



VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH

Nominated by Kathy Carr, Director of Player Development

Our April 2021 Volunteers of the Month are Toni Briggs, Judy Blackman, Ron Longino, and Wayne Schaefer. They were recognized for their support and contributions to the Club's Beginner's Mentoring and Novice Supervised Play Programs. As coaches they conduct warm up drills, evaluate and provide feedback on player performance, and provide guidance to reinforce the players' understanding of the rules, scoring, and court positioning.

Wayne Schaefer - April 2021



Almost everyone in the Club knows me as the Ball Machine Guy. I have been the trainer and maintainer for the ball machine for the last 5 years. I have been playing pickleball for almost 6 years.

I was a volunteer fireman for 10 years here in Georgetown. I have seen the dramatic changes that have happened in our city. Pickleball has given me another way to help our club and our Sun City community. I want to thank Kathy Carr for this nomination and the inspiration she brings as our Training Director.

Note from Kathy: *Wayne is a modest guy who understates his contributions. In addition to his ball machine duties, Wayne has been supporting our Novice Play Program as a coach for more than a year.*

**True humility
is staying teachable,
regardless of how much
you already know.**



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Toni Briggs - April 2021



Truth be told, I started playing pickleball in 2000. It was at a campground and free instruction was being offered. All it took was a wooden paddle, a whiffle ball, and a converted tennis court. It was easy to bat back and forth, and I didn't have to run far, because I had a partner. Worries about stepping into the NVZ after a volley, committing foot faults, or delivering an illegal serve were not part of the plan. I was hooked, and I got to play in RV parks all over the U.S. Slowly, I learned the rules.

Fast forward to 2013, when Sun City became my new home. I was introduced to a whole different sport and fell in love with all of it. Trash talk, social get-togethers, and meeting lots of new folks. Now, when on the road, all I have to do is look up "Places to Play" on the USAPA website in whatever

state I am in. I have new friends all over the U.S.

I get great joy out of teaching new folks this game with a silly name. I always start out telling them it won't be long, and they'll be addicted to it.

I have played in a few tournaments, but mostly I referee. It lets me watch players in all ability groups and appreciate the fact that it just takes a bit longer for the best players to make the same mistakes I do. The plus is that I always learn something.

**If you're not having fun,
you're not doing it right.**





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Ron Longino - April 2021



After retirement, my wife D'Les and I RVed full time for almost 3 years. We were first introduced to pickleball in Branson, Missouri, by some other campers.

We moved to Sun City in March, 2016. In April we took the clubs intro class and began playing pickleball almost every day. I volunteered to coach a couple of beginner teams when we had fun Sun City tournaments, and really enjoyed working with the teams I coached.

Kathy Carr invited me to join the intermediate training team, and, then, after COVID hit, the beginner training team.

I enjoy playing pickleball recreationally and in tournaments.

Note from Kathy: *Ron won't toot his own horn, but he and his partner, Walt Green, just won a bronze medal in Men's Doubles, Skill Level 3.0/3.5, Age Group 70 - 74 at the Mid-South Regional Tournament in McKinney, TX.*

Judy Blackman - April 2021



Five years ago, Billy and I moved to Sun City thanks to Kathy Carr and Pickleball. (That's a story for another time.) At the time, my sister, Peg O'Toole, and her husband, Joe, had already moved to Sun City. It was not long before Peg and Joe were teaching "Introduction to Pickleball."

When Billy and I moved to Sun City a year later, Joe thought it was the perfect time for him to resign and for me to take over. I have been helping Peg since then. Actually, Peg does all the work and I just help out. Since Peg began teaching the Introduction class, over a thousand members have been exposed to the awesome game of Pickleball. Watching members experience success as they go through the class gives us great satisfaction. Even better, is when we see our "Intro" students on the courts, and they tell us how much they are enjoying Pickle Ball and want more.

I genuinely appreciate this recognition, but it is the Pickleball Board who work tirelessly to make our club the success it is. A huge thank you to them.