



NEWSLETTER



Fall/Winter (December) 2019

Dear Golden Racquets (GR) Members:

I really appreciate the vote of confidence shown to me when Golden Racquets (GR) members attending the GR Annual Meeting in October voted for me to be President for the next two years. My previous nine months as Acting President has provided me with good experience for the challenges that may lie ahead. We also needed to elect a new Recording Secretary at the Annual Meeting, and were fortunate to have Connie Dineen volunteer for and be elected to this position. Connie currently does an excellent job as our Newsletter Editor, so now she has two jobs on our Board of Directors. As you know, GR is an organization fully run by volunteers, and the Board of Directors appreciates all members who take on a role that ensures the successful operation of this organization.

Planning for our summer venues has started. We are in the midst of our first tennis season at Springfield Golf and Country Club, and we are happy to announce that this venue will continue to be available to GR members in the summer of 2020. In addition to our continued use of tennis facilities, we are also planning to have both indoor and outdoor pickle ball venues. Our first venture into offering our members the opportunity to play pickle ball has proven successful. Approximately 25 GR members will have played pickle ball at least once before this season ends. (See picture and short article in this newsletter.)

There have been some substitution issues during our current tennis season. Dave Fleming, GR's Chairman of the Operations and Planning Committee, has written an extensive article, that you will find in this newsletter, concerning this issue. Be sure to check it out!

Let me take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a safe and happy holiday season! I hope Santa brings you everything on your wish list!

Tom Burroughs
President, Golden Racquets



Fred Hart: A Legacy of Service to Golden Racquets

by Dave Fleming

When I took over as the Operations & Planning Committee Chair, I had a limited idea of what the job entailed. I knew that it was going to be a lot of work and included areas in which I had no experience. Fortunately, I had a superb mentor in Mr. Fred Hart. I soon found out that I would be responsible for: overseeing venue operations, assisting the captains, using GRSys to generate the venue rosters, getting the park permits for the outdoor venues, developing the ball requirements, and purchasing and distributing the balls to the captains. I was assisted along the way by Fred, who very patiently showed me the ropes of how to run Operations & Planning.

Fred joined GR in 2004 and has held virtually every position in the organization, to include President, Vice President, Operations & Planning, and Social Committee Chair. He has also served on the ratings committee and captained several venues.

Fred was born and raised in Fresno, California. He took up tennis in high school and while in college, graduating from Fresno State University with a degree in Physics, he took a course in tennis. Interestingly, the course instructor was Cornelius “Dutch” Warmerdam who held the world pole vault record between 1940 and 1957 and coached tennis at Fresno State University. Fred and his wife Mabel moved to the area in 1969. They have been married for 64 years and have four sons, six grandchildren, and one great grandchild. Mabel was an avid doubles player until physical issues limited her playing. Fred can recall getting up early and playing tennis with his son at the old Shirley Racquet tennis club before it was time for his son to head off to school.



Fred began his career as a technical writer working on aircraft weapons systems and Navy radar and sonar systems for twenty years. He eventually changed jobs and got into Army weapons systems and assessing the difficulty of learning tasks in several Air Force specialties. Using his technical experience and skills, Fred went to work for the National Institute of Standards and Technology, assessing energy related inventions. His final move was to the Department of Energy where he worked on energy related inventions programs and developed tools for improving the efficiency of steam systems.

Fred took up computer programming as a hobby during the early years of the internet. Using his computer skills, he developed numerous spreadsheets and forms for court pairings and player assignments and the basics of ladder play, to name just a few. He also developed the GR Operating Procedures, Guidelines for Captains, and a GR Ratings handbook.

Fred enjoys meeting and playing with new members and is encouraged to see all the younger players filling the ranks. Fred remains very active in GR and the following vignette is illustrative of his dedication. At the beginning of the fall/winter session I had no success in recruiting a captain for the

Wednesday Burke 3.5+ venue. I called Fred, who had registered as a player, and asked him if he would consider being the captain or sharing the captain with someone. I was prepared for him to graciously decline my offer but after a short pause, Fred who turned 85 in October, said sure he would do it as long as someone could fill in for him on the days he took Mabel to her physical therapy. Fred's humble and quiet dedication is reflective of his continuing legacy of service to GR and is greatly appreciated by all its members.



**Working Through the Substitution Paradox –
Tips and Suggestions for Finding a Sub**

by Dave Fleming

While writing this article, I find myself in the same predicament that many of you have experienced when trying to find a sub. This time it's for my Friday Burke venue. I've reached out early but have had no success in contacting players who have subbed for me in the past or who are regular subs at the venue. Sound familiar? Why is it such a problem to find a sub with twenty-two names on the venue sub-list? I recently sat down to interview Fred Hart for another article in this newsletter, and I mentioned that Tom Burroughs had asked me to write an article about the problems of finding subs that almost all venues are experiencing this fall. Fred cracked a smile and said that this has been a problem discussed at the Golden Racquets Board meetings for as long as he could remember. "Why, with so many names on the venue sub-list, is it so hard to find a sub?" I don't have the answer to this question but I can provide some suggestions and best practices that may help.

The organizational scope has expanded this fall/winter session to eighteen venues with about 264 regular player slots and over 600 names on the combined venues substitute rosters. All of our captains should be recognized for the fine job they are doing in managing their venues. Being a captain is a big job. Behind the scenes a captain manages the players and subs, prepares the weekly line-ups, executes the weekly play date, and monitors the weather for our outdoor venues. The biggest headache is managing the substitutes to ensure that all player slots are filled each week. This fall there has been a higher than usual number of injuries necessitating subs. Here are a couple of examples to underscore this point. Fred Thompson, captain of the Monday Fairfax ladder, had as many as eight subs (33% of the players) on a play date and Paul Haas captain of the Thursday Fairfax 3.9+ had nine subs (56% of the players) on a recent play date. Fortunately, there were subs that stepped up to play at these and all other venues but it has been a challenge.

The Golden Racquets By-Laws state that members are responsible for their playing commitments. This includes arranging for a substitute when they are going to miss a play date. The efficient running of a venue depends upon the timely arrangement for a substitute in a player's absence. When a player fails to obtain a sub, it can lead to a "no show" which typically results in a court being a player short. In such cases, the players will have to resort to playing Canadian Doubles – detracting from their tennis enjoyment. Late drops due to emergencies, illness, etc., are unavoidable and the captain will deal with these as part of the course of operations.

Before I discuss some tips and suggestions for obtaining subs, let me dispense with one big negative comment to the very few to whom it applies. Finding a sub is your responsibility. Do not make a half-hearted attempt and then dump it off on your captain at the last minute with an email such as: "I sent an email to everyone on the sub list and did not get any replies. Good luck in finding someone." This is unacceptable and members have been dropped in the past for not complying with the Golden Racquets substitution policy.

Suggestions and Best Practices for Players:

- Be proactive and start early -- as soon as you know that you will miss a play date(s), start looking for a sub. Start with the sub list that was provided to each player at the beginning of the session. Note, new subs are occasionally added after the session has started. The venue sub roster is not updated and sent to the players with new additions. It is up to the captain to send their regular players the name and contact information of the new sub. Along the same lines, the captain should notify their players when a sub is dropped from the sub-list and is no longer available to sub.
- Consider calling a sub directly or texting them. Several players have mentioned that they seem to have more success using a phone call than an email (in such cases follow-up with a confirming email).
- Ask your captain if they know of a player desiring to sub. Many subs look forward to playing as much as possible particularly if there is no sub fee requested. Check with the captain who can refer you to the interested sub.
- Get to know the players at your venue. Introduce yourself to players who are subbing on a play date and ask if they would be interested in subbing for you if needed. Ask other regular players if they recommend someone who has subbed for them.
- Consider waiving the sub fee. Not asking for a sub fee will attract more takers. However, asking for a sub fee is entirely up to you. The sub fee transaction is between the regular player and the sub and does not involve the captain. In case you are interested, the sub fee for each venue is listed on the registration form as well as on the GR member roster and is calculated by dividing the venue cost by the number of weeks with any difference rounded up. No sub fee is paid if the captain has to find a sub.
- Use the venue sub-list and secondarily the GR member roster. When using the member roster, look for subs who fit the venue's GR rating range.
- As a last resort, the captain can get a non-GR member to sub if there are no members available. If you have a non-GR neighbor or friend who possibly could play, coordinate with your captain to see if he/she could sub.
- Confirm any conversations with an email and send it to both the sub and the captain. Include the sub's name, the venue, play date, and time. It may be redundant, but we have players who sub multiple times in a week at different venues and have had occasional mix-ups. Make sure you get an email confirmation from your captain and save it.
- Remember to thank your sub and also let your captain know that you appreciate their work in managing the venue.

Suggestions and Best Practices for Substitutes:

- When you sign up to sub at a venue, make a general commitment to sub during the session. It is not expected that you identify a specific play date(s), but when an opportunity arises that meets your schedule, step up and help out. This will be appreciated by the captain as well as players looking for a sub. Ideally, plan to sub multiple times as your schedule allows.
- Let the venue captain know that you are available to sub, especially if you would like to play as much as possible. The captain will note this and can refer a player looking for a sub directly to you, reducing the time and simplifying the process.
- Ensure you receive a confirming email with the player for whom you are subbing and the captain of the venue. Make sure it has the correct venue and the play date. Don't rely solely on a verbal agreement/phone call.
- Immediately mark the play date on your calendar and/or enter into your phone/device.
- Familiarize yourself with the venue if you haven't been there before. Even with GPS, Burke Racquet and Skyline (particularly the parking garage) can be a tricky place to find. Plan to leave a little early considering traffic, construction in the area, and time for checking in at the front desk of the venue. If subbing at the Fairfax Racquet Club, be sure to complete the waiver form if you don't have one on file.
- If after receiving confirmation from the captain your circumstances change and you can no longer sub, it now becomes your responsibility to get a sub for that play date.
- Notify the captain if you are not able to sub at all for the session due to injury/medical condition/other circumstances and request to be dropped from the venue sub list.
- Have fun and enjoy the experience. It's likely you'll be back!

Suggestions and Best Practices for Captains:

- Use and maintain an updated list/spreadsheet of subs by play date.
- Use email confirmations and follow-up any verbal arrangements in an email to the regular player and sub.
- Send a weekly reminder email to all players and subs scheduled to play on the next play date, as well as future play dates.
- Use a "Hot List" such as the one used by Fred Thompson, the Monday Fairfax ladder captain. Fred manages six courts and 24 players. He includes the names of subs wanting to play by date (Hot List) and includes it in his weekly email.
- Coordinate with a player(s) near your venue that would be willing to play in the event of an unexpected late drop.
- In your absence ensure your acting captain is fully equipped with player and sub rosters, emergency contact list, court assignments, balls, clipboards, etc.
- Inform your players when a new sub is added and provide their contact information. Conversely, let your players know when a sub has been dropped from the sub-list and request that they no longer email/call these people when looking for a sub.

- In cases when a court is short a player due to a no show, take it upon yourself to play on the short court. That's part of the job; however, check with your players first some don't mind playing Canadian doubles. In any event, the players who do show up should not be penalized.
- Thank your subs at the end of play for stepping up and helping out.

Feel free to email me if you have any suggestions, complaints, or comments on this topic at: dgflemingcpa@gmail.com

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### Golden Racquets Sponsors First Pickle Ball Session

Golden Racquets sponsored their first pickle ball session on Monday, September 9, 2019, at Burke Racquet and Swim Club. These weekly sessions will end on June 1, 2020. More than 25 members are expected to play their first game of pickle ball. During the 2020 summer season, there are plans being made for one outdoor venue of eight players outside and one indoor venue for eight players. The courts are smaller than a tennis court so there is less running but still plenty of good action in a smaller space.



GR members participating in the first pickle ball session are shown, from left to right, and are Dan Riesenber, Andrea Heintzelman, Tom Burroughs, Joe Wittling, Betty de la Cruz, Fred Hart, Larry Hyer, and Stef Leader.

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Exercise for the Brain

by Connie Dineen



You will remember that in the last newsletter, there were two puzzles shared that are of the type to help keep folks "of a certain age" mentally stimulated. Number 1 on the first puzzle is still a challenge -- anyone know the answer? Here are the other answers to those puzzles:

Puzzle #1:

① cut cut cut cut cut cut cut cut cut cut	② GIVE GIVE GIVE GIVE GET GET GET GET
③ CHTONGUEEEK	④ R O ROADS S
⑤ O_ER_T_O_	⑥ ECNALG

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1 = ?? | 4 = "Crossroads" |
| 2 = "Forgive and Forget" | 5 = "Painless Operation" (missing letters P, A, I, N) |
| 3 = "Tongue in cheek" | 6 = "Backward glance" |

Puzzle #2: How many words can you find in "**BRAVERY**". (There are at least 25 -- maybe more!)
"are, aver, bar, bare, bay, bear, berry, bevy, bra, brave, braver, bye, ear, era, err, rare, rave, raver, ray, rear, rye, vary, verb, very, year." Did you find more?



Pet Peeves from GR Members

The following "pet peeves" were submitted by GR members:

- **Make the call quickly:** "There are three things I find irritating when my opponent is making a call -- (1) stopping and thinking about whether a ball was in or out, (2) staring at a spot for an extended period of time, apparently trying to decide how to call the ball, and (3) saying something to the like of 'I think it was out' or 'I could not tell'." All three of these situations can make a player feel that the opponents are unsure of their call and is taking the point for themselves, even if that is not the case. Making the call reasonably quickly makes the opponent have more trust in the correctness of the call, even if the call goes against them.
- **Partners who disagree on a call:** "If doubles partners disagree on whether a ball is in or out, shouldn't the call go to the opponent?" Yes, when one partner calls a ball "in" and the other partner calls a ball "out", the call automatically goes to the opponent. There is should not be a situation in which the players -- on either side of the court -- feel they are not getting the benefit of the doubt.
- **Tossing the balls to your opponents:** When it is time to "toss" the balls to the opponents during a match, be considerate and get the attention of the person on the other side of the court before tossing the ball so they will know the ball is coming. No one wants to chase down balls that have been randomly hit to the opponents (usually out of frustration) at the end of a point or game. If you are not confident that you can hit the balls directly to a person (and consequently resulting in the balls going here and there on the other side of the court), simply walk to the net and hand them the balls. This is permissible!
- **Who makes the call?:** The opponents make the call on any ball you have hit to their court, just as you make the call about any ball the opponents hit to your court. Do not make a call from across the court, meaning do not make a call about a ball you hit. That is the not your job!
- **Call out the score:** Always call the score **so that it can be heard by all the players on your court before each and every serve.** This will remind everyone of the score as well as give the opponents an opportunity to correct the score if it is inadvertently called incorrectly, and prevent disputes over the score later in the game. According to The Code of tennis, when there is a dispute regarding the score, the two teams should



recall as many of the points of that game as possible until they reach an agreement on a score -- even if this means going all the way back to "love, love". If that becomes the case, simply start the game over.

*People will remember who played with sportsmanship much longer than they will remember who won a particular point, game, or set or match.
Let your name be synonymous with Good Sport!*

Do you have a tennis pet peeve that you would like to see addressed for the benefit of all? Please share it with us and we will get some helpful suggestions to you in the next newsletter.



Have You Visited the GR Website?



If the answer to this question is "no", you are encouraged to take a few minutes to visit and browse the GR Website by going to www.goldenracquets. You can find lots of information there about membership, coming events, play schedules, GR history, or venues, just to name a few areas of interest. Web master Joanne Hensley

updates the website frequently so the information is current, helpful, and user friendly. So take a look and see all the information that is available -- and perhaps even add the website to your "favorites" for easy access!



Feeling Under the Weather?

Are you or someone you know in GR feeling under the weather, had an injury, or recently had surgery? GR's Caring Committee, chaired by Marion MacRae, wants to make sure you receive a card to let you know you are being remembered and wished a speedy and complete recovery. Please inform Marion by contacting her at 703-751-4994 or at mmMacraecomcast.net when you become aware of someone who could use a "Thinking of You" card, and Marion will send one promptly!



Golden Racquets Annual Meeting Minutes October 15, 2019

The Golden Racquets Annual Meeting was held on Tuesday, October 15, 2019, at PJ Skidoos Restaurant in Fairfax, VA. There were 54 members and two guest speakers registered for the luncheon.

Business Meeting:

- **Member of the Year:** Following the luncheon that preceded the business meeting, acting president Tom Burroughs called the annual meeting to order by welcoming all. He began the meeting by announcing the recipient of the 2019 Member of the Year Award. The recipients were Fred & Linda Temple, awarded for their "selfless giving." Unfortunately, Linda was not able to attend, but Fred graciously accepted the award on behalf of himself and Linda. Fred stated that he and Linda appreciated the work of Golden Racquets volunteers and that he considered Golden Racquets "wonderful fun and good for our health."
- **Election of Officers:** Vice President Laura Reisenberg conducted the election of officers for 2020. Laura stated that the new officers would be serving a 2-year term, which will begin on January 1, 2020. There were only two vacancies to be filled, and results of the election are as follows:
 - **President:** Tom Burroughs stood for president. There were no nominations from the floor. Gary Hinson asked to have the nominations closed. Tom was unanimously elected by acclamation as the new president.
 - **Recording Secretary:** There were no names put forward for this position. Connie Dineen was nominated from the floor, and she accepted the nomination. Connie was unanimously elected by acclamation as the new recording secretary.
 - The positions of Vice President and Treasurer will continued to be filled by the current vice president (Laura Reisenberg) and treasurer (Al McFarland).
- **Program:** Tom introduced the guest speakers for the day, Sara & Ken Aitken. Sara spoke on the fast growing sport of pickle ball. She shared information on the history of pickle ball, the benefits of playing, and some of the reasons for the recent rise in the popularity of the sport. There was a display of pickle ball equipment available for viewing by attendees, including pickle ball paddles and balls. For further information, it was suggested that interested parties visit Sara's website (eastportpickleball.com) when one may learn more about the sport. Following Sara's presentation Tom announced that Golden Racquets has a court for pickle ball on Mondays at Burke Racquet Club. It was decided to use this tennis court, for which Golden Racquets was financially obligated, as a pickle ball court to determine the level of interest shown by members. Pickle ball is played each Monday from 12:30-2:00pm.
- **Golden Racquets Constitution & By-Laws:** Tom shared that the Board of Directors had spent a good deal of time reviewing and updating the Golden Racquets Constitution and By-Laws, and he thanked them for their work and for their input. He further stated that when the draft of the revisions were sent to the membership for review, he did not receive any questions or changes from members beyond spelling corrections. He then shared some of the major changes presented, which were as follows:
 - anyone joining Golden Racquets after today's date (October 15, 2019) must have a working email;
 - wording was changed from "audit" to "review" regarding the annual inspection of the treasurer's books;

- the rating committee will now have at least 10 members. The chair of the rating committee will recommend members who will comprise the ratings committee, and the president will have final approval or disapproval of the selected committee members;
- the removal of a venue captain or officer will require 15 names on the removal petition, not 30 as was previously the case; and
- many of the revisions were mainly wording for clarification.

Tom asked if there were any questions from those present. Hearing none, he called for a motion to accept the changes to the Constitution and By-Laws. Steve Mateo made a motion to accept the recommended changes, Bruce Kasold seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously.

- **Minutes from Previous Annual Meeting:** Tom pointed out that there were copies of the minutes from last year's annual meeting and a treasurer's report on the tables. The treasurer's books were found to be in good order, having been reviewed by Fred King.
- **Door Prize Distribution:** Howard Ho came forward to distribution door prizes. Tom gave a public thanks to Howard Ho for planning and organizing the luncheon for the annual meeting and for gathering and collecting the door prizes. There were 14 door prizes available and awarded, and they were as follows:
 - one 6-pack of tennis balls
 - four certificates for pickle ball lessons
 - four sets of spill-proof drink tumblers
 - one pickle ball tee-shirt (donated by the guest speaker)
 - one under-the-seat airline suitcase
 - two soft-side coolers
 - one \$50.00 gift certificate from Dick's Sporting Goods
 - one unstrung Wilson tennis racquet (donated by Fairfax Racquet Club)

Adjournment of the Meeting: There being no further business presented, Tom called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bruce Kasold, seconded by Joe Wittling, and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
 Connie Dineen, Recording Secretary

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Season's Greetings to all the members of Golden Racquets from the Board of Directors! Our wish for you is abundant health and happiness!

## **Reminder to All**

The GR BOD would like to remind all members that the GR directory is published for the use of members only for contacting other GR members about tennis matters. Please note and abide by the disclaimer at the top of the directory, which states the following:

"Golden Racquets publishes this seasonal roster as a service to members who wish to contact other members to pay for substitutions, other reasons related to tennis activities, or for personal contact between members. It should **NOT** be used as a mailing or contact source for commercial, religious, political solicitation, or any other purpose."

**This Golden Racquets Newsletter is published by the Fairfax County Golden Racquets, a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to senior tennis. You are encouraged to visit the Golden Racquets website at <http://www.GoldenRacquet.org>. Officers and committee chairs are as follows:**

President: Tom Burroughs

Vice President: Laura Riesenberg

Special Assistant: Bob Dineen

Recording Secretary: Connie Dineen

Treasurer: Al McFarland

Membership Chair: Adele Neuberg

Rating Committee Chair: Steve Mateo

Social Committee Chair: Howard Ho

Caring Committee Chair: Marion MacRae

Chief Information Officer: Joe Wittling

Operations & Planning Chair: Dave Fleming

Web Site Manager: Joanne Hensley

Newsletter Editor: Connie Dineen

**To have an article or picture of interest considered for inclusion in the Golden Racquets Newsletter, please send it to Connie Dineen at:**

**[csdineen51@gmail.com](mailto:csdineen51@gmail.com)**

**NOTE:** Articles may be of general interest and do not necessarily need to be about tennis.

