

Meet Bud Hauser, Comox Valley's 95 Year Old Pickleball Icon

After a vigorous Friday morning pickleball session, I cornered Bud.

"Bud, some of our newer players don't know you are 95 years old. If I bought you lunch and a pint, would you share your secrets of how you have kept active in mind and body for so many years"?

Licking our lips at the thought of the pint, Bud and I were soon nestled into Cumberland's Waverley Hotel, a thriving institution even older than Bud.

This is Bud's story.

Born in 1929 in Moose Jaw, Sk., Raymond (Buddy) had four older sisters to spoil him and one older brother to torment him.

Growing up on the prairies was not easy during the Great Depression. As a young boy, Bud got a valuable early education, hawking newspapers and shining shoes on Moose Jaw's infamous River Street.

Upon the outbreak of World War II, the Hauser family made many sacrifices, as did the rest of Canada. Four of Bud's older siblings joined the Canadian forces. His Mother and her sister moved to Fort William (now Thunder Bay) to work on an assembly line building warplanes.

"Just to keep me out of trouble," Bud spent two of his high school years at out-of-town boarding schools. Always athletic, Bud played every sport, a trait that has followed him to this day.

Bud joined the Dominion Bank when he was 19. A year later, he married Grace, his high school sweetheart, a fairy tale union that lasted 66 years. They were blessed with four daughters (Beth, Lynn, Jan, and Leslie), seven grandchildren and nine energetic great-grandchildren.

Bud's banking career took him to Regina, Winnipeg and then to Calgary, where he managed one of Toronto Dominion Bank's largest commercial banking centers. Retiring from active banking in 1985, Bud and Grace left Calgary to enjoy Victoria's milder climate and, in 2005 relocated to Courtenay to be closer to daughters Beth and Leslie and their families.

Bud discovered pickleball in 2010 when the game was reintroduced to the Comox Valley. Years earlier, the game had been played in our high schools.

In his own words, this is how Bud frames his pickleball journey:

“Yes, Dave, playing pickleball has undoubtedly enriched and prolonged my life in retirement. The physical benefits are undeniable, and if I am forced to lay off for too long, I certainly notice adverse effects on my body.”

“It is sometimes difficult to make the initial effort to go out and play, but after doing so, I feel better.

The social aspect of the game is of even more importance.

I am most fortunate to have my family's love and support. I am also proud that my enjoyment of the game has now been passed down to my daughters and grandchildren, who are enthusiastic players”.

The genuine friendships I have developed due to pickleball are the icing on the cake. Having this kind of loving social contact with friends, most of whom are younger than my daughters, keeps me young and wanting to stay this way.”

With the chicken fingers and the pint(s) now long gone, Bud's parting comment on living a successful and happy life: **“Marry well, treat others as you want to be treated and keep physically and socially active.”**

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“Thanks, Bud, for sharing your story with us.

As well as being a multi-gold medal winner in the Yuma Arizona Senior Games, you are an inspiration to our community both on and off the pickleball court.”
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Pickleball action at Martin Park, Courtenay August 2024



Dave and Bud on a hot August afternoon.