

CAMBRIDGE AREA PICKLEBALL ASSOCIATION

President's Report

May 10, 2022

Though CAPA is still a young organization, just over three years old, it is clear to me that it has been quite successful at bringing quality pickleball to Isanti County. We have people coming to play from all the adjacent counties and beyond. We have had a number of players compete successfully at tournaments in Minnesota and elsewhere. Last year we taught more than 50 beginners how to play. We followed the initial introductions up with skills and drills, something we hope to bring to even more players this year. Our tournament players have noted the importance of drills for improving your game. We were approached by an outside tournament organizer asking to run a tournament on our courts. Though we declined the offer, it was to give us time to study the implications of doing so. We also held three summer leagues and later, Peiwu Daniels and Pat Jaeger added a fall league. We were able to celebrate our four new courts and acknowledge the many donors that helped make them possible, at a Ribbon Cutting ceremony in August. We finished the year with approximately 250 members, a number I find remarkable when I consider the first ever lessons in Cambridge (pre-CAPA) were in late 2015 and held on a tennis court.

Several improvements were made to the Central Green Courts, notably the addition of windscreens and awnings on courts 5-8, a bicycle rack outside Court 1, sliding gates and fence top protectors between the new courts, and a new trash can near the west exit. There are 6 new awnings in storage, going up soon over the other 6 benches in the complex.

Unfortunately, we continue to require repairs to the windscreens. It seems that the stress of high velocity winds weakens the grommets and fabric. We have been using 50-pound test zip ties along the tops of the screens and heavier zip ties on the bottom, in the hopes that the zip ties at the top will break before damage occurs to the windscreen itself.

At the November Board meeting, we established three committees to look at how we deliver lessons, leagues and tournaments. I want to thank all the volunteers that served on the committees and particularly, Dick Welch, Bill Smrekar and Diane Hennig for their leadership. These committees came up with the recommendations that we are discussing tonight. We are already implementing some of their recommendations,

Going forward, the Board will consider additional acquisitions to enhance play. I've put together some suggestions, including a conifer windbreak outside of the south and west sides (requires City approval), new storage box for Courts 5-8, water removal rollers (Roll-Dri), a ball caddy for using during drills, a backboard/rebounder, and information banners. Other recommendations include a storage shed, leaf blower and a ball machine. I'm sure there are many other ideas as well.

Playing enhancements proposed for this year include holding an "intermediate/recreational" level tournament for our players that haven't ever played in a tournament but would like to see what it's about. More leagues (beginner/intermediate/advanced) offered mornings and

evenings. More drill/coaching sessions will be scheduled for advanced beginners and up and we will try and get our more experienced players to help with that. As always, there will be more introductory lessons for beginners. Thanks to all the CAPA volunteers that help with those lessons!

Last, I want to thank our outgoing Directors Bill Smrekar and Tracy Lehn for their service on the Board. They exemplify one of the great things about pickleball, which is how it brings people together. They'll be missed but we hope to see them both on the courts. I also want to thank Mary Person for her excellence in taking care of our finances, Pete Fell for grabbing hold of the windscreen maintenance and installation process and running with it, and Dick Welsh for his tireless work bringing new people to pickleball.

I want to wrap this up with a story. This past winter, while in Arizona, I played with a couple from Perham, Minnesota. Naturally I asked what the pickleball facilities were like in Perham, and they proceeded to tell me how they have been fundraising to build new dedicated courts. They don't have any currently. They've raised \$220,000 so far and construction on 8 courts has started! Wow! Pickleball is a motivating force!

Respectfully, Mike Mueller