



Pickle Juice

Thanks for reading this newsletter.
We welcome your comments/suggestions/articles.
Send them to: [Carol White](#)
Editor

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From the President's Desk

Andy Dalal

World's Fastest Growing Sport

You might be surprised to learn that while pickleball is America's fastest growing sport, it isn't the fastest growing sport globally. That title belongs to padel. Pickleball has indeed experienced a surge in popularity in the U.S. over the past three years, becoming a staple of American recreational sports. The sport has been spreading internationally, albeit at a slower pace compared to its U.S. expansion. In countries such as Canada, the UK, Australia, and some European nations, pickleball is gaining popularity and finding a growing number of enthusiasts and players. In contrast, padel, which originated in Spain, has seen significant international growth and is played widely in countries across Europe, Latin America, and increasingly in other parts of the world. The rapid global expansion of padel highlights its potential to become a truly universal sport.

Padel, a sport introduced in 1969, shares some similarities with pickleball. Both are played on smaller courts and involve hitting a ball, but padel is distinctive in its use of an enclosed court surrounded by glass walls and is typically played outdoors. As we continue to explore emerging sports, a compelling question arises: Will padel become a global staple like soccer, or will it fade into obscurity? Only time will tell. For now, as a pickleball enthusiast, I'm excited to try my hand at padel and see how this exciting sport fares on the world stage. p.s. Shoot me an email if anyone has played and wants to share your experience with me.

Vice President of Operations

Patty Guzman

We are happy to introduce some new chairpersons for our committees. Jamie Nash has agreed to chair our Communications Committee! He has already started posting to HCPA's Facebook page and has created an Instagram page for us. Please send ideas for posts to Jamie.

While Andree Cates is now focusing on Player Development with Jay McTighe, Mark Covington will take over as Chair of the Session Coordinator Committee. We now have over 30 sessions a week, so Mark will have plenty to do. Thirty may seem like a lot, but many of our sessions are full. Please consider being a session coordinator!

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In Member Committee news, Kathy Buckley hosted a New Members Event on August 10 at Oakland Mills High School. Over 30 members who had been with HCPA for less than six months attended. The new members played lots of pickleball, enjoyed breakfast snacks and had the chance to talk with board members about our association.

Upcoming Events:

- HCPA/HCRP Boo Event at Western Regional Park on October 25th from 6-10pm. Please bring used paddles. Click [HERE](#) for the flyer and here to register [Sign Up](#).
- Potluck at Dill Dinkers in Columbia on October 5th for those who volunteered at the MD Open.
- Thank-you dinner for session coordinators at North Laurel on December 12th at the North Laurel Community Center.

What's New

Joanne Griesser

The Association is run by volunteers.

Our session coordinators set up nets every week for open play. They come early and stay late to run drills. They don't ask for anything except more balls and working nets.

Referees come to our tournaments and leagues to officiate games. They get trained on their own time and attend several practice sessions before they are ready to referee a tournament match.

We have Software Support people who keep our announcements flowing, update website pictures and track our session information. These folks do get recognition when there's a glitch. But the rest of the time you don't even know they are working for you.

We have Trainers who work with Howard County Recreation & Parks teaching beginner classes. They get the joy of introducing the basics of the game to new players, over and over again. They also develop classes for intermediate and advanced players to improve their game. These are all done at low or no cost to members.

The ball machine has a custodian. Someone who stores it at his home and gives

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instructions on its use when you rent it. This person can also be seen with his ball machine at various drill sessions.

There's a person who fixes nets! The pesky issues with nets that people duct taped until that doesn't even work anymore. The nets are refurbished. (Please stop putting duct tape on nets!!!)

An Equipment Manager makes sure there are balls and ice packs and paint sticks and multiple other items that we use daily.

There are board members who start leagues, organize events, attend community meetings, run equipment around and interface with county officials in order to promote pickleball in hopes of getting more courts in Howard County. They had their compensation doubled last year. Now they collect 0x2.

The editor of this newsletter is a volunteer. Responsibilities include chasing people down to get these articles, editing the information, and publishing it for your reading pleasure.

All of these efforts are for you, our members, at the low cost of \$45 (single), \$60 (couple) and \$75 (family) per year. It's a fantastic deal!

HCPA has enabled many of us to make new friends, improve our game, and participate in tournaments and social and community-based events.

You enjoy the benefits of the Association, please consider giving a little of your time to make us successful. "Many hands make light work." *John Heywood*
We have lots of volunteer opportunities. Think about reaching out today. The following is a list of contacts who need you:

Jay McTigh - Player Development, Training: jmctigh@aol.com

Troy Osten - DUPR, Leagues and Tournaments: tdosten@gmail.com

Patty Guzman – Training, Events, Equipment: guzmaniac1@gmail.com

Joe Pagan – Technology Committee: joe.pagan@verizon.net

Gail Kennedy - Referee Training: gailinmd@yahoo.com

Ken Billingsley- Never Mind, There's no Help for Him: deviledeggs@yahoo.com

Joanne Griesser - Events, Member Support: joanne.griesser@verizon.net

Andy Dalal - Outreach and Community Involvement-

Jeff Love - Strategic Planning: jeffreyllove@verizon.net

Treasurer's Report

Ken Billingsley

As of our last Board meeting, the HCPA had over \$74,000 in net cash. This is up from our beginning of the year balance and reflects a sizable investment in equipment over the first six months of the year, specifically new nets. Our annual tournament generated revenues in excess of \$45,000 and our portion of the net income will likely result in \$12,000 to our association once the books are closed. Because of the success of our prior tournaments coupled with our growing membership, we will be required to file a detailed tax return this year.

The funds available to HCPA are providing flexibility to replace assets as well as support the growth of Pickleball at local schools

Pickleball Tutor

Harold White

Many of you may be aware that the Howard County Pickleball Association had offered its membership a pickleball launcher machine called the Sports Tutor. It has served us well over the last several years, but it has recently degraded in its consistency and usefulness. We conducted a search for a new machine to replace the Sports Tutor.

We purchased a machine called the Slinger or Slinger Bag produced by the Slinger Corporation whose headquarters are just outside the Baltimore beltway on Rolling Road in Windsor Mill, MD. We compared prices and capabilities of several machines before picking the Slinger Bag.

It offers all the necessary features for a good pickleball tutor. It has controls for ball velocity, frequency of ball delivery, angle of delivery (manually adjusted), and oscillation just like our old machine. But it adds a control for top/back/no spin on the ball. The remote control has the same two features that our old machine had, i.e., you can pause the machine and control the oscillator feature (on/off). On this machine, the oscillation feature is accomplished by a small and separate device that will fit under the machine and get its power from the machine's battery. The oscillator comes with its own separate drawstring bag.

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The portability of the Sling Bag is very nice. It has large wheels that allow it to be pulled over rough terrain and grass. The balls are easily transported because they can stay in the delivery box at the end of the session and get stored that way when you get back home. It is sufficiently lightweight and compact so that almost anyone can lift it into and out of a car trunk.

The package comes with a camera mount that you attach to the handle of the Sling Bag. You can attach your phone and then record your session for later review. It also has an accessory USB charging cable.

We are considering using Stack Team App to handle reservations. The fee structure has not been determined at this time. We have already started to use the machine at some of the drill sessions at no cost to players.

Stay tuned for more details.

Pickleball is ...?

Gail Kennedy

On the tv show Ted Lasso, there is a player for AFC Richmond named Dani Rojas, a very enthusiastic kid from Mexico. He joyfully exclaims, "Football is Life!"

I won't go so far as to say that pickleball is life, but I will say that pickleball is a lifeline for many of us. Most of the people I encounter on pickleball courts are retired as I am. Our lives changed quite drastically when we left the working world, and pickleball provides an opportunity to get out of the house (daily if we want) for fresh air and exercise. It's also given us the opportunity to connect with other people and sometimes share challenges going on in our lives. (This seems to happen more among women than men.) And even if you're not talking about stuff, your mind is focused on the game and the joy of that amazing point you just had, so you can forget your troubles for a few hours. Thank you to all the people retired and not who've been a lifeline for me. And a shout out to those who faithfully lug nets to the courts, set them up, and run sessions so the rest of us can play.

See you on the court!

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Howard County Special Olympics Pickleball

Bob Sans

It is said that “Good things come to those who wait”. While I have never been considered a “patient” person, I do have some great news to share with you all.

We were considered to be the trailblazers in getting Pickleball incorporated into the Special Olympics Howard County sports program in 2022. Prior to that time, Pickleball was not being offered anywhere in Maryland. I had thought that if it were successful here that we could easily transfer that success into all counties in Maryland. We did help three other surrounding counties start up a program but were getting nowhere with the State accepting Pickleball. Special Olympics puts on a weekend of State Games in June where Athletes come together from all over the State to compete in “sanctioned” sports. Sadly, Pickleball has not been considered to be “sanctioned”. For the first time, we were asked to do a demonstration of the sport for Athletes, Coaches Coordinators, etc. who were attending this past year’s State Games. This demo went well, and it was thought that this might propel Pickleball to being recognized and sanctioned throughout Maryland.

So, we had three years of trying to be “patient” and over the past months since doing the demonstration have heard nothing. I am now happy and most proud to announce that Pickleball has now been elevated to a State-Level sport hopefully starting in 2025. A committee is being formed to further develop the sport, which I and several members of our program, have already volunteered. I hope that by April 2025, we will have many more counties offering Pickleball programs.

Thanks go out to each and every Volunteer who comes primarily from HCPA for all the hard work and sacrifices made to achieve this goal. To those that do not volunteer I can tell you that our Athletes love the sport and are extremely competitive. They see participation in the State Games as the highest level of competition. As a State Level sport, we now have the opportunity to attend and participate in State Games. I can share this true story: 15 minutes into the very first session in 2022 (people will recall how cold it was at Schooley Mills) I was called over to a court where one Athlete asked me (no joke) “So Coach, when do we go to competition?”. That Athlete has been asking me that same question over the past three years to which I have had no answer. I can honestly look him in the eye this coming season and tell him the answer to his question is “Now”.

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Volunteer Coordinator

Kathy Buckley

Well, we did it again! Together we organized and orchestrated a very successful pickleball tournament for the third year in a row. A huge thank you to all of you volunteers who signed up, planned on coming out to help, were able to come out to help (this year was a little tricky with the last-minute switcheroo of location) and did the jobs in a way that made everything run smoothly. The positive compliments came pouring in. Players were happy with the extra effort we took to make it special.

Thank you for all your time and hard work! You are the reason the tournament was a big success.

2024 Maryland Open (UPA World Championship Qualifier)

Ken Billinsley

On Labor Day weekend we hosted 456 registrants, playing in 44 events and 823 games. We want to thank the over 50 volunteers who helped put on this event and make it one of the best Pickleball Tournaments in the region. Medal winners have already begun to receive emails from the UPA (PPA) regarding discounted registration for the National Championship to be held at the PPA event in Texas in November. This year we provided referees for all gold medal matches, over 90% of bronze medal matches and a majority of playoff matches that led into the medal matches.

In addition, we raised over \$3,100 from the raffle to support Grassroots. We expect that amount will go higher following contributions from us here at the HCPA and Dill Dinkers.

If you haven't seen the photos, below are links to each day:

[Day 1 – 2024 MDO](#)

[Day 2 – 2024 MDO](#)

[Day 3 – 2024 MDO](#)

[Day 4 – 2024 MDO](#)

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Gold, Silver and Bronze medals



Some of our volunteers

Our organization has produced a standout tournament for three straight years thanks to the organizing staff and its volunteers. Depending on when you are reading this, we will be holding a thank you event for those who volunteered during the four days. The volunteer event will be held on Saturday, October 5th at the COLUMBIA – Dill Dinkers, from 1-4 pm. We will be holding a raffle for volunteers where once again we get to watch two winners try to put together the JOLLA jenga-chair.

We will be soliciting comments regarding next year's tournament. We sent a questionnaire to this year's players regarding their thoughts on next year. If you received it, please be sure to fill it out. So far, respondents like the indoor location, but are mixed on when to hold it (September or October), but the sample size is small.

We look forward to seeing you on the courts and hope you will join us at next year's tournament as a player and volunteer.

Sincerely,

Your MDO Tournament Staff

Player Development Committee

Jay McTighe

The Mission of the Howard County Pickleball Association (HCPA) includes a provision to "promote and teach all ages" the game of pickleball. To that end, the Association has established a Player Development Committee to support that aim.

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One can think of HCPA player development as a 3-legged stool, consisting of: 1) Classes, Clinics and Boot Camps; 2) Drills; and 3) Open Play sessions. Here is a summary of these offerings and their contributions to player development:

Classes, Clinics and Boot Camps offer direct instruction and feedback on specific skills and strategies, targeting a designated level of player. Since the last Newsletter, HCPA volunteers have taught more than 120 beginners in Pickleball 101 classes offered in partnership with Howard County Recreation & Parks, and three more of these classes are scheduled in October. We have offered two clinics for 40 Novice 1 and Novice 2 players, with another clinic in October. Additionally, Duane St. Clair ran two Boot Camps for 40 Intermediate level players in June and September. Many volunteer instructors have contributed to these player development offerings, and we plan to continue teaching the PB101 classes and expanding Clinics and Boot Camps in the future.

Drills – HCPA offers weekly drills that provide players with focused practice on a variety of skills and strategies. These popular sessions are led by Steve Radant and Geoff Silberman at Locust Park (Friday morning), and James Martin and Donna Kahn at Vantage Point Park (Wednesday evening) and the Ice Rink Courts (Sunday a.m. and early p.m.). A recently added drill session takes place on Saturday mornings at the Oakland Mills High School courts led by Rick Constant and Raquelli Ganel. Many members attribute their improvements to these excellent drill sessions.

Open Play – A unique feature of the HCPA is evident in the wide range of open-play sessions offered each week for players from Novice 1 to Advanced levels. The schedule of these sessions is posted on the Stack Team App, and they allow members to enjoy game play, apply their skills, and gauge their progress against other players. A special thank you is owed to the many volunteers who coordinate these popular and well-attended sessions.

Moving Player Development Forward

HCPA currently has (at least) six members who are nationally certified instructors through the Professional Pickleball Registry. We have also expanded the cadre of volunteer instructors which will enable us to increase our offerings of classes, clinics and drills in the future. If you play at the 3.5 level (or greater), have a teaching background and/or an interest in volunteering as an instructional assistant, contact Jay McTighe (jmctigh@aol.com or 443-838-4311).

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Technology Committee

Joe Pagan

The HCPA technology committee is nearing completion on consolidating our website (used for signing up/renewing memberships) and Stack Team (used for scheduling our sessions) into a single application called CourtReserve.

Many of you who play at Dill Dinkers are already familiar with CourtReserve as a way to sign up for playing sessions on your phone.

This move will ease our membership management and give us a mobile presence - all on a common leading platform.

Training for session coordinators will need to be setup before we roll it out the general membership.

Keep an eye out for further announcements.

Competition Committee

Troy Olsen

DUPR King/Queen and Mini-Tournaments

DUPR (which stands for Dynamic Universal Pickleball Rating) is a global rating system designed for pickleball players at all levels.

HCPA has been granted the use of the Western Regional Park permanent pickleball courts as a result of all our volunteer work for Howard County. We have DUPR events planned for 8 weeks that target different skill levels, so all get a chance to experience these unique rotations. They are a lot of fun testing your skill against those who may be slightly better. During the K&Q sessions, players play matches and move up or down courts based on your performance! A great way to get in games, meet other players from both HCPA and outside of HCPA, and have fun. Look on Stack Team app to sign up! You can also bring your non-HCPA members friends, and they can sign up on Cheddar Up:

<https://pickleball-club-registration-temp-26744.cheddarup.com>

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Women's League

The next iteration of the Women's League starts on September 25th and runs through October 30th at Oakland Mills High School. There will be five weeks of play and a final week of playoffs.

There are 11 teams signed up currently. Even if you can't commit, we recommend joining the subs list as there is a "Team Subs" so the matches are balanced. If nothing else, it's great practice!! All matches will be recorded in DUPR. Women with DUPR rating of 2.75+ are welcome to sign up!

The Maryland Open

For those who missed it, we held the MD Open over Labor Day weekend and had a great turnout. As one of the east coast's largest, and from our knowledge, best tournaments, we hope our membership will continue to enjoy hosting and playing in this great tournament. As always, suggestions are welcome on how to improve this awesome event.

DUPR Club

The HCPA Club is alive and well as a result of all our competitive play. In September, we ranked 189th out of over 4000 clubs that are out there! Hopefully you are enjoying the competition!

HCPA store

Attention Members:

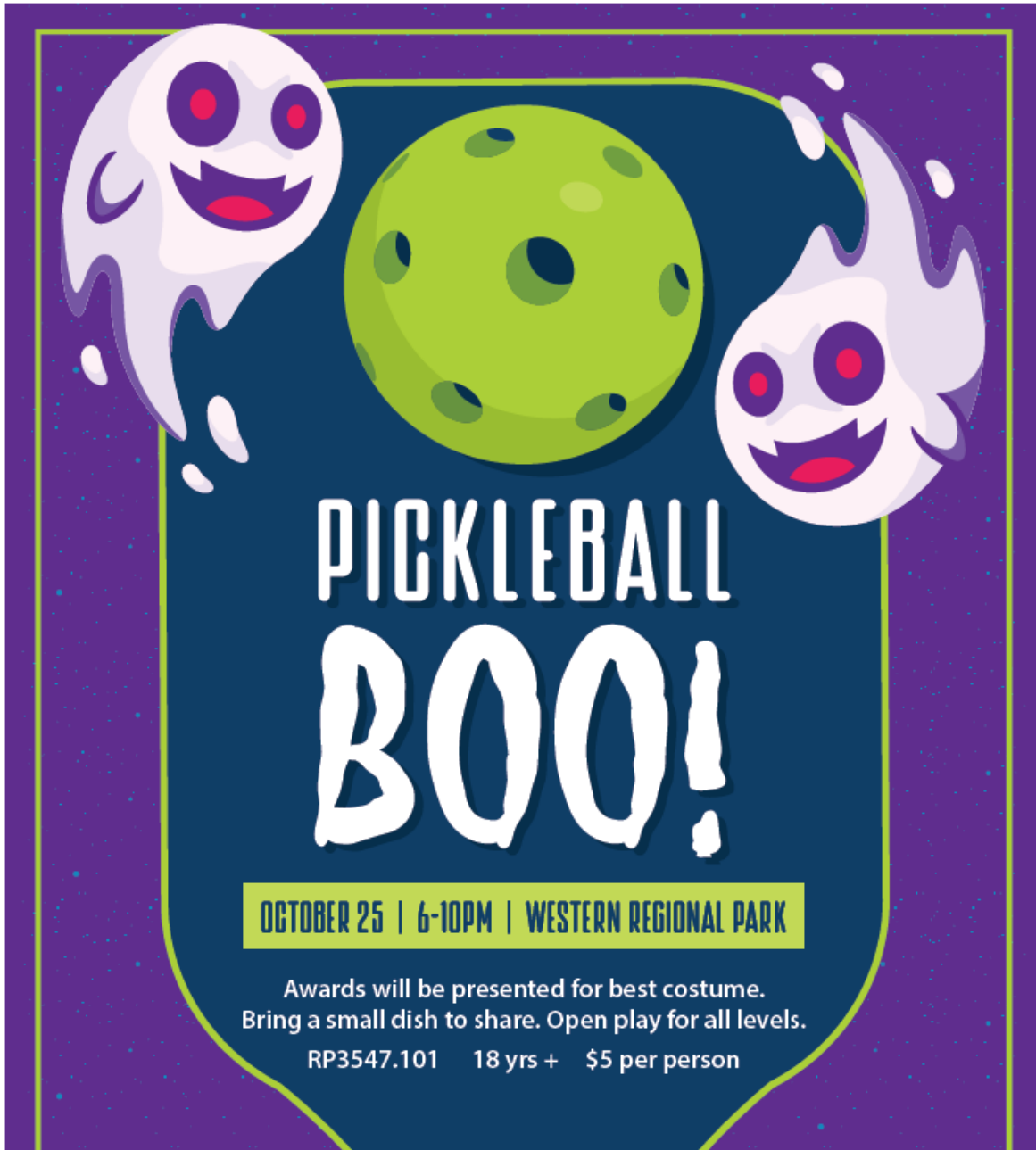
After five years of working with our association, our clothing supplier is closing the HCPA Store. The orders for clothing and hats have been too light to sustain their support. The store is closing at the end of September. It's not too late to place an order if you want to pick up a few logo shirts. HPCA is searching for a new vendor for our pickleball clothing.

We would like to thank The Spoiled Office for their support over the last few years. Remember orders are shipped directly to your home. Order today.

<https://hcpastore.thespoiledoffice.com/>

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Pickleball Boo



 **Howard County**
Recreation & Parks



Information: Scott Ripley, 410-313-7281 or sripley@howardcountymd.gov.

Registration: 410-313-7275 (voice/relay), www.howardcountymd.gov/rap.



Scan to Register

Register here....[Sign Up](#)