



Niagara Tennis News

Stories, reports and ideas about Tennis in Niagara-on-the-Lake and beyond.

May 20 2012

Hello Tennis Friends!

For many, it will be true that you heard it here first: On December 12 2011, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Tennis Club was incorporated as an Ontario Not For Profit Corporation, and commenced operations under the new legal structure on January 1 2012. The Club's initial yearend will be December 31 2012. The operations of the former Niagara-on-the-Lake Tennis Association have been folded into the new entity.

In so doing, the Tennis Club follows a pattern increasingly common among community tennis clubs as well as groups in other amateur sports in Ontario. The primary reason for the trend is the increasing reliance by municipalities on the sports themselves to participate in the raising of funds for the development of facilities and programs. If we want things done, we have to do it ourselves to a large degree ... and step one of raising money is becoming incorporated.

Faced with this realization, your Volunteer Committee undertook all the necessary arrangements. Initial Directors were Ian Waddell, Charlene Juras, John Christie and Larry Mantle. Dennis Donnelly was a Director for several months, bringing his expertise in dealing with grants from the Trillium Foundation. He has since found it necessary to relinquish the position.

A debt of gratitude is owed by the membership to this group. It has been an important transition for the Tennis Club and the process has not been an easy one. Please look for opportunities to let the Directors know of your appreciation for their willingness to stand forward and take on this substantial responsibility.

The work of the Initial Directors officially ends at the first **General Meeting**. This meeting has now been set for **Tuesday June 26** at 7:30pm in the Simpson Room of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre.

A new Board of Directors will be elected at the meeting, with nine Directors considered an ideal number. President Ian Waddell is eager to receive ideas and suggestions from all members, either volunteering to serve as a Director or to nominate others. He can be reached by phone or email.

The Directors extend the warmest of invitations to all members to attend **Opening Day** festivities for the Tennis Club on **Saturday June 2nd**. This will be a good opportunity for conversation and questions, as well as a great time to celebrate the start of our 42nd season.

There will be organized games and activities on court from 2:00 to 4:00pm, with a catered meal to be served in the pavilion around 4:30 or 5:00. A special welcome is extended to all those who are new members to the Club this season. Come early and stay late!

What's Happening on the Courts?

The best place to get an answer to that question is from

www.tennisniagara.com

Larry Mantle does a fabulous job with our website, adding more and more to it all the time. Check out the new Court Availability chart when you're looking for open time to practice or meet a friend for a hit.

Friday Nights

They say it takes years to become an overnight sensation. Our Friday Night Mixed Doubles program has been gently growing, but has now become a great success.

The program is managed by Charlene Juras, Marilyn Francis and Jacque Donnelly. They're using the model perfected by Liz Vinassac and Kay Ashwood for our Wednesday Night Ladies League.

The main thing to know is that it's open to all members. Couples often sign up together, but individual men and women members are completely welcome as well. Play is organized as Mixed Doubles, but everyone changes partners every 30 minutes, so there's lots of opportunity to meet and play with a variety of members.

There are two start times each week, one at 6:00, the other at 7:30. Players sign up for one time or the other, for a period of one month. There's a fee of \$5 to cover the cost of balls, with any residual going into the month-end social. Each month is managed as a separate session. The June session is already fully subscribed, but spots are still available for July and for August. For more information, contact Marilyn at marilynfrancis@bellnet.ca or come to play on May 25 after 6:00.

What if you can't commit to each and every Friday? Or what if you'd like to play in June and are disappointed that it's too late? No problem! A long list of subs is needed to deal with all the inevitable last-minute changes. Contact Marilyn to put your name on the Spares List ... and keep your racquet bag ready!



Charlene, Marilyn, Jacqueline



Laura McGregor, Gary Inkster, Scott McGregor



Mike Ottywill, Lynne McKay, Marilyn Francis, Terry Francis



Terri Dick, Joan Chicken, Irene Wall, Monica Berti, Joan Mergelas, Darlene Mancini, Marilyn Francis, Liz Vinassac, Marlene McCarthy, Chris Wormwell, Brenda Parks. In front : Kay Ashwood and Linda Gordon.

Ladies Night

There was such a rush to sign up for Ladies Night this season that the program was fully subscribed by the first week of May!

Thanks to phenomenal work by Liz Vinassac and Kay Ashwood, there will be 32 players every Wednesday (half at 6:00, half at 7:30) throughout the months of June, July and August.

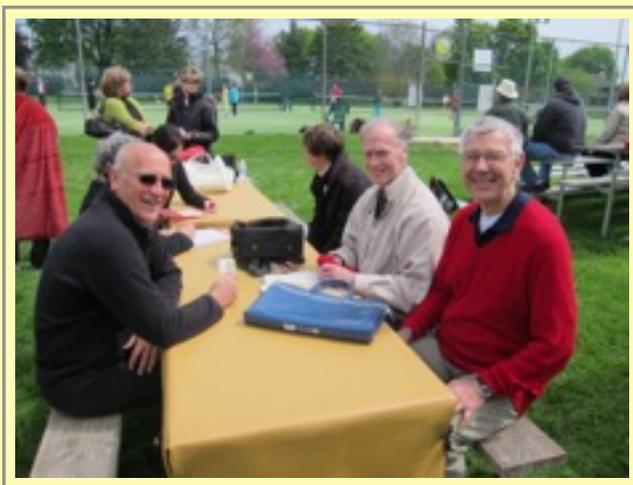
In addition to the Regulars, there's a long list of Alternates who will get lots of playing time when they're called to fill in as needed. And the special once-a-month social evenings include all the players. The first of these is a Chili & Garlic Bread party on May 30.

For more information, contact Kay at kashwood@niagara.com, or drop in to play on May 23rd after 5:30.

Registration Day

Each season, it's traditional for the Club to host registration at the pavilion on the final Saturday of April and the first Saturday of May. The weather was pretty unfriendly, but volunteers and members braved it regardless. Below, President Ian Waddell (right) and Treasurer John Christie (center) are seen with longtime member (and club past president) Tom Braybrook. Thanks to Willow Bakery for helping us with lovely pastries to go with the morning coffee.

Special thanks to Janice Schachtschneider who has processed all your registration information. It's planned that a Directory of Members' contact information will be circulated by email fairly soon. If you're late with your registration, you can download the form from the website.



Men's Night

Your reporter hasn't been to a Men's Night event as yet, so photos will have to wait until the next edition of NTN.

However, players are invited to arrive for round-robin play at either 5:00 or 6:30 every Monday evening.

The program is under the volunteer direction of Flory Massi, who can be reached at florymassi@cogeco.ca for further information.

Monday Morning Drop-In

Monday mornings from 8:30-10:00 are a work-in-progress. Originally designated as a Ladies Round Robin Drop-In, the time slot has become something of a catch-all and is waiting for an identity to develop.

So far, we've been few in numbers, with both men and women members welcome. It's a good spot to come by and meet new people or pick up a game without any advance commitment.

Regular Games

Thanks to fine work by our terrific Captains, most of the Regular Games on our schedule will be in full swing by the first of June. If you'd like to play in one of the Games, or if you're interested in putting together a group of players for a new Regular Game, please contact Rosemary Goodwin at rosemarygoodwin@mac.com.



Top Left: Brenda Parks is Captain of the Game at 9:00 each Tuesday morning.

Above: Estelle Simons is Captain of the Friday morning 8:30 Game (with help from Mary Mathews).

Left: Dominic Ventresca's Saturday morning Game has expanded to 4 courts to meet a surge in demand for the 8:30 gathering.

Coaching for Juniors and for Adult Players

When you see these sharp red uniforms on the court, you'll know that Coaching is In Progress. The Club has contracted with White Oaks to provide instruction services for our members this season, and their professional team is giving us a first-hand look at the expert program offered at the year-round Club.

Clinics for adult players are currently offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6:00, and on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Members can also book private lessons, or put together a twosome or foursome for a semi-private lesson.

Details are available by contacting Oluf Lauridsen at olauridsen@whiteoaksresort.com.

Special thanks to Oluf and the team for presenting mini-clinics for Juniors and Adults at our Registration Day open house.



*Oluf Lauridsen, Karol Szmurlo, Michaela Rivett,
Frank Petrick, Sue Crawford*



*Working with Karol Szmurlo in the Thursday clinic are
Anna O'Neill, Linda Telford, Jacque Donnelly
and Anita Robertson.*

The Junior Program is fully subscribed for the months of May and June, with classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:00 and 5:00, and again on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Bookings are still being accepted for sessions in July and August. Contact Junior Program Director Charlene Juras at charlene.juras@sympatico.ca for information.



Guests & Visitors Welcome!

Niagara-on-the-Lake is a terrific place to raise a family, or to settle down for our later years. A big reason for this is because we welcome visitors from far and wide. Wonderful facilities and amenities serve our visitors while adding greatly to the quality of life of residents.

Say the phrase "Niagara-on-the-Lake Tennis Centre" to someone from out of town, and watch their face light up. The very idea of it conjures an image of something very special ... something in keeping with the image of our Town.

More and more over the past summers, we're seeing visitors to Town traveling with their racquets and coming by Memorial Park in search of Tennis. If you're on the courts and space is available, please feel free to welcome visitors. We can be goodwill ambassadors for our Town and provide experiences that will result in tourists returning for another visit.



Debbie & Byron are members of the Howard Park TC in Toronto. They enjoyed playing on our courts as part of their weekend getaway earlier this month.

... including the Niagara District Senior Games

In the summer of 1912, Niagara-on-the-Lake was host to the Canadian Open Tennis Championships (now known as the Rogers Cup).

The best players in Canada and the USA competed for top honors, and thousands of spectators came to our Town to witness the spectacle. Competition was on grass courts located beside the lake at the foot of King Street.

A hundred years later, Niagara-on-the-Lake remains an ideal location for a Tennis Tournament. Players love having our Town as a destination!

A week from now, we'll host the Niagara District Senior Games Tennis Tournament. There will be 55+ matches on May 26, 65+ matches on May 28, and 75+ matches on May 30. Tennis is a Sport For Life, and will be on display at Memorial Park for all to see.

Winners in the Niagara competition will advance to the Ontario Senior Games in Brampton on August 14-16.

Come on out to cheer the players on!



A Facelift ...

At the moment, there's a very large gap between the image created by the phrase "Niagara-on-the-Lake Tennis Centre" and the reality of it. Closing that gap will be the challenge of the next few years, but in the meantime we make the most of the present and endeavor to use what we have to bring the joy of tennis to as many people as possible.

Your tennis pavilion has undergone a significant facelift in the past month thanks to the devoted efforts of club volunteers. Much needed storage space has been added, such that we now can store equipment both for on-court programs and for social activities in a manner that makes things readily accessible and keeps things in good condition.

The project is the work of the Tennis Club, with approvals granted by the Town. The cost of building materials for the expansion was shared between the Tennis Club and Penner Building Centre, and great thanks are extended to Harry Penner and his team for this support. Substantial assistance in the planning stages was provided by the Quartek Group, and thanks are extended to Patrick MacNeill for his encouragement and help. The Club had additional costs of steel doors and of electrical contracting.



But the project was made possible by the donation of thousands of dollars worth of time. Highly skilled time came from our lead builder, Richard Berti, without whom this project would still be only a dream. If you take a little time to look closely at the new storage space, you'll find much to admire in the attention to detail and wonderful craftsmanship.

Richard is quick to draw attention to his two assistant builders, Max Bade and John Christie. They knew just what to do and how to do it when extra hands and muscle were needed.

The finished product looked a little awkward owing to an au-naturel coating from 20 years of weathering to the original structure. Gerry Pepe came to the rescue with the donation of full-body stain which brings a unified and brighter look to the space.

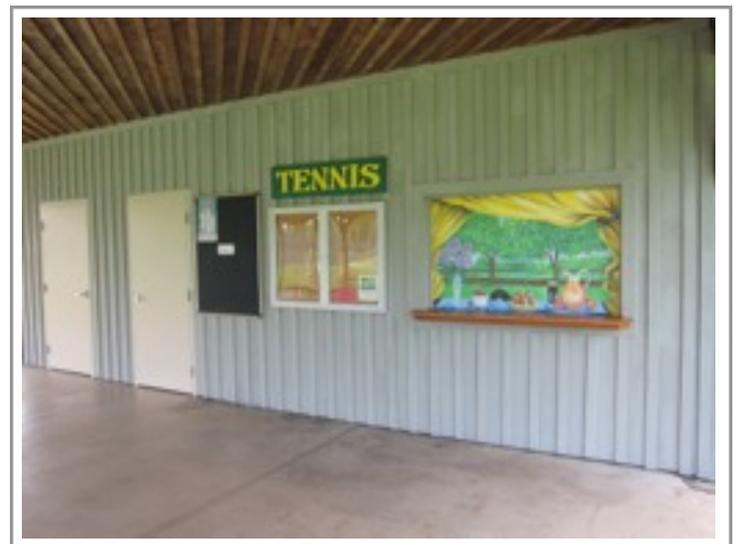
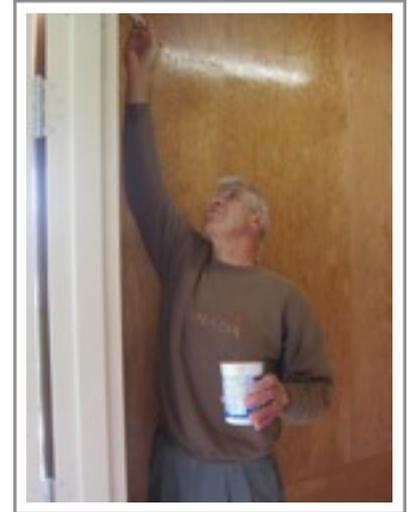
Painting of the doors was handled by Monica Berti and by Chado Brcic, and Victor Gallo proved to be a formidable wielder of the paintbrush with a steady hand and a strong will. Richard applied two coats of varnish to the interior plywood finishes.

The objective is to finish staining the entire building along with the gables, as this will make a much more inviting appearance. By using a somewhat contrasting shade, we'll also be able to highlight the curved brackets that flow from the pillars ... a detail built into the original design by the Quartek Group in 1990. So it's not too late to add your input to this project. Become part of the legacy by letting us know you can help.

A Nice New Feature

The after-dark atmosphere in the pavilion will be friendlier this season, thanks to the addition of an overhead light. The fixture was the suggestion of Marilyn Francis, and was installed by the Town while the electrician was wiring our new storage rooms. It's a dusk-to-dawn light, controlled by a light sensor.





Richard is also the creator of our beautiful shelves and serving counter. They're fashioned from lumber reclaimed from a barn built during the War of 1812. True story! And our beautiful summer mural is the work of artist Dorothy McGregor. What a difference it makes!

... on court as well !

While all this activity was buzzing in the pavilion, another group of volunteers was hard at work putting up our windscreens for the summer. This is a very challenging enterprise at the best of times, and was made even more difficult by cold damp weather at the end of April.

The photos haven't yet arrived from the first Work Session on April 28, but an amazing job with the screens on courts 3 and 4 was captured on May 2nd.

Larry and Pat Young demonstrated why they're such a great Mixed Doubles team, creating a partnership of patience and persistence in mounting the screens to perfection. Larry made a valuable collection of notes throughout the process, designed to make things better and easier in the future. We're learning that this is a task requiring organization and planning.

Many thanks to Pat & Larry, and to the other volunteers who were responsible for our improved on-court look!



Niagara Tennis News has been absent for a while, partly as a consequence of the work involved in getting the pavilion ready for the new season, and partly because of 6 days spent at the Vineland Tennis Academy.

As a result of the latter, the world now has a new Tennis Canada Certified Instructor, with a fresh appreciation for the art of teaching and of the never-ending wonder to be found in our game of Tennis.

It's hoped we'll be able to keep you posted on happenings at the Club on a fairly regular basis from now on.



Best regards,

Rosemary Goodwin
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