

NPC President's Message

I would like to start by saying, "Thank you", for the opportunity to serve as your NPC President over the last eight months. Last year, the executive reflected on our journey as a club and what our vision for the club could/should look like in the year to come. Being fairly new to each other in our roles, we needed to bond and discuss our diversity of perspectives and experiences to see what we could offer as a collective group to the membership. To do this, the executive met many times to discuss and create a new mission statement, we needed a direction in our future endeavors. I believe you will agree that these changes presented to the membership today, are proactive and moving towards a vision for all. Please read them carefully so you understand the proposed changes. If you have questions, please address them at the AGM.

This has been a year of change, constantly adapting on our feet, and moving forward with an executive that is so devoted to creating the best and most versatile programs for you the membership. Thank you. to my fellow executive members for adjusting, adding extra meetings, and continuing to lean into their volunteer roles, while family and work lives have been so much more demanding. Thank you for your personal commitment and resiliency.

I continue to thank my predecessors for their encouraging mentorship and ensuring the clubs strong financial situation, allowing us to continue to take on new initiatives with regards to play and growth within the club. It is an exciting time to be on the Executive as well as a member. Thank you to those who continue to support the club, to those members that have participated in the AGM year after year and welcome to those who are here for their first NPC - AGM. Your participation and opinions are greatly appreciated, by the membership, that expect and rely on the Executive to make sound decisions and goals to continue to move our club forward.

It's not as fun being virtual, and a little disappointing that we cannot get that feeling or the energy from being together in the same venue with committed members. But, we are together now, to discuss the sport that we all love and the synergy that comes from knowing that everyone is trying their best to make the club a little better, so, we move forward and embrace the moment.

This year felt like a start up for a new endeavor, with the partial closing of most facilities over the past year and then the slow reopening and returning to what is now known as "normal" play for the membership. This created a challenge for the executive in how to get our members to return to indoor play. Through a number of meetings and an amazing creative group, I personally feel this executive has been able to offer a plethora of different and exciting sessions to our membership, and they are still creating for an exciting 2023.

In the last year we have seen a massive growth of new players, which is indicative of the growth in pickleball around the world. That being said, this has created a few challenges for schedulers in how to create more time for court play with less availability of space. I believe our executive has done an amazing job in this facet, and I am extremely excited with the number and variety of sessions we are offering in the new year....but with more sessions being offered comes the need of more volunteers - Gary has been working hard to create a group of trained relief coordinators throughout the year, by placing volunteers in a starting position of leadership, while giving some assistance to coordinators when they are unable to attend a session. If this interests you - please contact the club.

There was an abundance of initiatives taken on by the executive this year: play at the Harewood facility - not as fertile as we had anticipated but we continue to look for those gems in the rough. We hosted a number of "skill's n drills throughout the year, as well as some specific sessions that were developed over shorter period of times to allow the membership more playtime with people of similar skills. This seemed to be embraced by the membership or maybe it was the social aspect that occurred after the drilling...League play was created for most levels of play bringing in the competitiveness of play as well as the ability to get to meet and socialize on the court with others. Our Youth program has been moving into the schools across Nanaimo and getting a lot of positive chatter as we move towards a youth league, hopefully in the near future. Big shout out to our "New Member Program", what a wonderful way to start any new endeavor, particularly as an adult, by having someone phone you and welcome you to the club... Cecil has been supporting our new members on their journey to pickleball in Nanaimo - definitely a highlight of the year.....

We have reintroduced the use of the ball machine to the club - hoping to see more use out of that this summer. Along with a big thank-you to Murray S for taking on the management and maintenance of the leaf blower for our outdoor courts.

Once again, training and developmental programs have been offered by Lee as well as Anna and Pete. Very successful programs for all levels, the membership thanks you for your devotion to support this great game. Caron did an amazing job this summer, hosting a number of orientation sessions with outstanding support from the membership. We met with the Regional Director of the Yellowpoint/Cedar area to help with supporting pickleball in their community at some of the local venues. More to come about that in the new year.

This was our first year implementing and refining the club rating policy, definitely a work in progress. The core of our focus in the rating policy is to make members accountable and aware of their skill level in comparison to other players for tournament entry, club play, as well as recreational play. Pickleball Brackets was introduced to the club to support this policy, members have been provided a few sessions where Pickleball Brackets is used as well all Novice players are using this format to identify their rating through play.

We were able to host a number of tournaments this year; thank-you to Nancy Stern with the support of a large group of involved volunteers for our indoor tournament, Dee and Ronnie, Mexican Madness was "Mucho Bueno" and so was the food, Anna and Pete, thank goodness for your perseverance with the weather, the UkraineAid Charity tournament was prosperous in its silent auction - thank-you to all for your time and commitment. And of course, a warm thank-you to all the volunteers that made these events happen - our work is only possible with you. We are also very fortunate to have designated tournament directors for the upcoming year; Caron Usher and LeeAnne Mitchell have stepped up and will be taking this mammoth task on. The membership thanks you!!!

It is with sadness but also with immense gratitude for their years of service, that three of our Executive members are stepping down this AGM. All have contributed in such unique and creative ways and we thank you. I would like to extend a special thank-you to Anna for her position in the club as President and just recently as past-president. Your shoes have been hard to fill, but what an amazing legacy you have created as president in our club. I thank-you for your work and especially for your guidance over the past year. Good luck in your pickleball play this year - may it be fulfilling.

In mentioning that, we have an additional 4 members, who have agreed to let their names stand for election; but, there are still vacancies for more volunteers!! Our club endures on the enthusiasm and endless work of volunteers, events could not happen without their time and efforts in supporting our club and it's programs. I would also like to thank those that are involved in sharing their thoughts and ideas through emails and personal discussions. These ideas are welcomed and discussed - this is your club and the Executive are here to listen and act upon what we feel the membership needs - please keep communicating with the Executive and amongst yourselves - this is how the club moves forward.

I'd like to thank my co-Executives for their invaluable contributions to the club, and to those that have agreed to stay on for another year.

This year our Executive is ready to handle what ever challenges and opportunities we may encounter as we navigate into the new year.

Here's to a great 2023! Stay safe and stay healthy!

Deb