



# Center Court

DECEMBER 2016

## Fran Wakefield Hunter Inducted into the SoCal Sr. Hall of Fame



SCTA Sr. Hall of Fame inductee  
Fran Wakefield Hunter

The sport of tennis encompasses so many different aspects from players to organizers, team captains, officials, tournament directors, media specialists, athletic trainers, ball kids, manufacturing reps and many more. Most people involved in the “sport of a lifetime,” at one time or another, played at some level of tennis and eventually fell in love with the game, despite the inevitable highs and lows. As competitive players, some people reach a very high level and continue on to the pros. Others play high school, college and maybe try the pros, yet only a few make it to the top of the tennis pinnacle. Some become good recreational players and perhaps get involved with league tennis and possibly win a sectional or league championship. Overall, tennis offers many paths to success.

Yet in the end, what is tennis achievement all about? BTC member Fran Wakefield Hunter knows as she was recently inducted into the Southern California Senior Hall of Fame for her lifetime dedication to tennis in many areas. At Balboa Tennis Club, Fran has been a regular competitor on the courts even into her eighties and along the way, has never stopped giving back to the game. Throughout a span of 40 continuous years, Fran was a USTA Circuit Chair, San

Diego District Executive Board Member, USTA League Captain, Tournament Desk Coordinator and SCTA Women’s Intersectional Organizer on all levels, where she was a pioneer in bringing about the gold, silver and bronze ball award system to senior tennis. As an accomplished player, Fran owns two prestigious gold balls, six silver balls and six bronze balls. In the end, this continuous participation, countless hours of volunteering and giving back to the game accounted for her prestigious induction into the SCTA Senior Hall of Fame.

“This award shows me that there is value in the whole tennis world other than being a champion. There is value in giving back to the game,” she said. “I’ve always had the attitude of trying to add to the total enjoyment of tennis in people’s lives.” Congratulations to Fran Wakefield Hunter for her countless contributions to the great game of tennis.

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## San Diego Captures Cal Cup Again

By Scott Williford



Balboa Tennis Club played host on October 15-16 to an important tradition for the San Diego Tennis Federation – it was the 30th anniversary of the California Cup. Also known as “Cal Cup”, the event is a team competition between the top 24 play-

ers from the LGBT tennis organizations in San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego. The Federation planned and hosted the first event in San Diego in 1986 at the now defunct River Valley Tennis Club in Mission Valley. The event rotates between San Diego, SF and LA each year but has never been played at Balboa Tennis club in all these years due to scheduling conflicts with tournaments at BTC. *(Cal Cup continued on page 4)*

**The President Serves It Up**

By BTC President Janene Christopher



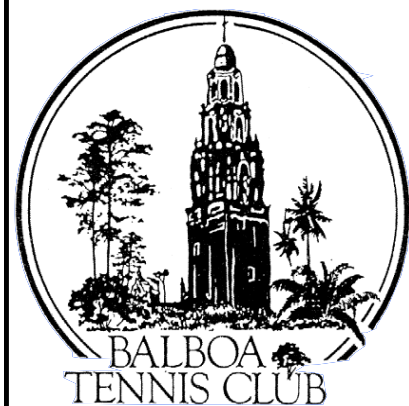
Happy December...the year just zoomed by....The months of this year saw the Club's Board of Directors working together like a well-oiled machine. Thanks to all (the Board) for their hard work and expertise this year. We are especially thankful for our Club Director, Colleen and all our dedicated staff. This year we focused on some housekeeping items such as: updating our employee handbook, streamlining our membership info and database, instituting online memberships and renewals, a ball recycling program, reroofing the storage shed, upgrading the shed lighting,

renovating the interior of the reservation office, purchasing additional storage sheds for the teaching courts, removing the tree in front of the pro shop, installing additional pavers, reinstituted court checks by the reservation agents and resurfaced all of the lower courts (an agreement with St. Augustine and OLP schools). Most important, we finalized and signed our Special Use Permit (SUP) with the City for the next three years.

Some members have misconceptions about our relationship with the City of San Diego/Park & Recreation Department. The SUP with the City allows BTC (a non-profit: 501C4) to operate the Club (courts, hitting wall, reservation office and clubhouse) for a processing fee. We are not subsidized by the City. The parking lot is not under BTC's jurisdiction, it's the City's responsibility. However, our club security cameras cover certain areas in front the facility where there have been problems in the past. All monies from memberships, day passes and other court rentals are used for payroll and associated taxes; utilities (electricity, security, Cable TV, internet etc.), club maintenance and improvements (cleaning, trash, landscape, court resurfacing etc.). Griffin Tennis Services and Ohana are Sub-Permittees. All tennis lessons and clinics are operated by Griffin Tennis Services and thus no "outside pro" is allowed to give a lesson at the club; likewise for stringing services. It's really no different in that respect from any other resort or private club. Geoff is the Club's Tennis Director; whereas Colleen is the Club Director. The former coordinates lessons and all activities on the teaching courts and the latter coordinates the Club activities and issues. There is one junior and four adult tournaments run by BTC (the Club Spring Tournament, National Open, the Balboa Open – Maureen Connelly Brinker Memorial, BTC Junior Championships and the Metropolitan Tournament). All other tournaments hosted, we charge a fee for court usage.

Balboa's Board serves to represent the best interest of the Club while adhering to the requirements of the SUP. We are a volunteer group, elected by you the members as stewards. We operate the Club with the funds generated for the best interests of Club members, all the while evaluating suggestions and issues related to public safety, vagrants, and even challenge court challenges! One suggestion is to have that big green electrical box (corner of Court 8) painted by an artist with a tennis theme. Great suggestion we just need to find an artist and work with that vision!

In our budget for 2017, we hope to include hitting wall fencing and repair, relamping the lights on Courts 9 & 10 (LED is desired) and the usual maintenance items (*President's Report continued on page 3*)



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**President**  
Janene Christopher

**Vice President**  
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**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



## Director's Report

by Colleen Clery Ferrell



Six newly resurfaced courts will soon be completed at BTC. Thank you to the members who continually support our club with dues and court fees so we can afford to continually upgrade the Club. With a great president and caring board members, we are all working to make BTC the best Club possible. Dan and Melissa work tirelessly to keep the plants and flowers healthy and attractive. Charles and his crew respond to every maintenance issue in record time so overall club upkeep issues are taken care of right away. The morning cleaning crew works 364 days of the year to make sure you play in a clean facility each day. Thank you to the members who let me know right away when there are issues to be resolved. Together, we are working to keep BTC as one of the finest public facility in the country. Happy Holidays to all.

## BTC Teaching Pro Mimi Loucks US Open Experience



This past August, Mimi Loucks spent a day at the US Open with her husband while getting her daughter settled for college in New York City. Was she able to just sit back and enjoy the action? Some of the time, yet she also had part of her brain analyzing how the pros handle different situations on the court. "The action was definitely different from the club level. The pros really know how to work the point and every ball has intent. At the club level, the players often try to go for too much too soon. I watched Radwanska come back one set from 3-5 to win 7-6. She knew how to build the point and play aggressive at the right time, and she never looked frazzled or frustrated. The pros kept the ball deep and made the other players move. Club players sometimes don't realize what stage they are in a point. The pros recognize defense, offense and neutral zone situations. I also had the opportunity to watch Coco Vandeweghe and Martina Hingis play doubles. You could say that Hingis and Coco have very different games. One the setter and the other the power closer. When I pair the doubles teams on the BTC league teams I coach, I look for the same type of combination."

Overall the experience at the US Open was enjoyable. Mimi even made time on her way out to pose with BTC icon and former great Maureen Connolly.

*(President's Report continued from page 2)*  
(the usual plumbing and cleaning issues, nets, wind screens, lamp replacements etc.). Our top priority will continue to be getting the Tournament Pavilion designed and constructed. Our hope is to use this structure as the "Check-in" for Tournaments. It will have vandal resistant light fixtures, power and be equipped to hang a relocatable LED screen (showing the draws or other info when connected to a laptop) and have "Big Voice" capability (speakers built in for announcements). We envision the pavilion as a gathering place for members, with the possibly of having an outdoor grade (folding) ping pong table. The space will be available for a pop-up café, exhibit area, sidewalk sale area for the pro shop and much more. We are positive once built it will be used! The concept sketch is our starting point.



A long term big money goal is still better lights for ALL the upper courts. The Board and staff of BTC appreciate all our fantastic members. Thanks for being part of our Club and supporting our great sport!

## BTC Tennis Pro Tom O'Brien



Tom O'Brien has almost 30 years of tennis teaching experience in San Diego. Tom is a U.S.P.T.A. Elite Certified Tennis Professional, where he has been an active member for more than 25 years. He has served as an officer to the San Diego Division for several years.

In the early 90's, Tom got his "big start" working with Bill and Suzie Bond as the Assistant Professional at La Jolla Beach and Tennis club, and in the late 90's, he joined John Holladay at Tennis La Jolla, atop Mt. Soledad where he served as the Head Professional for 5 years.

In 1999, Tom was invited back to the Beach Club by Bill Kellogg to help build a full-fledged junior program. As the club's first Junior Programs Director, Tom spent seven years building a junior tennis community that included successful programs, camps, tournaments, junior league teams and more.

From 2007-2014, Tom served as the Programs and Facilities Manager at Barnes Tennis Center. While at Barnes, Tom worked hard to provide excellent after school programs and camps for kids of all ages, as well as managing adult programs and annual facility events. In addition, Tom served as Tournament Director for multiple Jr. Satellite and Novice Tournaments, and took special pride in directing the USTA Father-Daughter/Mother-Son National Championships.

Currently, Tom is an officer of The Greater San Diego City Tennis Council, working with Geoff Griffin, Roz King and David Gill to help fund and resurface public tennis courts in the San Diego Area.

Tom is a South Park neighbor, but hails originally from Chicago, where he grew up in the very strong tennis community of Hinsdale. As a player, he considers himself a "late-bloomer" coming into his best tennis as an adult.

Tom is the proud dad of son Joe, who is a senior this fall at High Tech High in Pt. Loma. Tom is very excited to be back on the courts, and happy to be an active teaching professional at Balboa Tennis Club!

### Here's one of Tom's favorite tennis tips: Up the Middle.... Solve the Riddle!

As doubles teams at the net, we're sometimes fooled by the ball up the middle, and there are many good rules that can help us, from "forehand takes it" to "cross-court covers the middle", and more! Experienced teams will discuss the topic and have some general agreements, but there is NO one rule that covers every situation! Hesitate, and you are LOST!

Trouble up-the-middle starts with hesitation! Trying to figure out "mine" or "yours" should happen AFTER you start for the ball! Being eager to get the ball on your racquet is the best way to begin to solve the up-the-middle problem. If you and your partner are both ready and want the ball, then anticipation, action and reaction will replace hesitation and "figuring it out"! Be a Ball Hog!

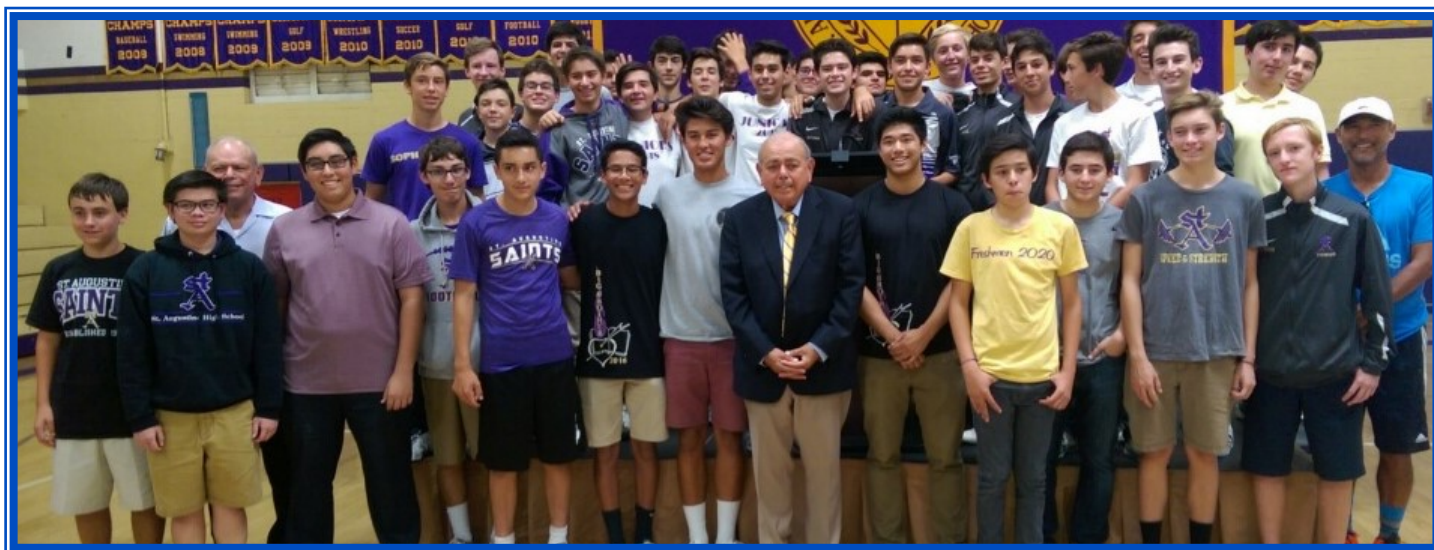
I love having partners that are aggressive, and proactive about getting their hands on the ball! My rule is "Go and get it first, and ask questions second". If everyone is playing the ball and starting for it early, more options are available for a team, and nobody is caught sleeping on the job!

*(Cal Cup continued from page 1)* This year the Federation founder Jim Winters and his Cal Cup co-founder Scott Williford brought "Cal Cup" home to BTC and it was magic for the San Diego team who won 30-21-21 in overall matches and will now retain the perpetual cup in San Diego until they play in San Francisco next October. The Federation featured a very diverse team of talented players, including honorary team member Geoff Griffin. San Diego was ahead 16-10-10 after day one of singles, and kept the momentum on day two by winning 11 amazingly clutch three-set doubles matches on day two of the event to seal the victory. It was a fitting "bookend" to the 30+ years of history at BTC for the Federation – who hosted its first San Diego Open at Morley Field in 1986 and now its 30th anniversary Cal Cup in the same location.



## Ruben Carriedo - BTC Board Member Extraordinaire

BTC Board of Director Ruben Carriedo was recently inducted into the St. Augustine High School Hall of Fame. Ruben graduated with the Class of 1961, having won a varsity letter all four years. He continued his education at Notre Dame, where he won a four year tennis scholarship and finished with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1965. Next he achieved his Masters of Arts in Education from New York University in 1969 and a Doctorate in Education Administration from Harvard. In 1993, Ruben earned an Honorary Doctorate from Notre Dame. In the 60's, he worked as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Bolivia, South America and then as a Teacher Corps educator in the New York City Schools. From 1969-1999, Ruben was employed by the San Diego City Schools as a teacher, counselor, coach and asst. superintendent. From 1999-2006, he worked at the University of Michigan as a university researcher.



Ruben is currently serving as coach for the St. Augustine Tennis Team. He recently answered some questions about his impressive tennis and educational journey.

**1. What is one of your greatest memories from your four years of high school tennis?** “Two things stand out in my mind. St. Augustine was not allowed to play in public school league until 1959. The principal at the time worked hard to get us in the league and the tennis team won the school’s first championship banner in any sport in 1960. The second was being a finalist in the Harper Ink Tournament, which was a very prestigious tournament in those days.” Ironically, Ruben lost to BTC member David Sanderlin.

**2. With so many accolades as a great junior player, what quality of your success would you hope to pass on to the boys you coach daily?** “I wasn’t a great athlete, but I was a consistent and an even tempered tennis player. You can’t let the opponent know when you are down. I try to make sure team members realize that tennis has a tradition of being a gentleman’s sport and besides being great athletes, they need to play fairly and demonstrate good sportsmanship and conduct.

**3. Who were your greatest influences and mentors during the high school years?** “Two people had a big impact – Fred Kinney – who was the editor of the newspaper and who also gave us free tennis clinics on court 9. He paid the tuition at St. Augustine for me and my brothers. The second person is Ralph Trembley – who worked for SD Park and Rec in the California Building and covered sports in general. He let me work as a recreation aid, typing results and working the desk at tennis tournaments. Fred and Ralph were both mentors at this important age of my life.”

**4. After a great four year career at St. Augustine, you went on to play four years of college tennis on a scholarship at Notre Dame. How difficult was it to get this prestigious award? Was it a combination of athletics and academics? What number on the team did you play? Did you ever have any professional aspirations?** “I received a tennis scholarship which paid for half of my tuition, room and board. The first two years at Notre Dame were an academic challenge for me. After I figured out the system and how to use my time better, I did well in my last two years. I played # 5 and # 6 singles and # 3 doubles. I had the reputation of being a consistent player who rarely lost close matches and contributed to many victories over Big Ten opponents like Michigan, Ohio State, Northwestern and Indiana, the strongest teams in the Midwest during that era. *(Ruben Carriedo continued page 6)*

## Kate Prichard - BTC Junior Who Knows How to Compete and Have Fun



At only 10 years young, Kate Prichard has the game figured out. She likes to practice and compete because it's fun, and she's learning from her losses. After her first win in a Girl's 10 tournament in East County, where she pulled out a tie-breaker victory 6-2, 3-6, 11-9, she had the perfect answer to handling pressure. "I tried to think of it like it didn't matter." This was her key to staying calm.

Kate started tennis at age four and didn't really take the game seriously until she was seven. Like many young girls, she started her athletic career playing soccer and now has chosen tennis as her primary sport. She attends St. Therese Catholic School in the Del Cerro area where her favorite physical education game is dodge ball. In 2nd grade, Kate dressed up as Maria Sharapova at Wimbledon in her all white tennis outfit. "Only one person knew who I was," she said with a smile. She continues being a kid while keeping an eye on her tennis future.

When asked about the strength of her game, Kate says, "I like to run people around." She claims her forehand is her best stroke at this time of her development. As for role models in the tennis world, she said this was a "hard decision" to make, yet likes watching Azarenka and Bourcier in the women's game and Raonic and Monfils in the men's game. She watches tennis on television and also attends the BNP Paribas Open tournament at Indian Wells every year.

Presently, Kate enjoys singles over doubles because "when I make a mistake in doubles, I feel badly for my partner. I also need to get better at volleying," she says. Kate hopes to play high school tennis at Patrick Henry High School and possible college tennis as well. When asked about becoming a touring pro, Kate replies with eyes wide open, "maybe???" No pressure Kate, just keep having fun!!! One of her coaches, Eduardo Afini, had this to say: "The key to Kate's success is that she knows how to balance things, as far as her tennis is concerned. She shows the composure of a professional player when she is practicing and competing in a tournament, and also knows how to be an adorable kid and have fun with her friends and teammates at the right moments. Working with Kate is a true pleasure." Kate's other Coach Armando Sandoval had this to say: "I am not surprised by Kate's results because I can see that her strength is coming from within. Kate is on the court because she wants to be. She has an excellent support structure in her mother that is very nurturing and conducive to producing a successful player. I'm looking forward to a lot of great tennis from Kate."



Eduardo Afini, Kate Prichard, Armando Sandoval

*(Ruben Carriedo continued from page 5)*

**5. What was the Honorary Doctorate you received at Notre Dame?** "The honorary doctorate is a special degree granted by the University to recognize outstanding achievement in science, the arts, politics, and philanthropy. Most of the honorees are world class and national leaders in their respective fields. The group of honorees usually include one or two Notre Dame Alumni as well. I established a scholarship for Latino students from the San Diego area and served as the first chair of the Hispanic Alumni of Notre Dame."

**6. How did you meet up with Billie Jean King in New York?** "During the summer of 1968, I was walking across Washington Square Park in New York City after taking an evening class at New York University when I met Billie Jean King, her husband Larry, and Rosie Casals. They were in New York for the first US Open being conducted at Forest Hills. I knew Billie from Southern California junior tennis and she had also played tennis at LA State where my brother Marcos also played. Billie asked me what I was doing in the City and I told her I was teaching at a middle school in Brooklyn serving Puerto Rican and Black students. She asked me if I could fill a bus with kids if she sent it to the school on the first day of the Open for the children's clinic. I told her yes. She sent the bus and arranged for kids from my school to win tennis racquets in the drawing. She also asked me to come down on Center Court to hit a few balls during the clinic-- one of my great tennis memories! Billie always has had a tremendous commitment to making tennis available to all parts of our society."

**7. How did you end up living in San Diego after traveling around the world?** "It's my home. If you can afford to live here, it's a great place. My mom is still alive at 93 years and all six siblings still live in Chula Vista."



## BTC Members Irma Gutierrez and Val Jones Attend ATA Tournament in Ft. Lauderdale



Irma Gutierrez

Irma was raised in Chula Vista and attended Pomona College in Claremont. In college she enrolled in a tennis class, but didn't continue playing even though she enjoyed the game. After finishing her studies, she moved back to L.A. to work, eventually married and moved to northern CA.

In her early 40's, Irma sustained a very serious spinal injury during her first and only pregnancy. She was hospitalized for several months in order to take her baby to term. She underwent spinal fusion surgery, which took almost a year of recovery. Irma was in a wheelchair and then a walker. She took pain meds for several years. Irma took up tennis nine years ago at age 50 and started playing at Mountain View where she participated and volunteered. She enjoyed playing league and participating in San Diego tennis activities and has never missed a Tennis Fest. She also learned about the American Tennis Association (ATA) and the rich history of this national organization, which was formed 100 years ago in response to segregation. Althea Gibson, Arthur Ashe and many other tennis players of color competed in ATA tournaments. The ATA also sponsors and advances wonderful youth tennis programs in mostly underserved communities. Irma de-

cided to become a member and volunteer for the ATA.

She started competing four years ago and decided to start with ATA tourneys. She won ladies' 3.5 singles at the ATA Western Regionals in Las Vegas three years in a row and mixed doubles twice. Irma went to ATA Nationals in Ft. Lauderdale three years ago and got to quarterfinals. During this time, she started coming to Balboa Tennis Club and said, "I enjoyed the variety of opportunities to play with different people and the camaraderie at the BTC." She appreciates her special friendship with BTC member Pat Mason, who has taken Irma under her wing. Irma and Pat attended the ATA Nationals this past July where she made the finals in ladies 3.5 singles. Irma states, "I couldn't have done it without her support!"

Additionally, she is honored to have become the national secretary for the ATA, ([www.american tennis association.org](http://www.american tennis association.org)) and hopes to be an integral part of this organization as they advance the legacy and programs. Irma looks forward to the centennial celebration and tennis tournament next summer in Baltimore, MD. She invites and encourages fellow BTC members to join in!

Val Jones had a great summer of tennis starting with her Copa American Express ITF women's 45's win on red clay in Guayaquil, Ecuador. She was also a finalist in the mixed 50's, with partner Andre Brady of Puerto Rico. Next stop, ATA tournament in Fort Lauderdale, FL. "Competition was fierce and fun was had by all. There were many wonderful activities that the ATA provided the players. A barbeque beach party, live music, ATA 100 year celebration ball, Hall of Fame induction, and much more. It was a great tournament." Val won the women's 50's title and defended her 50's mixed title with partner Andre Brady, who is also the ATA president representative.



Val Jones

### Run and Roll Tournament for 2017

Back by popular demand, the annual Run and Roll tennis tournament will be held at Balboa Tennis Club Sunday, February 19th from 1:00-5:00. \$25 entry fee includes the round robin, t-shirt, and catered dinner. For more information contact M. A. Hillier at [tennisma@cox.net](mailto:tennisma@cox.net) or 619-884-8911.

### Social Media for BTC

Find us on Social Media! Balboa Tennis Club posts regular updates on Twitter and Instagram as well as Facebook. For example, learn about weather delays, tournaments or clinics on Twitter without having to call the club! Our Facebook page is loaded with tournament photos and interesting news articles. We are **@balboatennis** on Twitter and Instagram. Stop by and say hello, we'd love to connect with you!

**DECEMBER 2016**

# Calendar of Events

## December

7	Volunteer Appreciation Party	6:00 p.m.
20	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
25	Club Closed for Christmas Day	

## January 2017

13	SDDTA Annual Dinner and Awards Banquet, LJB&TC	6:00 p.m.
17	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.

## February

17-20	Hector Ortiz Jr. Satellite Tournament	
19	Run and Roll Wheelchair Tournament	
20	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.

## March

10-12	K&W Junior Tournament	
21	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.

## April

7-9	BTC Spring Tournament	
18	BTC Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.

## Wounded Warrior/Veterans Free Tennis Clinic



Every Tuesday Geoff Griffin, Spike Lowndes, Gil Mahaney and Trent Aaron offer their time to put on a free tennis clinic for Wounded Warriors and Veterans on the teaching courts. After the clinic, regular volunteers have a meal prepared for the play-

ers. This altruistic group includes Geoff's wife Manuela Griffin, Barbara Shaw, Anne Ross, Bill Bauer, Libby Jaehnig, Harold Lawson, Mary Ann McCauley, M.A. Hillier and others who can make the time. The volunteers supply food for 25 people each week. If you are interested in getting involved or donating food for the Wounded Warrior/Veterans Free Tennis Clinic, contact Geoff Griffin at [griffintennis@msn.com](mailto:griffintennis@msn.com).