



*Two new ways to get a game...
BTC Junior fund gets major boost!
You can help keep dues low!*

Center Court

New lights to be installed this month

Great news for nighttime players! This month Amtech lighting will replace all of our lighting fixtures, nearly doubling the lighting.

BTC decided to move forward with the project when County Supervisor Ron Roberts approved a \$50,000 county grant to match \$50,000 that was donated from the estate of John Gerding.

The money from the Gerding estate has been delayed in court, but the board of directors voted to use funds from our reserves to finance the lighting improvements until the Gerding matter

is resolved. It was decided that to wait for the legal system might jeopardize the county funds, and this is too great an opportunity to pass up.

As any nighttime player at BTC can tell you, there is certainly a need for improvement.

Extensive testing performed by Professor Will Tappen, former Facilities Chair, demonstrated that the light output at our club is half that of state-of-the-art facilities.

Tournament grade lighting calls for an average of 30fc, club grade lighting calls for an average of 20fc, and our courts cur-

rently average a dismal 13fc.

Amtec lighting promises to bring our lighting up to 25fc – nearly double the light we have today!

We will keep our existing poles, increasing the lighting with modern fixtures. Plans call for a few new bulbs on the corner of some courts, but we hope to lower our energy costs because the old electric panel that controls the lights is currently a mess of outdated wiring. This panel will be rewired and a remote system will be added to allow the Reservations Desk to control the lights.

January 18 Round Robin Social

With each BTC social round robin seemingly more fun than the last, anticipation is high for the new year's first club social on Saturday, January 18.

Space is limited and we're expecting a sellout, so make sure you sign up early! We will begin taking reservations for the social on Friday, January 3. Tennis starts at 3:30 p.m., with dinner to follow. There will be grilled burgers and a

pasta salad for those who don't eat meat. The fee is only \$5 whether you plan to eat or not.

In order to insure competitive play, we are limiting this round robin to players who are 3.5 or above. Newer players are encouraged to play in the free beginners clinic at 3 p.m. and join the party at 5:30 (if you're unsure of your level, see Geoff Griffin in the pro shop).

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Toni Atkins recommends BTC Junior Fund for \$1,000 donation

Recently the Balboa Tennis Club received a call from City Councilmember Toni Atkins' office. She was interested in supporting an athletic activity for kids and she thought of the Balboa Tennis Club.

Weeks later Geoff Griffin received a letter from the Century Club Charities Committee notifying him that had allocated a donation of \$1,000 to the Balboa Tennis Club Junior Fund from the proceeds of the 2002 Buick Invitational.

Geoff was also invited to their Annual Charities Luncheon at the Hall of Champions located in Balboa Park.

The Balboa Tennis Club Junior Program is dedicated to teaching the game of tennis to kids who might otherwise not be able to play. Many of the children in the

program come from low-income households that would not be able to afford tennis lessons.

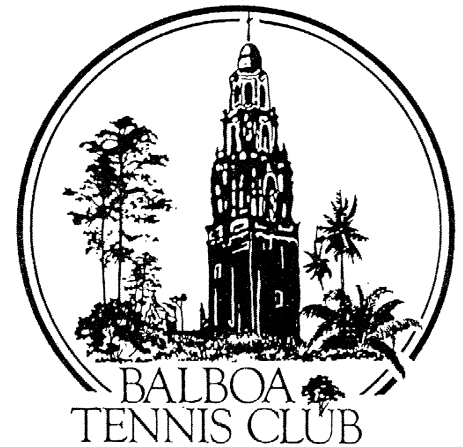
Created and run by Geoff Griffin, the program provides kids with an hour of free instruction every Tuesday from 4—5 p.m.

The program is open to any child who shows up to play.

The teaching pros all teach at a greatly reduced rate, but the Junior Fund is always in need of funding.

Donations to the Junior Fund are accepted at the Pro Shop and the Reservation Desk, or you can mail a check (made out to BTC Junior Fund) to the address below our logo in the next column.

"Kids Courts" were developed to help our juniors, by giving kids priority on courts 5 and 6 from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m. during the week.



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295-9278

Robin Rodger
President

Richard Barndt
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Ron Celeste
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Pam Fullerton
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Roz King

Bev LaRue

Linda Stadelli

Tony Stephens

Patty Sweeting

Board Members

Kent Sligh
Director

Geoff Griffin
Tennis Director

Roz King
Editor, Center Court

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 New Years Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

Office 295-4242

Reservations..... 295-9278

Pro Shop..... 291-5248

Snack Shop 299-8787

Submissions to the newsletter are welcome.
Call 295-4242

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Balboa's busy board promises to stay active

By Robin Rodger, BTC President

A standing ovation for the people who made our patio remodel a reality: Architect James Robbins and his partner Janene Christopher, Patricia Trauth and Tom Garcia both landscape architects, Izzy and Chris Maggay of Academy Engineering, Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Belinsky, as well as an array of caring people from the city and the park and recreation department.

Everyone agrees it has made a huge positive difference in the appearance and the furniture is much more comfortable. We are aware of the concerns over the bamboo plants in the planter boxes and are working on a solution.

Our first Social Round Robin was a great success, with about 40 people playing tennis and sharing hamburgers a la Ron and Don. Thank you to Linda Stadelli for organizing a great event, and thanks to Geoff Griffin for running the tennis format.

We have tweaked our club calendar this year to try and give our membership more opportunities to socialize and get to know new people. We are eliminating the Fall member tournament, but will still have our Spring member tournament, which has historically been much more popular.

In place of the Fall tournament we have scheduled four member Round Robin's with dinner following. The first one will be January 18 (see front page). We will also have several free clinics during the year. This combination of events should provide a social get-together each month. Our hope is that this will enable our members to become acquainted with each other, find new people to play with, and improve their tennis games at

the same time. With this new comfort level members might then enjoy a more formal dinner dance like we've had in years past. In 2003 our annual dinner will be a much less formal affair. It is scheduled for late spring and there will be a picnic on our own premises. More on that in the months to come...

I want to say thank you to the brave and caring members who ran for board positions. We have an outstanding group of diverse people to represent you for the next two years.

Get to know these people. If you have suggestions be sure and fill out a suggestion form and turn it in to one of the two suggestion boxes. If you choose to sign it you will receive a follow up phone call.

Filling out a form is much better than verbally telling a board member something because it creates a physical record of your concern that is sure to be addressed. Also it can be hard for board members to remember everything said while they are trying to enjoy their tennis time just like you.

We are looking forward to a very exciting year at BTC. We have many projects behind us and will be improving our lighting situation before the end of the year. Our roof patio project is on hold pending an engineering study of the weight load factor. The backboard project is waiting for some funding. We might have to do a fund raising project to accomplish this item. I will be trying to obtain funding for the lights for the lower courts. The clay courts are in the future since we need not only funding but city approval because any clay courts would need to go on land not currently in our lease.



New year brings fresh faces to BTC Board of Directors

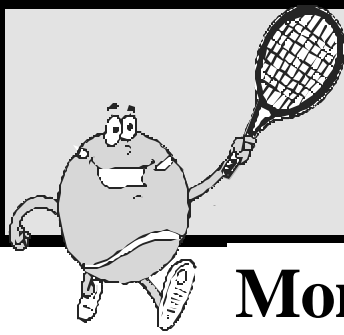
Tony Stephens is the newest member of the BTC Board, and he has already made a terrific impact with his work on the facilities committee. Tony took the seat vacated when Chuck Splitgerber resigned. Chuck should be congratulated for his service to the

club — he was instrumental in the success of the BTC Open and the improvements to the snack shop.

I hope everyone will thank the outgoing board members. Pam Fullerton served on the board for years. Brad Hasper chaired several committees during his 3 years

on the board. Bev La Rue worked on a number of committees and continues to be a volunteer. Patty Sweeting organized a number of social events during her service.

The new year will bring new board members Randy Gerson, Annette Howell and Terry Overby.



Tennis Tips...

...from the pros

Mom was right — eat your veggies!

By Kevin Johnston, USPTA & USPTR

What was the worst thing your parent made you do when you were growing up? Like most parents, mine made me eat my vegetables at the dinner table.

My mom would — and still does — serve up the most awful combination of broccoli, cauliflower and carrot combination known to man.

I would have to sit there at the dinner table until I finished everything on my plate, including the veggies. Sometimes this would take hours because I would refuse to eat them.

But mommy dearest would make me eat them up because they were good for me.

The same philosophy can be used for your tennis game. Most people go out on the tennis court and, if they are not playing a match, only practice what they are comfortable doing.

This translates into most people just rallying from the baseline until they are blue in the face. The only time they go to the net is to retrieve balls.

People love instant gratification. They don't want to go out and do something that won't feel good, even if they know it is good for them, like eating vegetables.

Tennis players love to bang the ball from the base-

line. There is a feeling of power that makes them feel like the big hitters on television.

Forget this little fantasy world and work on the parts of your game that need working on.

For most players that would be the net game and serving. The weak parts of your game will never improve if you don't practice them.

Next time you go on the court, have a plan of attack for improvement. Practice your volleys for thirty minutes and then rally from the baseline.

You may not enjoy your hour of tennis like usual when you are camped out on the baseline all hour, but think of the big picture — the thirty minutes you spent working on your volleys just brought you that much closer to having a decent, or even good, net game.

Use this thinking towards all parts of your tennis game. Better yet, sign up for a tennis lesson with your favorite pro. They will be able to show you exactly what you need to do to improve the weak parts of your game.

I'm an adult now, so I don't have to eat my vegetables. I prefer cheeseburgers and cupcakes. But you should eat your veggies.

Griffin Tennis Services

*Keep the Pro Shop in mind for your Christmas shopping!
Open until 8 p.m. Monday—Thursday in December to serve you.
Manuela will be happy to gift wrap!*

**10% discount for all items
of \$20 or more!** (sales items not included)

Gift Certificates available!

Lots of logo shirts and hats in stock

Sale!

Spotlight

By Roz King

It has been three years since Kent and I took on the task of making a fold-over newsletter into an informative, interesting and communicative six page publication. This will be my *last column* and we eagerly await someone else stepping up to the plate to carry on to the next level.

I have enjoyed the opportunity of engaging in some of the most informative and fascinating exchanges with BTC members. Some preferred not to be featured. My goal was to focus on those who quietly and unobtrusively contributed to the well being of the club, the community and tennis.

We are touched by the caring deeds of **Sonny Gift** and **Tony Stephens** who are teaching **Alex** tennis. Alex rents a wheel chair that is more appropriate for tennis.

Our Pro **Geoff Griffin** gave of his time to act as a ball person for quadriplegic wheelchair tournament players, and **Fran Wakefield**, **Bev LaRue** and **Tad Yamaguchi** assist at the desk each year.

Chris Clark donates many hours to the growth of tennis and supporting the Tennis Federation. Thanks to the **Hanks** and **Frans** who bring fruits and vegetables they grow to share with members.

Also thanks to members like **George Wajda**, who carefully thought out ways of improving the facility and presented the plan to the board.

What I also like is how we all seem so familiar, we have members that everyone knows just by stating their first name: **Phillis, Sonny, J.T., C.D., "Lobbin" Bob, Keith, Ollie, Ramon, Dom, Hazel, Roberto, Nick, Andre, Sid, Scotland, Manolo, Vaughn** and **Herb** – just to mention a few.

Some players continue to be challenged and interested in the competition of tennis though they do not compete on that level anymore. They are willing to give hitting time to those who do... to name a few: **Payton Cook** works out with me and **Susan Davis**.

Tad Yamaguchi is most generous with me and junior players, and **Bob Durgen** always has lots of insights, and he has a vast knowledge of tennis history and tennis venues all across the country which includes some of the early minority players... its always educational.

You know, our club director, **Kent**, is also developing a real *itch* to jump into tournaments.

Maybe next year he'll *scratch* the surface!!! Other rising tennis stars are: **Sunya Griffin** (great tournament results), and **Andrea** (of the fitness duo of **James** and **Andrea**).

Speaking of competition!! – As Intersectional team Captain of our Southern California Women's 65's, I am proud to say we *took the championship!* There were 10 Sections in the draw consisting of a 3 singles, 2 doubles format. **Nellie Aguilera** and **Georgia Turner** and I were joined by two other ladies from Los Angeles to form our 5 woman team.

Virginia Blanchard was on the W55 team and **Cassandra Ceasar** and **Ruth Marshall** where on the W35's. The place: Lake Conroy just North of Houston, Texas. A week earlier **Mike Carrico** was there on the men's intersectional team. We are unique in having so many members of our club being selected to represent all of Southern California. **Johnny Sanchez, Brad Hasper** and **Jay Turner** are other members who frequently travel and do well at out of town tournaments. By the way, Ruth and Cassandra are under the coaching of our Pro **Carlos Mora** so we can look in the future to them being a formidable doubles team.

Since I'm talking about teams as such... we must recognize and SALUTE all the team captains – **Mike Carrico, Thayer Christensen, Laura Jefferson, Rolando Mateos, Zeke Montes, Peter Riley, Robin**

(Continued on page 6)

Roz King's last chat...

(Continued from page 5)

Rodger, Jesse Wood – who take on the daunting task of fielding a team, sometimes because no one else is willing to do the job.

Did you know that **Johnny Courtney** and **JT** are setting up some regular doubles times? If you are an early bird you can join the early tennis workout (7AM) with **David Ross, Debi Flowers** and **Susan Afflalo**.

Have you noticed that we have two tables of bridge players? The *ideal day* is tennis followed by bridge – okay, okay! – or in some cases pinochle. The Balboa Tennis Club is a *goood* thing!!!!

Thanks to all of you who have been willing to give your time to me and for all the news tips. I appreciate all the work that Kent has given to formatting and writing articles and adding to the over-all professional publication. I appreciate all the other columnists for their quality, informative and timely articles. **Happy holidays!!**

New location for suggestion box

In an effort to encourage members to share what's on their mind, we are installing a new suggestion box outside of the reservations desk.

Of course you can continue to use the suggestion box located in the clubhouse. Many of BTC's best improvements were the result of member feedback.

Beginning tennis players — *this article is for you!*

You'd like to play more, but it's scary meeting new players and it's even tougher when everyone seems to be better than you.

Maybe your backhand is as reliable as a tech stock, or your serve is as slow as third-class mail. It's okay! Tennis is a tough game, and no one learns overnight. The truth is there are a lot of beginners at Balboa, and our head pro, Geoff Griffin, is looking for you.

Every Saturday at 2 p.m. Geoff organizes a free round robin for beginning adults of all ages. Players rotate across up to four courts playing doubles and switching partners after the best of five games.

Just show up with a racquet at the teaching courts (courts 1-4) at 2 p.m. any Saturday and Geoff will match you up with partner and, the next thing you know, you'll be playing competitive tennis. So get out there — you're going to have a great time!

Balboa II team gets first place finish

For the second time in BTC history, the Balboa II team won the Women's Scripps Invitational Fall League. Captained by Robin Rodger, the Balboa team surpassed teams from 10 other clubs. The league benefits the Special Olympics, and is essentially a double A league since the club's pros play in the number one position. Kudos to Darice

Carnaje and Melinda Ainsley-Murray who played number one for BTC. Team players included Ginni Blanchard, Elaine Hawkins, Judy Janc, Adi Hilsdorf Marion Hinchy, Jennifer Knock, Deb Linder, Laura Moskel, Pam Seggerman, Becky Smiser, Cathie Sobke, Georgia Turner, Marni Wheeler, and Colleen Witterschein.

Balboa needs more team captains

By Robin Rodger

Recently a club member approached me at the gym (I had on a Balboa t-shirt) and asked me why BTC doesn't have more men's teams. The answer is simple — we need someone to captain the team and put the players together at different levels. We need 3.5 Men's and Women's teams, as well as 4.0 teams and maybe another double B team.

Six years ago there was only one Scripps Invitational A team at Balboa and I was told we couldn't field two teams that could compete. I was given a chance to try, however, and our team (called Balboa II) came in third that year. Since then we've won twice and placed second the other two years. When I started the second A team I had never even played as a regular on the A team. If I can do it, so can you!

For more information on how you can captain a team, contact BTC Director Kent Sligh at (619) 295-4242.

Two new ways to get a game

Do you know about the 4.0 Saturday Mixed Doubles Round Robin? Players meet every Saturday at 1:30 p.m., except during tournaments. It only costs \$1 for members (\$6 for non-members).

Just show up at the Reservations Desk a little early and Don will tell you where

to go. Players rotate every half hour.

Starting January 13, Pat Mason is starting a Round Robin from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. every Monday for 2.5 to 3.5 players. Sign up at the Reservation Desk or give Pat a call for more information at (619) 296-6551.

You can help keep dues low...

The relaxed, care-free attitude here at the Balboa Tennis Club is one of the best features of our club. And our low membership dues are nice too.

Lately, however, we've noticed an increase in non-members playing without paying the day pass fee.

We don't want to move to a system that forces every member of your foursome to show their cards at the window, but we've had trouble with people assuming everyone in their group is a member. We could use your help.

Before you check in for your group, ask to make sure everyone is a current member... it will help insure our easy-going manner, and keep your dues low too.

New Tennis Café owners appreciate warm response

By Ed and Penny Barron

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing us to serve the Balboa Tennis Club and for the support and warm welcome that we have received from all of its members.

Our winter hours are Monday thru Friday (excluding Tuesday) 9 am to 6 pm, Saturday 9 am to 3 pm, Sunday 10 am to 3 pm and closed on Tuesday.

We have added several new

sandwiches and we are exploring the possibility of expanding the breakfast menu.

We would appreciate any suggestions on any products that you would like to see served at your Tennis Café. Feel free to call us at (619) 299-8787 to place an order and it will be waiting for you when you arrive.

Once again we would like to thank you for your support and we look forward to serving you in the years to come.

Unwrapped toys will help bring joy to less fortunate children

Griffin Tennis is helping St.

Claire's house again this holiday season, but they can't do it alone.

Be on the lookout for the toy drive boxes located in the Pro Shop.

St. Claire's House is a place for battered women and their children in Escondido.

Toys should be unwrapped and delivered to the Pro Shop no later than Friday, December 22. Please take this opportunity to help bring a little holiday joy to the children.



BTC's free clinics

On Saturday November 16, the Balboa Tennis Club sponsored the second in a series of free clinics.

These clinics, free to any adult, are designed to promote adult tennis at our club.

Geoff Griffin ran the clinic, along with Majid Benbrahim, Mike Feldman, Chaz Griffin, and Kevin Johnston.

There were five courts going at once, with five pros and forty players.

Geoff was happy with the turnout. With about eight people per court, his staff was able to offer a fair amount of instruction.

BTC will sponsor four free clinics this year. The date for the next free clinic is Saturday, February 22. Mark your calendars now and remember to keep an eye out for flyers and signs.

Calendar of events

December

10 BTC BOARD MEETING
18 HOLIDAY APPRECIATION DINNER

January

18 CLUB SOCIAL ROUND ROBIN
21 BTC BOARD MEETING

February

18 BTC BOARD MEETING
22 FREE ADULT CLINIC—OPEN TO EVERYONE

March

10-14 PAUL BUSKEY MEMORIAL HEART TOURNAMENT
18 BTC BOARD MEETING

Center Court

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