The Court Reporter

Newsletter of the
Walnut Creek Racquet Club

November 2026



Utsab "Sunny" Mukherjee battles in the 4.5 men's singles final

Walnut Creek Racquet Club

P.O. Box 4574 • Walnut Creek, CA 94596
(925) 945-0105 • www.wcrc.net

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Mixed Doubles League	**Dave Wong -** 925-272-8222 dw_wcrc@proton.me
Doubles League	**Garvin Tom -** 209-969-5445 gtom12@hotmail.com
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WING Singles League	**Karen James** - 510-472-2032 karenhollingsbee@hotmail.com
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The President's Report

Happy November!



Garvin Tom
2026 WCRC President

Hi folks! Let me start out with an update to an update. You may remember in the September issue, I wrote about appealing up and mentioned the 3-match requirement for adjusted players to play postseason. Well, there is an exception to that rule, and I give Brian Hennessy credit for pointing this out. Apparently, if you appeal UP, then you only need 2 matches to qualify for postseason (players who appeal down still need 3). Brian also sent me an example of a 7.5 combo roster where one of the players with an adjusted rating also had a "2^" next to their record, signifying that the player met the match requirement with just 2 matches.

So I wanted to look up the actual rule myself, but strangely enough, I could not find it anywhere in the USTA NorCal LLARs. Then I went to the NorCal League Rules FAQ, scrolled through it, and there it was: "A player who has appealed up and is playing at the higher level needs only 2 matches to be eligible". Something that many of us probably didn't realize, and it's maybe because only a few of us would even think about appealing up.

While I'm on the topic of rules some players are unsure about, let me add another one: what to do after a tiebreak. Who serves first? Do we change ends? I played a match recently where the 1st set ended in a tiebreak, and no one (other than me) knew what to do. My opponents thought that we stay on the same side, while I insisted that we switch. They ended up asking their captain, and he confirmed I was correct. It still amazes me that there are players who have been playing a long time who still don't know to switch after a tiebreak. If you're not sure, think of it this way: you always switch after the end of every odd game, and since a tiebreak is an odd game, you also switch after the end of it. And if you start the first point of the tiebreak returning serve, then you start the next set serving.

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to Our 6 New Members
Current Membership: 1,039

Bruna de Farias	Walnut Creek	3.0	Anthony Abalos	Castro Valley	3.5
Vuk Dukic			Morgan Taylor	Benicia	3.0
Ayesha Wagle			Dina Kazzaz		



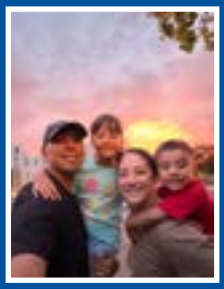
Membership questions contact:
Dave Wong at 925-272-8222
email: dw_wcrc@proton.me

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:

Nathaniel Calachan



The President's Report continued

Another rule that I see players get confused about is when you're allowed to reach over the net to hit a ball. This was also a story that Brian told me about when his dad reached over the net to hit a ball that bounced on his side first. His opponents argued that he wasn't allowed to reach over. Well, they were wrong. You are allowed to reach over if the ball bounced on your side first, and that's the only time you're allowed to do that. This also reminds me of a doubles match back in my early USTA days where the ball just dropped over on our side of the net but had so much backspin it bounced back over the net. My partner was standing next to it but didn't know what to do, so he just watched it land on the other side without taking a swing at it. I told him to hit it, but it was too late.

That was a little more understandable since he was fairly new to the game, but if you've been playing for a while, you should probably know these rules. It's also helpful to bookmark the USTA's Friend at Court page on your phone in case you need it.

See you on the courts!

Garvin Tom

Fall Mixed Doubles Tournament Highlights & Results coming in December Issue

Member Spotlight

Hosting the Unofficial "Party and Event Center" Melissa Bach

Interview and article by Ian McLaughlin



WCRC member Melissa Bach and her husband Steve Lehmer, who himself is a longtime WCRC member and prolific club presence, are engaged with so many different teams at Heather Farm and they live so close to the facility that their home has become known as the unofficial party/event center for WCRC because they very frequently host club gatherings at their nearby abode.

Melissa and Steve met in intermediate school in Chico, California, proving that sometimes adolescent crushes can indeed turn into lifetime partnerships.

As a child growing up in Chico in California's northern Central Valley, Melissa hails from a very athletic family, with sisters who swam for UCLA and a brother who played football and ran track at UC Davis. A talented athlete herself, swimming and basketball were Melissa's primary sports when she was a child, but in high school she also played tennis and ran cross country. Clearly athletic genes run through Melissa's first family, because their combined sporting background is wide-ranging and very impressive. Melissa actually went on to play collegiate hoops at Wellesley College in Massachusetts, where she was a versatile forward who played both the 3 and 4 positions. In fact, Melissa often goes by the nickname "Mel" because it is shorter and was much easier for teammates and coaches to yell when they needed to get her attention on the basketball hardwood.

As a native northern Californian, Melissa found her way back to god's country after college, and back to her beau Steve. Once she was back in the area, Melissa also returned to the game of tennis, which she initially got into because her mom played back in the days when player ratings were designated by letters rather than numerically (e.g., A,B,C, D, and E… "the olden days", jokes Melissa).



Melissa came to Heather Farm in 2021 because Steve and their son Ryan, who was 23 at the time and a recent college graduate (from Chico State, of course) had already been playing at the club. Steve and Ryan both have a baseball background and turned to tennis when the Covid pandemic quarantine restrictions effectively shut down all team sports. With her athletic background and both Steve and



Ryan already playing at Heather Farm, Melissa joined the USTA, self rated at 3.0, and like so many club members, began her competitive tennis career at WCRC on Cara Mia Barnacascel's "Deuces Wild" team.

Melissa was soon reeled in by the inclusive and welcoming tennis community at Heather Farm, and she still fondly remembers her very first match for "Deuces Wild", which was a mixed match where her partner was Steve Bucholz, one of the club's friendliest and most gregarious members, as well as a very skilled player. Melissa has been a steady presence at Heather Farm ever since then, and always joking, she says that once you're over 55, "there is no off season", because you're eligible to play in every USTA league. She still plays on Cara Mia's teams, as well as on teams captained by Tammie Snyder. It was on one of Tammie's 55+ teams a couple of years ago that Melissa won Nationals. She and Steve have both also co-captained with Tammie, and when Melissa finds herself partnered with her husband during a mixed match, she says the commentary can become quite colorful, because you can say things to your life partner that you wouldn't say to anyone else, so there's no holding back. Like Melissa's pet peeve, "don't call 'mine' and then not make the point!" Melissa's tennis game is also unique in that she uses an old school one-handed backhand, which is increasingly rare in this era. In addition, because Melissa is a left-hand dominant player in basketball but plays tennis as a righty, she's effectively ambidextrous. It doesn't happen too often, but when she's playing the "ad" side and a ball comes out wide, Melissa's been known to switch her racquet from her right to her left hand to return the shot. One can imagine that this party trick is very effective when playing beer pong as well.



Melissa still works long hours in the field of commercial real estate appraisal, where she specializes in providing expert analysis and testimony in court proceedings. Although her primary office is in San Francisco, she also works out of a Walnut Creek office, but she travels extensively for work and provides expert testimony in litigation throughout the state. It's because of her extensive travel schedule that Melissa doesn't have a pet dog despite being a "dog person". Instead, she and Steve (a cat lover) have a cat named "Boo" due to its black and orange coloring, perfect for Halloween and the fall season.



In addition to Ryan, who now works in the field of computer programming, Melissa and

Melissa Bach continued...



Steve also have an older child, their daughter Madison, who earned her PhD in molecular cellular biology at UC Berkeley (go Bears!) and now works on the peninsula for a company that does pharmaceutical research. Melissa and Steve raised both of their kids in Walnut Creek and both were educated in Walnut Creek's excellent public schools, graduating from Northgate high school. Always joking around, Melissa self-deprecatingly says that Madison have gotten the "recessive genes" because she's pursued the intellectually rigorous, brainiac-dominated career field, while Mel, Steve and Ryan are more financial, real estate and tech centered.



Since the athletic genes also run through the family, Madison plays in an adult league soccer club in Berkeley where she lives, when she's not working long hours on the peninsula. Ryan lives with Melissa, Steve, and Boo, in their longtime residence near John Muir Hospital, very close to Heather Farm. Although Melissa loves her native northern California, her "happy place" is Hawaii (isn't everyone's?) and her family has places where she can regularly stay in Poipu on Kauai and on the Big Island of Hawaii. She says that when she steps off the plane in Hawaii, smells the wonderful tropical aroma, and feels the palpable aloha spirit, it immediately makes her happier. Needless to say, she's a frequent traveler to the islands.



Like so many WCRC members, what makes the club so special for Melissa is the community of people at Heather Farm. She remains close with Steve Bucholz ever since that first USTA match, and she still loves playing for Cara Mia's teams, because "how many great meals can you have?" Between her and Steve they have met numerous great people at the club who have become close friends, and since they love gathering their tribe together, they often host WCRC events and gatherings at their home, which is so close to the facility that it makes an ideal "party pad" for WCRC because people can easily hop on over from Heather Farm. Just remember to bring your ID to show the bouncer at the door. ▲



2026 Men's and Women's WING (WInter SpriNG) Singles Leagues

Registration Form

Full Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Current Rating:

- ❍ 2.5
- ❍ 3.0
- ❍ 3.5
- ❍ 4.0
- ❍ 4.5
- ❍ 5.0
- ❍ 5.5

I would like to enter the following division:

- ❍ Women's 3.0
- ❍ Women's 3.5
- ❍ Women's 4.0
- ❍ Women's 4.5+
- ❍ Men's 3.0
- ❍ Men's 3.5
- ❍ Men's 4.0
- ❍ Men's 4.5+

$10 Entry Fee (per bracket)

Checks to: Walnut Creek Racquet Club
c/o Karen James
PO Box 3017
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Entries open **Nov 1st** online
www.WCRC.net

Questions?
Email Karen James at
karenbeejames@gmail.com

Dates: November 2nd - April 11th

Format: Men's Singles/Women's Singles

Scheduling: This is an open schedule. Players are responsible for scheduling their own matches. Players will be provided with a contact list of participants within their division.

Venue: Any mutually agreed site

Match Format: Best two out of three sets. Default is 10 point tie breaker but a full third set may be played if both players agree.

Scoring: The winner is responsible for reporting the match score by logging on to www.wcrc.net.

Standings: Division standing will be updated on a real time basis as scores are posted

Match Min: 2 matches

Tournament: There is no tournament weekend for this league. The top 8 players of each bracket will move on to playoffs scheduled by playe arrangement between 3/8 - 4/11.

Only $10



2026 WCRC Men's & Women's Summer Singles Tournament



It was a bit chilly for the start of the first matches of the morning, and then rolled into a couple of perfect tennis days for the Summer Singles semi and finals played at Heather Farm on Oct 10th/11th. Players from five different divisions battled it out over two days for pride and some great WCRC swag. Thanks to all for bringing some great attitudes, and great effort on the court!

We don't always get to play a full 3rd set in USTA tennis, but it's the standard for the WCRC Summer Singles once you reach the semis/finals. That 3rd set made for a few epic back and forth matches, especially on the men's side, where every division had at least one 3-setter over the weekend. Lots of fun to witness the effort and grinding of players giving their all both physically and mentally trying to put together the winning formula.

Much thanks as always to Bob Satcher for taking lots and great pictures of the event, and Bobby Walgren for running the tournament desk over the weekend!

Look for Summer Singles 2027 to kick into gear in March/April.

See you next year!
Steve Lehmer






















































IDC

























2026 Summer Singles Tournament - Results



Steve Bliss defeated
Raphael Pouliquen
6-1, 5-7, 6-4



Mary Roach defeated
Karen James
6-1, 6-2



Ramin Naeini defeated
Alex Tayag
4-6, 7-6, 6-4



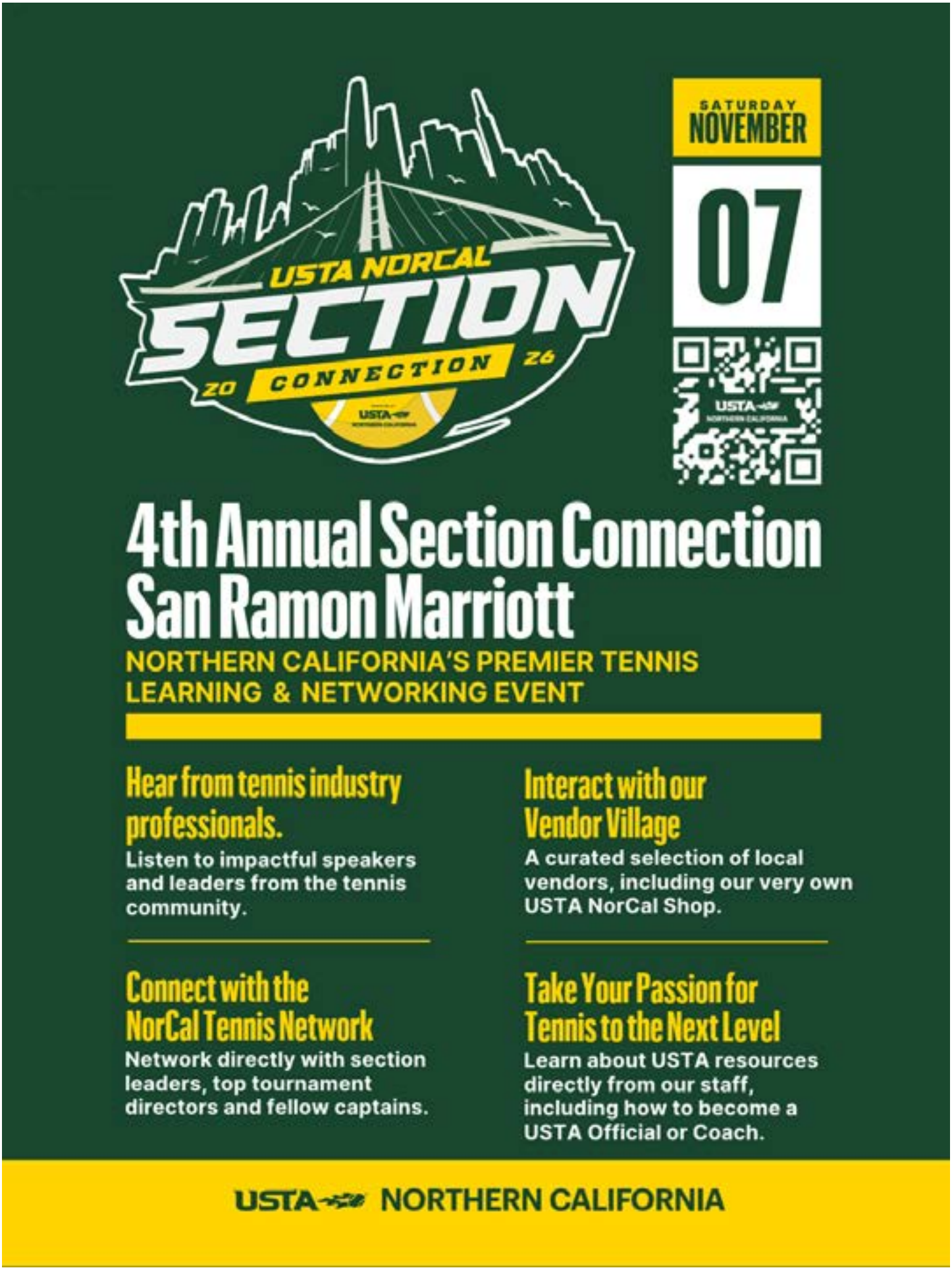
Nicole Leong defeated
Malou Matthew
6-1, 6-0



Steve Lehmer defeated
Sunny Mukerjee
6-2, 7-6

Check out all of the Summer Singles Tournament photos are here:

https://wcrc.zenfolio.com/p350046141


USTA NORCAL
SECTION
CONNECTION
ZO
Z6
SATURDAY
NOVEMBER
07
4th Annual Section Connection
San Ramon Marriott
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S PREMIER TENNIS
LEARNING & NETWORKING EVENT
Hear from tennis industry professionals.
Listen to impactful speakers and leaders from the tennis community.
Interact with our Vendor Village
A curated selection of local vendors, including our very own USTA NorCal Shop.
Connect with the NorCal Tennis Network
Network directly with section leaders, top tournament directors and fellow captains.
Take Your Passion for Tennis to the Next Level
Learn about USTA resources directly from our staff, including how to become a USTA Official or Coach.
USTA NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

SECTION CONNECTION 2026

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7 | SAN RAMON MARRIOTT

FEATURED SPEAKERS



CRAIG TILEY
Chief Executive Officer, USTA



RAJEEV RAM
Professional Tennis Player & Olympic Medalist



NEERU JAYANTHI
Sports Medicine Physician & Researcher, Emory University



MIKE BARRELL
Executive Director of Tennis, SPORTIME NY



NANCY ABRAMS
Founder, One2Deuce



DAMON LEVY
USTA NorCal Board Member & League Player



MICKEY MAULE
Managing Director of National Industry Partnerships & Growth, USTA



LYDIA COLARESI
Managing Director & Head of Digital Strategy, USTA



CY DOFITAS
Director of National Sales and Partnerships, USTA



BRIAN WILSON
Head Tennis Professional, Former NCAA No. 1, ATP Tour Professional



NOAH MERL
Founder, Athletic Acumen



PETER WRIGHT
Former President, Youth Tennis Advantage & Cal Men's Tennis Coach

SCAN TO REGISTER

USTA NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

OPERATING HOURS AT WCTC

Monday – Friday: 8am-10:00pm • Saturday & Sunday: 8am-8pm

November 2026

QUICK PRO TIP

Placement on your serve is an important skill to help increase your chance of holding serve. Being able to place the ball to your opponent's weaker side can help neutralize their return and put you in control of the point. Additionally, moving your serve targets can keep your opponent guessing and lead to an easier second shot (plus one) to shift into an offensive position. Serve placement to the weaker side is also a great target for your second serve to keep the point neutral by not giving them an advantage on the return.

NOVEMBER PASSHOLDER SPECIAL

Passholders can test out racquets or paddles with **FREE day demos**. Demos must stay at the Walnut Creek Tennis Center, and availability is limited to demos in stock. Only one demo per Passholder may be taken out at one time, but Passholders may return to try a different demo each day. For more information, talk to our Front Desk staff. If you are looking for an upgrade, this is a great chance to test out something new!

FAMILY GIVING TREE HOLIDAY WISH DRIVE



We are in the giving season! Last year, our generous local community (including many members of the WCRC) donated so many presents for families in need that we had to request more Wish Cards! Let's keep up the giving tradition!

Early November, Wish Cards will be available in the Pro Shop. Pick a Wish Card, purchase a requested gift, and return the Wish Card attached to your gift unwrapped to the Pro Shop **no later than Tuesday, December 1st.**

RESERVATION POLICY UPDATE & ADDITIONAL RESERVABLE COURT STARTING 12/1

Effective December 1st, 2026, court cancellations made less than 24 hours of the reservation start time will incur a **$10 per court Late Cancellation Fee**, and missed reservations that are not cancelled in advance will incur a **$15 No-call, No-show Fee**. Please plan accordingly and cancel reservations in advance to avoid penalties. Click here to learn more. With cancellations at least 24 hours ahead of time, fellow community members have more time to get a group together for the open court. Additionally, Tennis Court 6 will become reservable starting December

FALL 2 CLASS DROP-IN OPTIONS (available starting 11/2) 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 ($53)
Saturday – Adult Intermediate 11:40-1:00pm ($39)
Sunday – Adult Cardio 9:00-10:00am ($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!

11/7, 12/5: Specialty Shots – Increase your arsenal to change it up against opponents
11/14, 12/12: Matchplay Strategy – Figure out the strategies to make your best shots shine
11/21: Serve & Return – Start points strong
11/28: Winning at the Net – A gamechanger clinic for doubles players

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







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
Dec 8-10	USTA 70+ Sectionals

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**

Lifetime Activities

WALNUT CREEK
TENNIS CENTER

IMPORTANT POLICY UPDATE

Court Reservation Cancellation Policy

EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2026

To help ensure fair access to court reservations, please review the following late cancellation and no-show fees.

LATE CANCELLATION

Cancel less than 24 hours before your reservation start time.

Billed to the primary reservation holder

$10

PER COURT

NO-CALL, NO-SHOW

Miss your reservation without cancelling or providing notice.

Billed to the primary reservation holder

$15

NO-SHOW FEE

AVOID FEES: CANCEL AT LEAST 24 HOURS AHEAD

Thank you for helping keep court time available to everyone.

Court 6 will be reservable starting 12/1, and there will be at least one court available for walk ons.

WALNUT CREEK TENNIS CENTER
1751 Heather Dr. | (925)-945-0105
www.lifetimeactivities.com

CITY OF WALNUT CREEK