

The COURT REPORTER

DECEMBER 2021



Reports in this Issue

<i>President's Message</i>	2
<i>Special Events</i>	3
<i>The Ref's Corner</i>	5
<i>Competition Committee</i>	6
<i>Membership Committee</i>	7
<i>Courts & Grounds</i>	8
<i>Web Page News</i>	9
<i>Faces in SV Pickleball</i>	10
<i>Find a Coach</i>	11

Congratulations to the winner of the Name The Newsletter Contest

Graeme Blake really went to work submitting nine name ideas for the Skagit Valley Pickleball newsletter, with his offer of "The Court Reporter" receiving the most votes.

Knowing that Graeme can often be found playing pickleball at the YMCA, club president **Dan Budzynski** showed up to surprise Graeme with the announcement and congratulate him on his win. Graeme was awarded the prize of one dozen pickleballs. He will also be recognized on the new SVP website for the next three months.

Skagit Valley Pickleball is honored to have you as a member, Graeme! Thank you for your enthusiasm and participation in the contest.



President's Message

By Dan Budzynski

Contact: president.svpball@gmail.com

Welcome to the first edition of *The Court Reporter*. This has been made possible through the efforts of our club's membership committee, with chair **Melissa Ballenger** and newsletter editor **Mark Dixon**. Thank you for helping to keep the club members informed and included.



You will see that the board voted to change the club name to Skagit Valley Pickleball in support of those members who do not

live in Mount Vernon. Just three and one-half years ago the twenty-six players who came together to form the club had many discussions as to the club name. We settled on MVPC but didn't want to exclude those players who live in other communities. Our membership has now grown to 219 with many of the new players coming from surrounding areas. That is exciting to see, great for the club and for the growth of pickleball in the area.

The primary purpose for which we established the club is found in our by-laws, Article 3. We operate for promoting an active and healthy lifestyle directly associated with the game of pickleball by:

- 1) *instructing game rules, player strategy, and social/good sportsmanship to all age groups and skill levels*
- 2) *seeking new inside and outside playing venues for our members*
- 3) *working cooperatively within the community with special interest groups to promote the sport of pickleball to all.*

While we have spent much of our early years on the location/expansion of venues, it is great to see that we have a full board that is driving game rules, strategy and sportsmanship as well as working with local groups to promote pickleball to all.



In four short years we will have gone from zero to sixteen dedicated pickleball courts in the area, with the ten new courts opening in 2022. I believe that we are only getting started. Please contact our VP, **Travis LoGrande**, if you have ideas for locations within Skagit Valley where new courts could be developed.

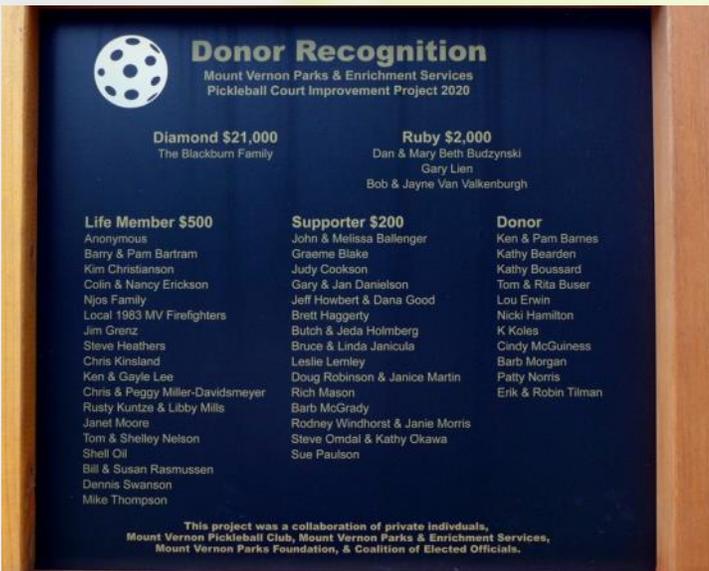
Special Events

By Melissa Ballenger

Hillcrest Park Pickleball Courts Dedication

The dedication of **Hillcrest Park Pickleball Courts** on August 8, 2021, was a huge success as many pickleball players and those who want to learn the game attended. Many guests lined up at the membership tent ready to join the **SVP**. The first five to join received a gift certificate for free pickleball lessons. Volunteers **Kathy Bousard** and **Gayle Lee** signed up thirty-three new members in a few short hours. For over an hour, all six courts were full as six dedicated club members gave lessons to the guests.

Courts were cleared at 11:00 when the dedication ceremony began with Master of Ceremony **Butch Holmberg**. **Jennifer Berner** (Mount Vernon Parks director) expressed excitement about the well-attended event and appreciation for **SVP** for bringing so much activity to Hillcrest Park. **Barb McGrady** shared the history of pickleball in Skagit County.



The new sign honoring donors was unveiled and the president of **SVP**, **Dan Budzynski**, spoke of the donations that made these courts possible. Much appreciation was demonstrated with applause and cheers when **Claude Blackburn** was acknowledged for his tremendous generosity. Winners of the recent ladder games were announced and congratulated as medals were awarded. The crowd gave a heartfelt applause.

The crowd gathered at the fence to watch high level players challenge one another. For the next hour or so, expressions of amazement and cheers of support could be heard throughout the crowd of spectators as difficult shots were made to look easy and misses made us all feel better about our own games. From beginning to end and for weeks prior to the dedication, event coordinator **Sue Paulson** ensured that equipment and volunteers were in place and working to run this event in a smooth and efficient manner.

Special Events (continued)

Mount Vernon Holiday Parade

Skagit Valley Pickleball received an honorable mention in the December **Mount Vernon Holiday Parade**. Over twenty **SVP** members sporting festive holiday costumes and accessories created our joyful procession. Each wore a **lime green scarf** and our new logo button which defined our group.

Leading the way with our new club banner were **Elf PK Mead** and **Santa Mark Reilly**. Cheers were heard from crowds on every block as dinkers laughed and played across two nets on wheels pulled along the parade route. Thank you to **Mary Beth Budzynski** for keeping the dinkers supplied with balls as many were rolled out to the crowd.



Peggy & Mary Beth

Rudolph Colleen Ebright concluded our procession with a lighted pickleball tree in a red and green wagon. A speaker projected the voices of **Dana Good** and **Melissa Ballenger** merrily singing a pickleball jingle to the tune of Jingle Bells and some sang along. Extra candy canes were also carried in the wagon to refill bags as **Bonnie McIntyre** and **Ginny Reilly** handed them out to children.

Colleen, in the spirit of giving, began pulling balls from the tree and rolling them into the crowd. **John Ballenger**, who donated the balls for decorating the tree, quickly joined in to the delight of the rosy cheeked children who were on the receiving end.



Graeme, Colleen, Travis

A big **“Thank You”** from the Membership Committee to all who spent many hours preparing for the parade, to those who participated in the parade with great holiday spirit, and to our board members for their tremendous support!



The Ref's Corner

By Gary Danilson

Contact: atlarge2.svpball@gmail.com

I'd like to share some of the upcoming rule changes that become effective on January 1, 2022. There are a total of eighteen changes but these three topics probably have the most impact on recreational play. I'll mention some of the other changes in future columns.

- The new drop serve (letting the ball bounce when serving) is being retained as written and is no longer "provisional". The ball is simply dropped by the non-paddle hand without applying downward force or spin.
- The traditional volley serve (making contact with the ball before it bounces) is being clarified to eliminate a server generating spin by rubbing the ball against his paddle or body (known as the chainsaw serve). Spin can still be imparted to the ball when tossed or dropped with the non-paddle hand.
- This isn't really a change but the rule on let serves remains as it was changed for 2021. Receivers must play any ball that hits the net and lands in their service court. There are no let serves in pickleball (unless you're a pro in certain tournaments).

Etiquette Tip: If you need to cross over or behind an active court, wait until play has stopped and cross quickly in a single group to minimize disruption of that game. Make eye contact or call out to make sure the players on that court see you. "Thanks" is always appropriate to say.

The USA Pickleball 2022 rulebook should be out in December. We always keep a copy of the rulebook in our equipment box at Hillcrest Park. I'm sure we'll start seeing videos and articles that cover all rule changes and I'll post the best ones on our website.

Let me add a disclaimer to this first column. I'm not a Certified Referee, but I am working toward it and will do my best to accurately interpret rules of play for both recreational and tournament players. If you have any questions about pickleball rules please feel free to contact me at the email address above. Some of the answers may be included in future columns.

See you on the courts!



Competition Committee By Sue Paulson

Contact: competition.svpball@gmail.com

In May, Gary Danilson organized the Hosted Drop-In Play at Hillcrest, which occurred two days a week. This was very successful, drawing over fifty players on some days. Due to the popularity of Hosted Drop-In Play, in October we added a third day, so at this time the club provides this fun event on Monday, Wednesday and Friday when weather permits. A big thanks to Butch Holmberg and Don Wold for overseeing the rotation of players onto the courts!

In June, we put together an 8 week ranked ladder tournament. Matches were played through-out the summer and winners were awarded medals at the Hillcrest Park dedication ceremony in August. Highest Average Points winners in the Women's Division were Beth Bell, PK Mead and Barb Haddox. For the men it was Grant Udlock, Barry Bartram and Karl Micka-Foos. Nancy Hansen and Paul Grenier were recognized as the players showing the most improvement during league play.



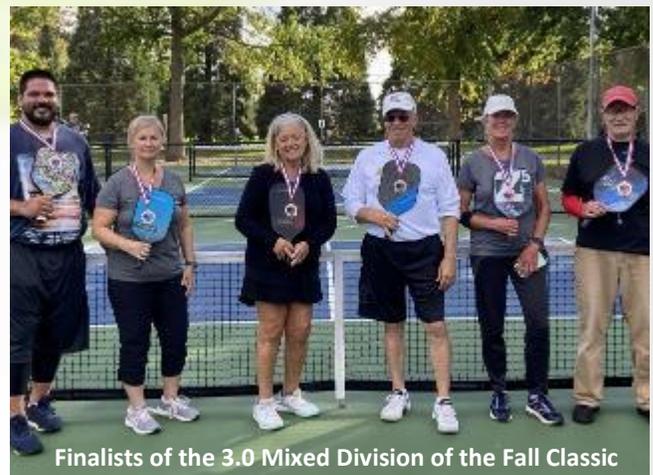
Not satisfied competitive play was over, a 4 week Fall Classic mixed double elimination tournament was organized and run by Don Wold. It included two skill levels, with the winners pictured below. By the time the tournament wrapped in October, the weather had definitely changed. Fall was here!



Finalists of the 3.5+ Mixed Division of the Fall Classic:

Silver
Karl Micka-Foos &
Aimee Requa

Gold
Barb Haddox &
Trent Morgan



Finalists of the 3.0 Mixed Division of the Fall Classic

Silver
Travis LoGrande &
Debbie Berentson

Gold
Sandi McKenzie &
Don Wold

Bronze
Shannon Huston &
Rusty Kuntze

Membership Committee

By Melissa Ballenger

Contact: membership.svpball@gmail.com

The purpose of this committee is to attract/retain members and to collaborate with the community. The committee is comprised of the following members:

Melissa Ballenger - membership chair

Mary Beth Budzynski - events assistant

Mark Dixon - newsletter editor

Beau Loughlin - community networking

Linda Loughlin - secretary, community networking

Open - volunteer needed for data entry

We are grateful also for the invaluable contributions of two incredible women who have agreed to contribute as they are able:

Dana Good - adviser, currently employed as an embedded software engineer

Ardell Brandenburg - printed media designer, retired events planner for Everett Parks and Recreation

Finally, we would also like to thank our webmaster, **Jeff Brandenburg**, who makes it possible to bring you this newsletter and much, much more. Please check out our new website at SVPball.com.

In The Works

2022 event planning - Our goal is to keep our members informed and share this exciting sport with more members of our community. Together we can make the name **Skagit Valley Pickleball** well known in and beyond our beautiful valley.

New Members Booklet - **Ardell** has put countless and thoughtful hours into the design of SVP's *New Members Booklet*. All members will receive a *New Members Booklet* (upon board approval) which is designed to provide essential information and may easily be stored in a car console or a gear bag.

Membership ID cards & guest passes - Members will find ID cards inside the cover of the *New Members Booklet*. The booklet will explain how the ID cards and guest passes are to be used.

SVP Newsletter - **Mark** and **Melissa** teamed up to bring you SVP's first newsletter, *The Court Reporter*. We will begin with a quarterly publication. The next edition will circulate in April 2022. Thank you to those who have contributed. You will find their names within these pages.



Ideas Brewing

- Evening hosted drop-in play at Hillcrest Park
- Networking with students at Skagit Valley College
- Members and new members picnics
- Sedro Woolley's 4th of July Parade
- Demonstration and/or booth at Skagit Tulip Art Festival
- Demonstration and/or booth at Skagit Valley Fair

Please bring your ideas for community events where SVP may participate to the attention of the Membership Committee by using the email address listed above.

Courts & Grounds by Barry Bartram

Contact: court.svpball@gmail.com

Our first full year of playing on our Hillcrest Park Courts has been a tremendous success. I loved seeing as many as seventy players show up to compete and have fun. The courts have held up very well, thanks to all of you that have helped sweep, squeegee, blow, dry, and clean the courts. It takes a lot of work and time and the benefits are obvious. The courts look great!!!

A few items for your information:

- **The large blue box and its contents belong to you, the club members.** Use this equipment as if it was your own. The lock code can be found in the Members Only Area of the website. Keep the box closed as much possible. Please lock the box if you are the last club member to leave the courts. As a general rule: If you unlock it, you lock it unless you have passed that duty onto another club member.



- **The new leaf blower and batteries are ready for you to use.** Power has been installed in the blue box. Please put dead batteries into the charger as needed. The new blower is expensive so please secure it in the box after each use.
- **The fencing between courts is held to the posts with small wire ties.** These are weak and may come loose or fall off. Use caution when leaning on or running into the fence and avoid hanging very heavy bags on the chain-link. If you see missing tie-downs and you have the ability to replace those that have fallen off, please do so, or let me know.
- **You may notice small cracks forming on the courts.** The Board and the contractor are aware of these cracks and will be repairing, as needed, per the recommendation of the contractor.



Butch, Barry, Steve, Ken and Dan

- **The new windscreens on the have worked very well so far.** Please take care not to hang on or pull on the screens. If you notice zip ties breaking or the screen coming loose, please let me know.
- **Please take care of the nets.** Don't hang bags, pull on or jump over them. If you notice a net is wearing out or is too loose, too low, or too high, please let me know.

(Continued on page 9)

Web Page News By Jeff Brandenburg

Contact: web.svpball@gmail.com

Check out our new website **SVPball.com**

With a new club name comes the need for a new club website: SVPball.com.

MVPBclub.com and the new website are both currently active. The new website will allow you to pay your club dues online, sign up for tournaments online, buy club merchandise online, schedule court play online and more - all through SVPball.com.

In the near future members will receive an email asking you to log into and create a password for the new website. Your login will give you access to the website's **Members Only Area**, where you may pay

dues, view the club roster, view the Hillcrest Park lockbox combination, and access other information available only to club members. You should only need to log in once on your home computer or smartphone to maintain access to the **Members Only Area**.

There is now a Search bar at the top of each page of the website which allows you to type in what you're looking for to see a dropdown list of "hits." Click on one of the hits to go right to that information. For instance, if your opponent's serve hits your foot while you're standing behind the baseline and they think it counts as a point, you can stop everything, grab your phone, type in "rules," and go to the USAPA Rule book, page 33, Rule 7H. You'll be able to show your opponent that yes indeed, it is their point.

Courts & Grounds *(Continued from page 8)*

Please only wear court shoes when playing. Incorrect shoes leave black marks or large scuffs. Help us all keep our courts looking top notch.

This spring we will again be asking for volunteers to help scrub, pressure wash, and clean the courts. This is a big job so please watch for an email this spring. Thanks again to everyone who helps with court maintenance. Please let me know if you have any questions by using the email address at the top of the previous page.

Faces in Skagit Valley Pickleball



Travis LoGrande

Travis has been playing pickleball for 8 months and stepped up to fill the VP position on the SVP board.



Bud Wienker

Bud has played racquetball, ping pong and tennis. Pickleball has been his game for the past five months.



Bob Leber

Bob has been playing since June. He has been known to play tennis, basketball and squash.



Judy Cookson

Judy used to play tennis. Now she enjoys both pickleball and water aerobics.



Pam & Barry

Pam and Barry Bartram have been playing pickleball for six years and are founding members of the MVPC.



Ann White

Ann began playing this past August and now has pickleball fever. She has found everyone to be so friendly and nice.



Larry Kupp

Larry has played many sports and has been a pickleball enthusiast since the nineties. When he's not on the court, he's probably doing lawn work.



Dan Budzynski

Dan has been playing pickleball for a little over 4 years. He helped to drive the organizing of the MVPB club in 2018 and have been President for 3 years. Dan also acted as project manager to convert the two tennis courts to six pickleball courts at Hillcrest Park.



Barb Haddox

Barb is planning on traveling and playing more pickleball when she retires from PSE. She has been playing for two years.



Gary Danilson

Gary served as Secretary for the club since its beginning in 2018. He currently serves on the Board and on the Competition Committee. Gary was raised in Spokane and served in the Navy from '70-'74. He graduated from WSU in 1977 and moved to the Skagit Valley. Gary retired in 2012 after a lengthy career at Frito-Lay. Gary and his wife Jan have 3 children and 5 grandchildren. Various past interests include long-distance cycling, running, tennis and racquetball. He picked up pickleball 5 years ago and hasn't looked back.

Board & Committees

Board of Directors

President	Dan Budzynski
Vice President	Travis LoGrande
Treasurer	Chris Miller
Secretary	John Ballenger
Member at Large 1	Chris Kinsland
Member at Large 2	Gary Danilson
Member at Large 3	Anna Wright
Past President	Barb McGrady

Committee Chairs

Communications	Jeff Brandenburg
Competition	Don Wold
Court & Grounds	Barry Bartram
Membership	Melissa Ballenger

Other

Newsletter Editor	Mark Dixon
Website	www.SVPball.com

Find A Coach

Jessica and Bobby Welch

- Certified Coach (Professional Pickleball Registry)
- Rated as 4.0 PPA tournament players

Jessica and Bobby coach beginners to 4.0 players, offering private and group sessions. They love to coach doubles strategy as well as fine tuning basic fundamentals at any level. Jessica and Bobby can be reached at 360-389-8539.

Mark Livingston

- Level 2 Certified Teaching Professional (IPTPA)
- Certified Rating Specialist (IPTPA)
- Certified Pro (Professional Pickleball Registry)
- Certified Coach (Pickleball Coaching International)
- Rated as a 4.5 player

Coach Mark works with players who are serious about learning pickleball, improving skills and gameplay performance, and obtaining a higher skill level rating. He uses IPTPA's rating system to customize training and development plans for dedicated improvers.

Coach Mark LLC
252-451-0367
mdllivingston@gmail.com
www.coach-mark.com

