

THE COURT REPORTER

Newsletter of the
Walnut Creek Racquet Club

October 2026



Long time board member Pam Maloney was surprised with some special gifts from the board for her many years of service! Thank you for **EVERYTHING Pam!!!**

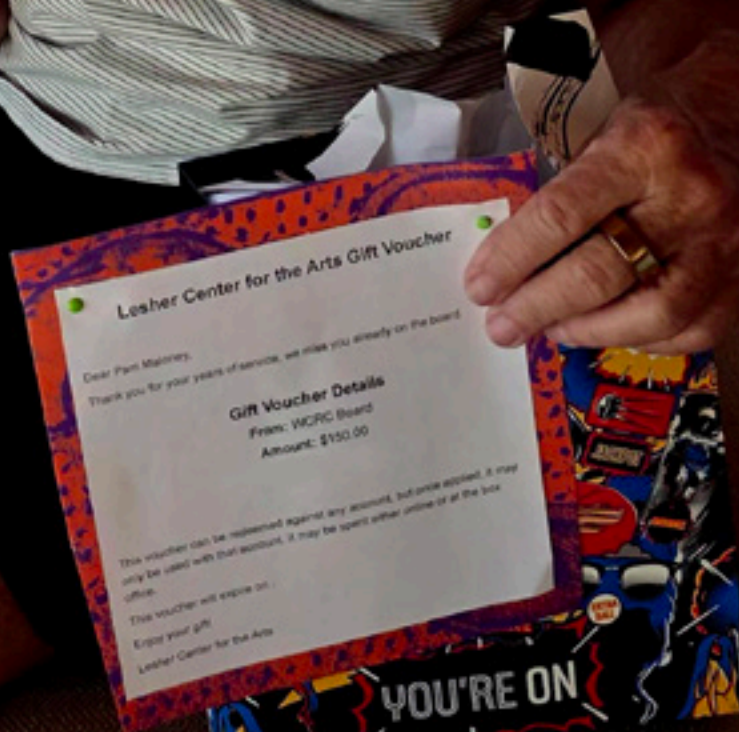


photo by: Heidi Belton

Walnut Creek Racquet Club

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(925) 945-0105 • www.wcrc.net



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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Happy October!

We have a lot of great captains here in the WCRC. Some even go above and beyond what a captain normally does, and we absolutely appreciate them. However, there are some in and outside the area (not in the club) who just do the bare minimum and just don't do enough as a captain. So what are the things that these latter captains do (or don't do)? Here are some.



Garvin Tom
2026 WCRC President

Lack of communication. So what's going on with the team? Am I playing in the upcoming match? Have you ever played for a team where you don't know if you're in the lineup until the day before the match? It would be nice to know so you can schedule for it, especially if you're playing for multiple teams. I've been able to play on a day's (or even hours) notice back in the day regularly, but I don't think I can do that now.

Posting home dates on the last day. This might not be a thing for a lot of you, but for me, I like downloading my team's schedule to my calendar, and I would like to do it early. But I also like to do it all at once when the schedule's complete, so I don't have to go back and update my calendar each time a straggler finally posts their date. But there's always that one captain who tends to post their dates on the last day before the deadline, so I'm always waiting until the last day to download the schedule. Pretty annoying.

Not informing the opposing captain of a default line. This one is really bad. So you don't have enough players to fill a lineup? Fine, just let the other captain know. How hard is it? It really sucks when you clear your schedule to play and drive all the way out to the courts only to find out the other team defaulted on your line. That just shows zero respect and courtesy for the opposing players. If you can't let the other team know that you're defaulting, then you shouldn't be captaining. Not to mention that at Heather, that's potentially lost revenue that Lifetime could've had with the extra court.

Not providing food and drinks. Now, let me say this first. This alone isn't bad. There are some legit reasons why teams may not provide anything after a match. I talked with a captain a few years ago, and they said with all the increased costs between USTA membership fees, league fees, court fees, balls, etc., it's hard to ask players to spend even more money just to play a home match. I get it, and that's a perfectly good reason. I just want to say that if you add this with all the previous items I mentioned, then it becomes noticeable, especially if it's out of pure laziness or lack of caring.

Now, some of you may be wondering if I had anyone in mind when I wrote this, and I will neither confirm nor deny it. LOL! But I'll ask this: can you think of anyone who's been guilty of all of these things? Let me know.

See you on the courts!

Garvin Tom

M EMBERSHIP

Welcome to Our 54 New Members
Current Membership: 1,120

Lauren Addicott	Oakland	3.0	Signy Judd	Berkeley	5.0
Susan Armijo	American Canyon	4.0	Katy Keim	Oakland	4.5
Jay Bains	San Ramon	4.0	Lindsay Kiesling	Alamo	
James Barber	Concord	3.5	Chris Kirschenheuter	Alameda	3.5
Alicia Barco	San Ramon	3.5	Dan Kwan	Danville	3.5
Edison Barco	San Ramon	3.5	Gerry Linendoll		
Graciella Barco	San Ramon	4.5	Paul Lizama	Oakland	4.0
Luiza Bercea	Concord	2.5	Dianne Maher	Napa	4.5
Heather Brown	Danville	4.0	Denise Maloney	Walnut Creek	4.0
Steven Chan	Orinda	4.5	Paige Mcconlogue	Fairfield	3.5
Rachel Chang	Fairfield	4.0	Sally McKay	Lafayette	4.0
Tina Chou	Orinda	3.5	Nonna Pastore	Moraga	3.0
Marian Corpus	Vallejo		Ashref Pattani	Dublin	3.5
Shiva Dixit	San Ramon	3.0	Fangting Pierce	Pleasant Hill	2.5
Edward Edson	Lafayette	4.5	Bryan Rodrigues	Orinda	4.5
Jeri Feuer	Clayton	4.0	Eric Saccullo	Walnut Creek	5.0
Christina Fong	Orinda	4.0	Rohan Salantry	Walnut Creek	3.5
Will Gamarra	Pleasant Hill	3.0	Kelly Sanchez	Concord	4.0
Debra Goettsch	Lafayette	4.5	Wenjie Sha	Castro Valley	3.5
Ally Gwozdz	San Francisco	4.0	Allie Tol	Walnut Creek	4.0
Joanna Ha	Danville	3.0	Lynn Ventura	Vacaville	4.0
Barbara Harris	Lafayette	3.5	Jason Witwer	Concord	3.0
Gary Hazard	Martinez	3.5	Vaughan Woodson	Moraga	3.0
Jeff Heiman	Walnut Creek	4.0	John Rhee	Orinda	3.5
Mike Helow	Danville	4.5	Michael Schmidt	Clayton	3.0
Elaine Horng	Alameda	3.5	Corri Synak	Pleasant Hill	3.5
Ronit Jorgensen	Lafayette	3.5	Brandon Villadiego	Richmond	4.5



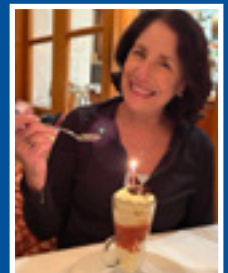
Membership questions contact:
 Dave Wong at 925-272-8222
 email: dw_wcrc@proton.me

NEW MEMBERSHIP RAFFLE

Each month a random draw will pick a WCRC member's name to receive free WCRC membership for a year!

This month's winner is:

Cindy Turner



Gone with the Wind From China to “The Nut” Jessica Zhang

Interview and article by Ian McLaughlin

WCRC member Jessica Zhang originally hails from China, but her circuitous route to Heather Farm crisscrossed the entire United States and included an extensive amount of time living and working in the “best tennis town in the United States”, Charleston, South Carolina.

Jessica, who also goes simply by “Jess”, was born and raised in Shanghai, China, and lived the majority of her life there through her university studies, when she earned a degree in electrical engineering. It was graduate school that brought Jessica to the United States in 1997, when she emigrated to New York to study at the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT). After earning her Masters degree in computer science from NYIT, Jessica embarked on her career in a move that would also ignite her love for the game of tennis when she took her first professional position in her field in Charleston, the largest and most populous city in South Carolina in the deep Southern region of the United States.

About the only knowledge Jessica had about Charleston when she moved there for her first job after graduate school came from the 1939 cinematic classic *Gone With The Wind*, in which the city serves as protagonist Rhett Butler’s hometown and is often featured in the film. What Jessica actually found in Charleston was a large yet genteel, charming Southern city that is absolutely crazy about tennis. Named by the USTA as the best tennis town in the United States in 2010, almost every resident played the game, and the city’s landscape is riddled with courts. For example, Jessica had a twenty minute drive to work each day, and along the way she would pass five separate tennis clubs. There were



also a lot of new communities being created in the city, and many of them included courts for their residents’ use. Jessica said she and her friends used to joke that you could stand literally anywhere in the city and throw a tennis ball, and it would land on a tennis court.

Not surprisingly, despite having no history with the sport, given its popularity in Charleston Jessica also caught the tennis bug when she moved there. So, Jessica started playing tennis relatively late in her life, taking up the new sport as an adult. She began just by taking lessons with some of her friends, but it was not



long before she started playing competitively after she self rated as at 2.5 and joined a USTA league in Charleston. Jessica describes the USTA tennis culture in Charleston as one where there are so many teams that every team member expects to get a lot of court time and typically plays in at least seven matches each season for their team, which was Jessica's early experience as she gained a lot of USTA experience relatively quickly and played a lot of competitive tennis very soon after picking up a racquet for the first time. Like so many Charleston residents, Jessica was hooked on the sport.



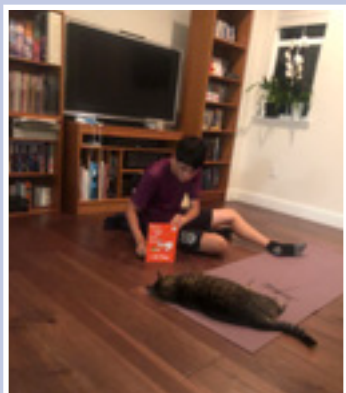
At the same time, Jessica and her husband Larry Mishkin were starting a family and had a young son, Evan. As charming as Charleston is and as much as she enjoyed living there, Jessica and Larry determined that it was not the best environment for them to raise their son. Jessica had traveled and lived around the world, and since she knew she loved the Bay Area, she and Larry decided to move out west with Evan, who was still a young child, and they settled in Orinda initially, where Jessica continued to work remotely for the same technology company that she worked with in Charleston.

Since she still had the tennis bug, Jessica wanted to continue playing after she moved to Orinda, so she began by searching online for the best places to play locally. Heather Farm and Walnut Creek Racquet Club popped up in her search results repeatedly, so Jessica reached out to all the captains at WCRC who had 3.0 teams, which was Jessica's rating at the time. She ended up joining a team captained by well-known WCRC member Lisa Italia for her first USTA season in California circa 2015, and in her first season with WCRC, Lisa's team went to Nationals. So, it was an enormously successful start to Jessica's playing career in California, although she humbly says "I didn't contribute much" during the run to Nationals with Lisa's team. After that successful Nationals run many members of Lisa's team were bumped up to a 3.5 rating, so Jessica and a couple of her friends from that team who didn't have their ratings bumped decided to start their own 3.0 team at Bay Trees in Castro Valley. Lo and behold, Jessica's team at Bay Trees also went to Nationals, so it was back to back trips to Nationals for Jessica in her first two seasons of competitive tennis in California. Talk about quick out of the gate! Since she enjoyed the inclusive atmosphere and friendly, high character people at Heather Farm, Jessica has been a steady presence at WCRC ever since, and has competed for several WCRC teams including: Janet Nielsen, Nicole Leong, Julia Petrov, Tammie Snyder, and Heather Houston teams. She now plays at a 4.0 level, but a case of "jumper's knee" has kept Jessica



Jessica Zhang continued...

sidelined for a couple of years while she has rehabilitated, although she is getting back into playing shape now and is eager to get back out on the courts again and playing competitive matches, where she belongs. Jessica says that WCRC will always hold a special place in her heart, as her first tennis club after she moved to California, coupled



with an incredible run to Nationals during her very first season playing at Heather Farm with a special group of teammates and friends.

Jessica and Larry still live in Lafayette with their cat, who goes by either "gizmo" or "momo", but they're basically empty nesters since Evan is attending the University of California at San Diego after he graduated from Miramonte High School.

Jessica now works for the educational technology firm iXL Learning, which develops technology-based educational tools and is well known to any parent who has recently had children in the California school system. While Larry is now retired, Jessica is still working long hours for iXL. But as soon as her knee is fully rehabilitated, you'll see her often back out at the courts at Heather Farm, once again gone with the wind, from her homeland of China to New York, Charleston, and finally blown all the way to "The Nut". ▲





Tennis News



90

Celebrating Carolyn Spady

by Geraldine Alano

90 years young and still an inspiration! Thursday September 17th we celebrated our well loved USTA captain, Carolyn Spady, on her 90th birthday!

Carolyn captained one of the first USTA league teams I had the good fortune of being part of: Walnut Creek Heather Farms 3.5 women's team: we won local playoffs and went all the way to win Sectionals! I still remember those early-morning weekend practices at Northgate — and one piece of Carolyn wisdom that has stayed with me all these years:

"Put the ball where they ain't."

Simple, brilliant, and honestly... still some of the best tennis advice.

So grateful for the memories, the friendships, and the lessons from such a special captain.

Happy 90th, Carolyn! What a privilege to celebrate this incredible milestone with you. Kudos to Ellen Leng, Kim Caison, Jen Dihn, Robyn Elawady, Cynthia Granicher, Sue Lyon, Eileen Chang, Diane Cunnane, Stephanie Foley, Tami Price, et al for gathering. Thinking of all my teammates from those Northgate mornings and that unforgettable Sectionals run."



Tennis News

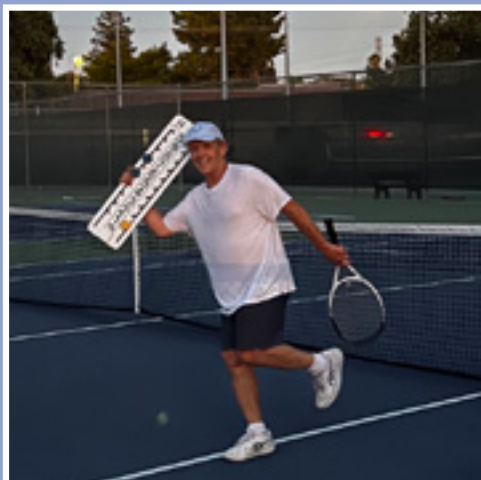


Nadia, You're Not Alone: Team Samosa and Mixed Signals Go Perfect

A Summer of Perfect Tens

In 1976, Nadia Comăneci made sports history with gymnastics' first perfect 10 at the Montreal Olympics. The scoreboard was not even designed to display a 10.00, so it famously showed 1.00 instead. But the meaning was unmistakable: the 14-year-old Romanian gymnast had produced something rare—an officially perfect performance.

This summer, two teams from Walnut Creek Tennis Club created their own memorable version of that story.



First came Walnut Creek TC 18AM3.5D [Team Samosa], our men's 3.5 team. Alongside my co-captain, Jeff Bennett, I had the privilege of helping guide Team Samosa through an outstanding 10–0 season and 40 wins in 50 individual lines. That record represents more than a collection of team wins. Over ten matches, the team repeatedly demonstrated depth across the lineup, strong partnerships, and the ability to deliver on the courts that mattered most.

The example set by Team Samosa did not go unnoticed. It became a challenge—and an inspiration—for Walnut Creek TC 40MX7.0C [Mixed Signals], our mixed 7.0 team. Alongside my co-captain, Maddie Thomas, I saw Mixed Signals match the 10–0 team record and then raise the standard another notch.

Across its ten matches, Mixed Signals won all 30 individual lines, producing an exceptional 30–0 lines won-lost record while dropping only four sets. The result was not simply a perfect team season. It was a full-court sweep, match after match—an achievement that is difficult to plan for and even more difficult to sustain once the weight of the streak becomes real.

A run like this brings a particular kind of pressure. At first, a team is





Tennis News



player showed real ticker—the steadiness to compete through tight sets, recover after momentum swings, and remain present at precisely the moments when nerves can take over. The teams' success rested on individual accountability, confidence in partners, and a culture in which every court felt supported rather than isolated.

Team Samosa established the standard: 10–0 in team matches and 40 of 50 lines won. Mixed Signals carried that inspiration forward: 10–0 in team matches, 30 of 30 lines won, and only 4 sets conceded in the 64 played. One team showed what consistent, complete tennis looks like; the other took that model and turned it into a clean sweep.

Nadia Comăneci's perfect 10 endures because perfection is never casual. It demands precision, nerve, and the ability to perform when the moment feels larger than the routine. Walnut Creek Tennis Club's Team Samosa and Mixed Signals



brought those same qualities to the court this summer. Their formats and records differ, but their message is shared: special seasons are built point by point, line by line, and together.



Team Samosa: Renato Castro, Sujith CM, Jim Collins, Derek Daymond, Dan Do, Dana Dominguez, Mark Joselh, Chris Kemp, Kevin Kyono, Alan Lam, Minseok Oh, Sushil Rajendran, Brady Rogers, Ryan Rosete, Martin Sanchez, Greg



Tennis News



Snyder, Kevin Suh, James Tak, Tim van der Waart, Peter Zhong, Jeff Bennett (co-captain), Guru Prasad (captain)

Mixed Signals: Diana Babayan, Mercedes Bell, Minh Cannon, Susanne Carr, Sujith CM, Dan Do, Theresa Goodwin, Kara Levy, Lang Lindsay, Renee Mercier, Bahurudeen Mohamed, Sreevisakh Muraleedharan, Samantha Ng, Minseok Oh, Sushil Rajendran, Brady Rogers, Jaclyn Rosete, Ryan Rosete, Robyn Schleifman, Kevin Suh, Maddie Thomas (co-captain), Guru Prasad (captain) ▲





Tennis News



WCRC Tri-Level Singles Champions!

What an amazing weekend for our Tri-Level Singles team!

When Amber Golini decided to put together a team for the Tri-Level Singles Tournament, it was her very first time captaining. She asked me to help as her co-captain, and while I never actually stepped foot on the court, I was more than happy to help with lineups, do a little opponent stalking, and cheer everyone on. And what a weekend it turned out to be! The team battled through the tournament and came away as Tri-Level Singles Champions! Every player contributed to an incredible team effort, supporting and cheering for one another throughout the weekend.



A special congratulations goes to Captain Amber. Not only did she put together a championship team her very first time captaining, she went out and won both of her own matches as well. That's a pretty impressive captain debut!

One of the things I loved most about the weekend was seeing how much of a team experience a singles tournament could become. Singles can feel like such an individual part of tennis, but this weekend was anything but individual. Players were watching one another's matches, cheering from the sidelines, helping with strategy and genuinely invested in how everyone else was doing. There were nerves, close matches, lots of cheering and plenty of laughs along the way. By the end of the

weekend, we weren't just celebrating individual wins. We were celebrating something everyone had accomplished together.

Congratulations to Heidi, Samantha, Amber, Olga, Erin and Mel on a fantastic weekend and a well-deserved championship! A special shoutout to Heidi, who also received a sportsmanship award. You all represented WCRC beautifully, both on and off the court. And as the team's completely non-playing co-captain, I was thrilled to be along for the ride and watch it all come together.

Congratulations, Tri-Level Champs!



Summer Dubs Tournament







Summer Dubs Results



Mina Chang/Lang Lindsay def.
Mary Soe/Erin Brindley
5-7, 6-3, 1-0



Amber Golini/Audra Lutter def.
Olga Ivanova/Pru Pruden
6-1, 7-5



Heidi Belton/Donna Himenez def.
Tisha Kermoian/Christy Dundon
5-7, 6-4, 1-0



Jeff Bennett/Kevin Kyono def.
Chris Kemp/Dong Suh
6-4, 6-7, 1-0

8.0 Men

Shuangxi Xu/James Kim def.
Sean Barnacascel/Ron Edwall
6-4, 6-4

**2026 Fall Mixed
Doubles
Tournament
Oct 24-25**

check out all the photos from the
summer dubs tournament here:
<https://wcrc.zenfolio.com/p39418426>



at the

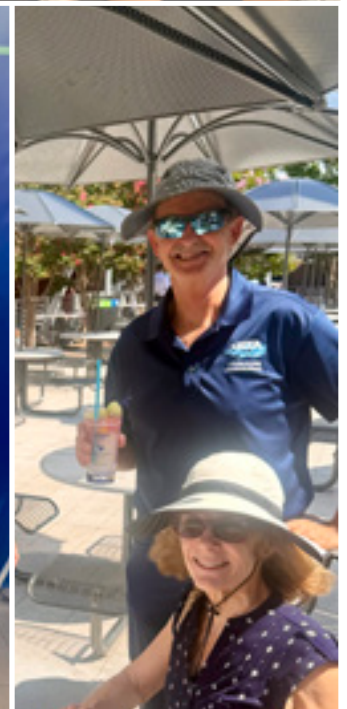


us open





TENNIS
ACE the OPEN



OPERATING HOURS AT WCTC**Monday – Friday: 8am-10:00pm • Saturday & Sunday: 8am-8pm****October 2026****QUICK PRO TIP**

Quality ball contact is key in staying consistent and hitting offensive, neutral, and even defensive balls. For the recommended Quiet Eye Technique, keep your head still with your gaze locked on the contact point of your shot while you allow your body to rotate and complete your weight transfer. This is the simplest way to ensure more frequent clean hits in your game! Remember to prepare early, track the ball, and keep your head still through contact on every ball.

PASSHOLDER SPECIAL

For October, passholders will get FREE entry into costume social. See below for more details and registration link.

HALLOWEEN COSTUME SOCIAL

Don your favorite costume and join us for round robin doubles on Friday, October 30th from 3-5pm. Just be sure your costume allows safe movement on the court and includes court-appropriate footwear. Serve up a spook-tacular day of rallies and fun!

Cost: \$30 per player or FREE for Passholders

Registration: Thursday, 10/8-10/29

Tennis: NTRP 2.5+

Format: Tennis 105! A cardio-intensive, rally-based doubles game sure to test your all court skills and give you a great workout before the holiday! Register here:

<https://app.courtreserve.com/Online/Events/Details/13230/WWYFIF13230779?resId=61589820>

Pickleball: DUPR 2.5+ Must know how to play and keep score

Format: A Mixing Partner Round Robin (Games to 11)*

*format subject to change based on timing. Register here:

<https://app.courtreserve.com/Online/Events/Details/13230/W1G4X5S13230344?resId=61589987>

FALL SESSION 2 STARTS 10/19

Youth & Adult classes begin the week of October 19th.

Select Adult Drop-Ins will open for registration starting October 27th.

[Register on CourtReserve!](#)

FALL 1 CLASS DROP-IN OPTIONS (available through 10/19) [Register on CourtReserve!](#)

Tuesday – Adult Advanced 8:00-9:20pm (\$39)

Thursday – Adult Intermediate 6:30-7:50pm (\$39)

Thursday – NTRP 3.5+ 8:00-9:20pm (\$52)

Saturday – Adult Intermediate 11:40-1:00pm (\$39) + Adult Advanced 11:40-1:00pm (\$39)

Sunday – Adult Cardio 9:00-10:00am (\$39) + Adult Intermediate 11:40-1:00pm (\$39)

FALL ADULT TENNIS ROTATING CLINICS

Looking for a quick tune up to your game? Check out our Rotating Drop-In Clinics! Themes rotate each week and focus on different ways to improve your skills and strategy. Sign up with your doubles partner to get some reps together!

10/24, 11/21: [Serve & Return](#) – Start points strong

10/3, 10/31, 11/28: [Winning at the Net](#) – A gamechanger clinic for doubles players

10/10, 11/7, 12/5: [Specialty Shots](#) – Increase your arsenal to change it up against opponents

10/17, 11/14, 12/12: [Matchplay Strategy](#) – Figure out the strategies to make your best shots shine

Rotating Clinics are \$39 per clinic. [Register now on CourtReserve!](#)

**Visit us online at www.lifetimeactivities.com or stop by the the office at 1751 Heather Drive.
Please call with any questions at 925-945-0105 or 925-945-1102.**

CALENDER OF EVENTS

2026

Oct

Nov

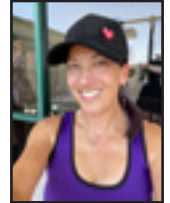
Dec

Oct 24-25	WCRC Fall Mixed Doubles Tournament
Oct 30	USTA 70+ Season Closes
Oct 30	USTA Combo Doubles DT Season Closes
Nov 1	USTA 55+ Mixed Season Closes
Nov 2	USTA 40+ Team Registration Opens
	USTA 40+ Daytime Team Registration Opens
	USTA 18+ Mixed Team Registration Opens
Nov 1	USTA Combo Doubles Season Closes
Nov 5-8	USTA 55 Mixed Playoffs Round 1
Nov 9-13	USTA 70+ Playoffs Round 1
Nov 9-13	USTA Combo Doubles DT Playoffs Round 1
Nov 12-14	USTA 55 Mixed Playoffs Round 2
Nov 12-15	USTA Combo Doubles Playoffs Round 1
Nov 16-20	USTA 70+ Playoffs Round 2
Nov 16-20	USTA Combo Doubles DT Playoffs Round 2
Nov 19-22	USTA 55 Mixed Playoffs Round 3
Nov 19-22	USTA Combo Doubles Playoffs Round 2
Nov 30	USTA 65+ Team Registration Opens
	USTA 40+ Team Registration Closes
	USTA 40+ Daytime Team Registration Closes
	USTA 18+ Mixed Team Registration Closes
Nov 30-Dec 4	USTA Combo Doubles DT Playoffs Round 3
Dec 1	USTA 40+ Player Rostering Opens
	USTA 40+ Daytime Player Rostering Opens
	USTA 18+ Mixed Player Rostering Opens
	USTA 65+ Player Rostering Opens
Dec 3-6	USTA Combo Doubles Playoffs Round 3

TREASURER'S REPORT

Cara Mia Barnacascel

January - August, 2026



Income

League Dues	\$4,038.41
Membership Dues	17,924.12
Tournament Dues	\$7,260.46
Total for Income	\$29,222.99
Gross Profit	\$29,222.99

Expenses

Bank Service Charges	25.00
Board Meeting	923.70
Captains Meetings	856.39
Contributions	1,271.55
Filling Fees	0.58
League Expenses	\$927.05
Office Supplies	290.91
Professional Fees	\$378.00
Program Expense	200.00
Rental Fees	695.00
Repairs	12.01
Sectionals Fees	4,070.00
Software	599.92
Supplies	1,972.83
Taxes	45.00
Tournament Expenses	\$9,921.48
Website	19,729.90
Total for Expenses	\$41,919.32
Net Operating Income	-\$12,696.33
Net Income	-\$12,696.33

Balance August 31, 2026

\$55,171.59



Tennis News



Gerry Brown

Sept 28, 1942 - Sept 18, 2026

It is with great sadness that I announce the passing of long time Heather Farm fixture and WCRC member Gerry Brown.



Rosemary will be having his memorial service at St. John Vianney Catholic Church (1650 Ygnacio Valley Road, Walnut Creek) on Monday, November 30th at 10:00 am with a reception to follow.

Please mark you calendars as I know both Gerry and Rosemary would love to see all of his old tennis family.

