and the weeds out. Also, I've worked to get the grass greener."

Q – At 67 years young, what drives your passion?

A – "I enjoy making life and the surroundings beautiful. It's immediate gratification."

THANK YOU Dan Hays for all your contributions and caring to help beautify Balboa Tennis Club!!!

Spotlight on BTC Member - Don Natel



BTC member Don Natel played racquetball for 20 years before making the transition to tennis. "I didn't want to play indoors anymore." So he transitioned to tennis, playing at courts in Mission Hills and eventually landed at Balboa Tennis Club. Now after 15 years, Don is boldly beginning tournament play for the first time in his life and enjoying the experience.

Don played in the San Diego District Tournament and "did great," he said after losing in three sets at the 4.0 level. "My partner and I had three match points and couldn't put the other team away." Not discouraged by losing, Don also signed up to play the San Diego Metropolitan Tournament. Most important, he is truly enjoying the tournament experience and wants more opportunities to test his skills.

"I developed a lot of bad habits from racquetball that are hard to break," he said. Don never took lessons and has become a formidable player on the court all on his own. He started out playing singles and then discovered doubles from playing on the Challenge Court. "I want to keep improving my strokes and learn how to play doubles better," he says. "That's what I like about the Challenge Court at BTC. I can always get a game."

With a steady diet of vegetarian food and regular tennis as a part of his lifestyle, Don is a content man. He commented how pleased he is with the new shade that was paid for by the BTC members, located between courts 8-9. "That's the best thing that happened to the club," he said. "People can come down and visit with friends." A combination of tennis, competition, camaraderie and good health are all combining to make Don Natel a happy member at BTC.

BTC Pro Mimi Loucks Perspective on US Open 2017



I had the opportunity to watch the US Open again this year. My daughter Alex attends NYU and since I was there helping her move in, I thought I might as well see some amazing tennis. I watched Nadal, Federer, Del Potro, #1 seed Karolina Pliskova, US Open Champion Sloane Stephens, French Open Champion Jelena Ostapenko and many other top players in the world. As a teaching professional, I have a very strong understanding of the technical game as well as the strategies it takes to win matches. To actually see a player execute these strategies is truly amazing! At the professional level, errors are minimal and game point opportunities are rarely wasted. Thus, the reason a break of serve at the pro level can determine who wins the set. The mental toughness and ability raise the level of their game when needed is something all of us can try to replicate.

How can players at the club level learn to win the points that really count? So many times, I hear from my students that the match they lost was much closer than the score suggested. They tell me “every game went to deuce” or “I had many set points but I just couldn’t close it out.” I know there is nothing more frustrating to lose games and/or matches that you feel you could have won. The good news is you are not alone! Everyone, including the pros, had to learn how to play the big points. The ability to raise the level of your game and stay mentally engaged for the big points comes from experience. You must first realize that certain points are more important than others and find a way focus. Try using what I call the B.E.A.T strategy.

1. **Breathe.** Before the point starts take deep breaths and calm your mind.
2. **Errors.** Don’t make any. Don’t give her a free point off a missed return of serve or double fault. Make your opponent win the point.
3. **Attitude.** Stay positive. Don’t let your mind think negative thoughts such as, if I lose this point I’m going to lose the match, etc. Focus only on the current point, keep your head up and show your opponent complete confidence.
4. **Time.** Take the full 20 seconds before the point to gather your thoughts. Play out in your mind your strategy of how you will win the point and believe you will execute it.

Practice this BEAT strategy in all your matches including practice matches. The more experience you have winning the big points, the more confident you will be whenever the situation arises. You can BEAT your opponents and gain mental toughness just like the pros!

*Special CONGRATULATIONS to Mimi on receiving the SDDTA “FEMALE PRO OF THE YEAR” award.

BTC Members Making a Mark Around the World



Congratulations to BTC members Judy and Larry Belinsky on their medal wins at the 20th Maccabiah Games in Israel, July 2017. About 9,500 Jewish athletes from over 80 countries gathered at the third largest international sporting competition in the world. Judy Belinsky won gold in the Women’s 60 singles and took the bronze with her husband Larry, in the combined 55/60 Mixed Doubles division. Larry took the silver in the in the Men’s 60 singles division. He and wife Judy, held the distinction of not only being the only husband and wife that competed, but also to win medals at the games. Congrats Judy and Larry!!!



BTC member Roz King won the World Championships in Lake Nona, Florida. She is the #1 player in Women Singles 80 division in the world. Congrats to a great champion and wonderful role model for players of all ages.

Roz will lead the 80s team at Intersectional play this month in Boca Raton, Florida. Along with 25 other players, ages 45 to 80, Southern California will be sending five teams to represent the section.

Tennis Love at BTC!



Jesse Steinberg and Katherine Nguyen became engaged the Sunday before Labor Day (Sept 3) during the second weekend of the District tournament. Here is their LOVE story, according to Jesse.

"I had been brainstorming the proposal for a while (long before the marriage pressure was ramped up this summer). I knew I had to do something with tennis. We met playing tennis, our closest friends play tennis, many of our weekday nights we spend running each other around on court. If it weren't for friendships with, and the kindness of, the people actually necessary to pull off the mid-match, mid-tourney proposal, I wouldn't have thought of the idea. But, because Colleen and Tony were generous enough to let the proposal happen at Balboa Tennis Club during the tournament, the idea and execution came easily. It helped that there were only three 5.5 mixed teams in the draw and we are close friends with the other two teams. Tony was able to assure us a show court and an afternoon match time. Both teams knew I was going to do the proposal on Sunday regardless of which team we played.

It was really special being able to do the proposal at Balboa during a tournament. I remember when we first starting playing mixed as a couple. I am a pretty calm and laid back guy, but it was incredibly

frustrating! I knew tennis was a very mental game, but mixed took it to a whole new level. Learning how to work and play together on court made everything else about a relationship seem really easy. Now I truly enjoy playing mixed doubles, and my favorite days are ones when we get to go out to Balboa and compete with friends at tournaments.

The most worrisome part of the engagement was letting people know about the proposal the week before without Kat finding out. I wanted to have friends and family share the moment with us. A few people got really close to spilling the beans the Saturday before the proposal! My buddy Steve Harmon walked up to me as I was standing next to court 8 and said 'congrats on the engagement'. Kat was sitting right behind me but fortunately she was playing with her dogs and didn't hear.

The only other potential issue was that it started raining on Sunday morning. Our match was scheduled for 3pm and I was going to do the proposal around 4. We went out to the tournament early that day to watch some friends play, but the rain quickly suspended play for a few hours. I honestly did not have a back-up plan. I knew I had to do the proposal one way or another that afternoon, because her family was coming down from LA and we had friends that were joining us, but I didn't know what I was going to do if it kept raining. We went back home and I started cutting a tennis ball in half, thinking that if I really can't figure anything out, I will just stick the ring inside the ball and gather everyone around as I give it to her. Fortunately, the skies cleared and we were able to get on court right around 3pm.

I guess I didn't quite know what I was getting myself into regarding the wedding planning. The morning after the engagement I woke up at 4am and Kat was on her computer. She hadn't slept. She had been planning the wedding all night. I didn't have my weekends for a few weeks because she was taking me from venue to venue all around San Diego. But thankfully, we eventually found a place that was both of our favorites. We are getting married December 3, 2018 at a place called Grand Tradition in Fallbrook. And now I have my weekends back! One of the benefits of getting married is we will be able to play the husband-wife divisions. I am sure a lot of those couples/teams share the same bond of being able to compete alongside a loved one. It is very special and very unique to tennis."



NOVEMBER 2017

Calendar of Events

November

1-3	Western League Girl's Individual Tournament	
6-10	Girl's CIF Individual Championships	
18	Turkey Shoot Social	
19	Free Guest Day	
28	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.

December

8	Volunteer Appreciation Party	6:00 p.m.
17	Free Guest Day	
19	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
25	Club Closed for Christmas	

January

15	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
19	SDDTA Annual Dinner, LJB&TC	6:00 p.m.
21	Free Guest Day	
28	Run and Roll Wheelchair Tournament	

February

9-11	Tennis on Campus Collegiate Tournament	
16-18	Hector Ortiz Junior Tournament	
18	Free Guest Day	
20	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.

BTC Juniors Gettin' It Done!



Savo Simic started his 2017 tournament year by winning his first 12s title in a level 5 tournament, still as a nine-year-old. From there, he shifted his focus back to 10s, as he wanted to become #1 in So Cal. From January to October, Savo won two level 3 and one level 2 titles in singles, one level 3 title in doubles, and made another level 2 and level 3 singles finals. At the beginning of October, Savo accomplished his goal, and became #1 player in So Cal in 10s. He will now shift his focus to competing in 12s, even though he has another four months before he ages up. He hopes to stay healthy and will continue to work hard both in practice and competition. At 10 years old, Savo has a clear understanding of the benefits derived from hard work and dedication.



Ivan Smith competed in 3 National Tournaments during the last 3 months. In Florida, he reached the Quarterfinals and in Oklahoma he placed 3rd. Earlier this month, in Texas, he won the National Boys' 16 Doubles Championship and Gold Medal, with Chris Papa of Cypress, California. Ivan, who is a sophomore at Hilltop High School, won the League Singles Title as a freshman over several highly ranked opponents. He is ranked #1 in Boys' 16 and #2 in Boys' 18 Doubles, in Southern California, with his partner. Ivan recognizes the great assistance he has received over the years from BTC members, and how significant the Ultimate Challenge Court doubles he played as a youngster has helped his skills.