



VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH

Nominated by Kathy Carr, Player Development Director

As the Club's new League Director, **Donna Duffy** launched our first league play since the onset of COVID. She leveraged her depth of experience both from her years of tennis league play and her informal management of an advanced skill ladies pickleball group in Sun City to set up the Fall skill level drop-in league. The goal for this league was to have fun.

With consideration of our limited number of courts and the enormity of our membership, each self-rated ability group (2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0) was capped at 28 participants per weekly session. Donna mapped out a plan for a random draw of court and player assignments in each ability grouping. She recruited league captains to manage the sign-up board and court assignments. Participants got to play 4 - 5 games each week, depending on the number of folks that showed up. A couple of weeks into the season, she introduced a singles league at the request of multiple members. In total, 163 participants came out one or more times to try out the leagues. Donna prepared and distributed a survey to participants to solicit feedback on how the drop-in leagues can be improved for the future.

And she's just getting started. On 5 November, Donna will conduct a test of the USA Team Pickleball League (Flex League) for possible expansion to multiple skill levels once we get the 16 new courts. Each team consists of 3 men and 3 women who will form a men's doubles team, women's doubles team and a mixed doubles team. Each team plays in round robin against the other teams and the team that ends up with the highest number of total points for all games wins.



Donna Duffy - October 2021

Donna and her husband Brad moved from San Diego to Sun City 11 years ago and have been active members in the Pickleball Club ever since.

Donna graduated from Briar Cliff College with a B.S. in Mathematics, a minor in Physical Education, and an M.B.A. from the University of Phoenix. Her pre-retirement life was high tech, working as a sales and marketing manager both internationally and in the U.S.

Donna's million-dollar smile! Donna has worked as a personal trainer since 2008, specializing in Super Slow Weight Training. Since moving to Georgetown, she has taught strength training, aqua fit, indoor cycling, slim down classes, and coached a lap swim program. Her second retirement was June of this year, and now she gets to just play and, lucky for us, manage our leagues. Donna has participated in 9 USAP sanctioned tournaments and is a 4.0 women's and mixed doubles player.

When she is not on the pickleball courts, you will find Donna swimming, working out in the weight room, hiking the beautiful Texas trails, playing tennis, or walking her dog, Max.





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Nominated by Allie Bower

Barb Patterson is nominated for Volunteer of the Month for her tireless efforts on our recent T-Shirt sales. Members expressed a desire for club T-Shirts and when approached by the club board to spearhead the project, Barb willingly stepped forward. Beginning in July she researched options for a logo and found a source that could produce multiple designs based on provided concepts.

Working closely with the club communications director, a survey was sent

to club members to determine the final logo. Concurrently, Barb found a source for the shirts that would provide quality, reasonable costs, and timely delivery. She personally drove to Austin to pick-up samples so that members could both see and try-on prior to ordering. She spent multiple days at the courts making this possible.

Shirts were on sale 1-16 September; 433 shirts sold. Once all the purchases were reviewed and counted to ensure no errors, Barb submitted the order. Shirts were ready mid-October; she once again drove to Austin to take delivery.

Taking careful planning one step further, Barb counted and individually packaged each shirt with name to ensure accuracy for pick-up. Once completed, a flexible and generous pick-up schedule was published via a *Pickleball Newsflash*.

Assisted by volunteers, Barb distributed some 360 T-Shirts and then took the remainder home for members to pick-up, following-up through club communications as well as personally contacting remaining shirt owners.

She contributes to our club in many ways; this is yet another example of her commitment to our members and ongoing operations. She is most deserving of this recognition.

You can't help but notice everyone sporting their new shirts on the courts; when you see Barb give her a big THANK YOU!





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Barb Patterson - October 2021

Way back in 2013 I was drilling with my tennis team at indoor courts in Kalamazoo, MI and noticed an older woman (turns out she was 81), dragging a funny looking, small net onto the court next to me. Then a bunch of other folks arrived and started milling around. Curious, I finished tennis practice and walked over to ask them what they were doing. It's "pickleball" they announced, rather proudly. I asked if I could sit on the side and watch them play since I had never seen it before.

"No," said the 81-year-old, who had introduced herself to me as Lulu, "we saw you playing tennis, here's a paddle, get out here and play with us."

And thus began my addiction to pickleball. I soon was forgoing tennis practice to meet with friends at local parks and play pickleball instead. When it came time to choose a retirement community, I was concerned about floor plans and location relative to family, but most of my questions really centered around how many pickleball courts were available and if there were lots of nice players. Obviously Sun City Texas filled all of those requirements!

I was born and raised in Central Pennsylvania. After majoring in Business and Computer Science in college, I worked as a computer programmer for General Motors and met my husband, Ken, at a disco in 1979. We got married and spent the next 30+ years moving around the Midwest while raising our son and daughter.

We now have added a son-in-law and two grandchildren to the family. (My grandchildren know where the pickleball paddles and pickleballs are kept in our house and always run to grab them when they visit.) Our kids call Sun City a "luxury summer camp for retirees." And thanks in large part to the Pickleball Club (for me) and the Hiking Club (for Ken), six years after moving here we still feel like camp is in session!