

PICKLEBALL REGINA INC.
Annual General Meeting – October 18, 2019
President's Report

Submitted by Karen Rust

I will start my report by reviewing Pickleball Regina's Mission Statement that was adopted at our Organizational Meeting on January 26, 2017:

Our mission is to promote the growth of pickleball as a sport for all ages in the City of Regina by offering organized recreational and competitive play, by ensuring opportunities for the continued development of players in an inclusive and sportsmanlike environment, and to support the development of pickleball facilities.

We have done a very good job over the past year, focussing on this mission and it will continue to guide us going forward.

The growth of our club has been strong as the popularity of pickleball explodes here in Regina and, literally, all over the world. This kind of growth can only happen with a significant amount of time and effort from our many volunteers. Your dedication and commitment is acknowledged and greatly appreciated.

As Donna Loran informed you at the start of the meeting, we now have 731 members in Pickleball Regina (compared to 505 one year ago). This represents a 45% increase!

Many new members have joined Pickleball Regina because they want to learn to play pickleball. Michelle Askew, our Training Facilitator, along with a great team of volunteer trainers have introduced more than 150 people to pickleball this year. Some have continued on in the more laid-back recreational play and some have moved into the more competitive area and are already competing in tournaments. That is the beauty of pickleball – there is a level of play for everyone and we welcome every level of player in Pickleball Regina!

Our volunteers have been busy all year trying to keep up with the demand for more pickleball programs:

- The Monseigneur de Laval school gym has been booked every weekday evening and most of Saturday from fall through spring.
- The indoor facility at Evraz was a new and well-utilized option for play which started in April of 2019, and continues through to early winter. It has also been an excellent facility for training sessions.
- We provided 13 program options throughout the summer; outdoors at the Lakeview courts, and in late summer, at the Douglas Park courts.
- The Regina Christian School has also become another popular Saturday morning play option from fall through spring.

Thank you to all the members who have volunteered to host the many sessions being offered.

As a result of our efforts to encourage the development of dedicated outdoor pickleball courts we now have two sets of six courts – one set at Douglas Park and one set behind the Mahon Ice Arena. Thank you to everyone who came out and lent support to our lobbying efforts.

Having these new courts available next summer will present an opportunity to completely redesign Pickleball Regina's summer program offerings. A survey was sent to all members to obtain your input and a meeting with the City of Regina Recreation manager will be organized this fall to discuss preliminary plans.

We are also making good progress in building a fund to contribute to the development of dedicated pickleball courts. As the financial statements show, the dedicated court fund is now over \$41,000

Barry Thuen, our Facilities and Equipment Chair, will provide more details in the Facilities Update later in the meeting.

The overall level of play of our members continues to improve. Members have participated in Skills training and Club ratings sessions conducted by Brooke Siver, Mark Renneson, and Charles Neufeld. Greg and Karen Smith also conducted some very popular skills sessions at the Lakeview courts. The Pickleball Rebounder and the Pickleball Tutor ball machine are available at Evraz and have also been used to advance members' skills.

Quite a few members have also taken up the challenge of becoming pickleball officials. Eleven Pickleball Regina members are now qualified Level 1 – Scorekeepers. Seventeen are considered Level 2 – Referees and I may soon have company in the category of Level 3 – Certified Referees. We will need twice as many officials for the Regional tournament next summer, so I encourage any member with interest in volunteering as an official to pursue it.

Al Carpentier, our PR & Media Chair, coordinated our media relations. He handled a radio interview, set up a television appearance on Locker Talk and arranged for an interview with the Regina Leader Post. The Leader Post ran a feature article on August 25, immediately after the Paddles on the Prairie, Beverley Butt Memorial Tournament.

Al also arranged to have Ralph Goodale, Canada's Minister of Public Safety, Gene Makowsky, Saskatchewan's Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport and Regina City Councillor, Lori Bresciani all attend the opening ceremonies and bring greetings at the Provincial tournament in June.

Pickleball Regina put on one fun match back in January and two Pickleball Canada sanctioned tournaments this past summer. All were very successful and well-attended. The Provincial Tournament had 142 players over the June 8 – 9 weekend. The Paddles on the Prairie, Beverley Butt Memorial tournament had 150 players over the August 24 - 25 weekend. Both tournaments were held indoors at the Canada Centre West building, Evraz Place. We made the move indoors partly due to the weather forecast, but primarily due to the poor condition of the courts at Douglas Park. Tournaments take a great deal of coordinated effort from our volunteers and I commend you on a job well done!

Feedback on all our tournaments has been very positive and Pickleball Canada has awarded our Club with the distinction of hosting the first Western Canadian Regional Pickleball Tournament in the summer of 2020. This event will be held over three days and could involve as many as 400 players. We will have some more information to share on this topic at the end of the meeting.

In March, we found out that our application for a grant from the New Horizons for Seniors program was approved. The \$13,750 grant that we received was used to purchase the Rebounder, protective eyewear, nets, balls, storage boxes, windscreens, and to subsidize training costs. We have applied for another grant for next year.

The committee structure that was set up following last year's Annual General Meeting is working fairly well. The goal is to delegate more of the operations of Pickleball Regina to the committee level and relieve the board of many of the day to day tasks. I urge all members to think about where they can help out through participation on a committee or in other ways. I also sincerely thank those of you who have already stepped forward and made significant contributions to our rapidly growing organization.

At this point, I would like to give my sincere thanks to our outgoing Vice-President, Noreen Hetherington. Noreen was among the first to offer to help get our new club established and her contributions have been significant. Noreen's background with numerous volunteer boards and sporting organizations has been invaluable. Please join me in a round of applause to show our appreciation.

In conclusion, I can confidently say that Pickleball Regina's second year of operations was very successful, both financially and in terms of growth. With the continued support of our members, the next will be just as exciting. We will address the 2019 – 2020 plans later in the meeting, so I now conclude the President's Report.