

THE COURT REPORTER

Newsletter of the Walnut Creek Racquet Club

March 2026



*Stephanie Areen
lines up a forehand.*

Dan Kaplan

PHOTOGRAPHY

Walnut Creek Racquet Club

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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Happy March!



Garvin Tom
2026 WCRC President

Lobbers! Moonballers! Who likes playing them? I can probably answer that in one word: nobody. Some people like to say that it's not "real tennis," but let's face it...it is a part of the game, but it's a part that many of us don't like facing. It tests your patience and is very frustrating to play against at times, but it's not impossible to beat. You see more of it at the 3.0 and 3.5 levels, but when you're playing at 4.0 and 4.5, you see it more rarely because players at those levels tend to have the skills and gameplan to beat it. So what are the strategies to use when you play a lobber?

Attack the net. You don't need to rush the net right away. Show some patience (a little more on that later) and pick your spots. Wait until you hit a nice deep shot (preferably to their backhand side) and follow in, and prepare to hit an overhead, so make sure you warm up on overheads. Attacking the net puts a lot of pressure on your opponent to hit a passing shot, which makes them feel uncomfortable and forces them to give you a more favorable shot. One WCRC member who I think does a great job at this is Martha Matrisian. She's very effective at coming to the net and forcing the issue against lobbers, and that's one reason why she's a 4.5 now.

Move your opponent around. If you can do it, hit the ball from side to side, especially in singles. Run them around. Tire them out. You can also hit a shorter shot to create a larger angle. It might be tougher to do in doubles because you also have a net player to contend with, but you can also hit a drop shot to force them to move up. It doesn't have to be perfect; just short enough so that they have to move. Many of them don't feel comfortable playing closer to the net. Also, keep it low to give them an even tougher shot to hit.

Patience. The previous two strategies won't work if you don't have patience. Wait for the right shot where you can get them on the run or deep on their heels to attack the net. And when you're moving the ball around, make sure you have enough time to set yourself up. It's okay to hit it in the middle of the court if you don't have the time to set up properly, but you should have enough time on a lot of those lobs.

Of course there are more strategies, and these are just three of them. Hopefully a combination of these and others that you may find will help you against those pesky lobbers.

See you on the courts.

Garvin Tom

Happy
St. Patrick's
Day



M EMBERSHIP

Welcome to Our 30 New Members
Current Membership: 1,184

Alex Agurto	Sacramento	4.5	Laurie Lowery	Orinda	4.0
Kalliope Bellesis	Oakland	4.0	Francisco Macias	Alamo	4.5
Deirdre Burke	Napa	4.0	Shari McAneney	Concord	4.0
Rick Chan	Walnut Creek	3.5	Rebecca McAuliffe	Lafayette	4.0
Peter Dave	Walnut Creek	3.0	Scott McCaughin	Alamo	3.5
Paul David	Dublin	3.0	Lisa Ng	Danville	4.0
Jeff Froula	Walnut Creek	3.5	Siddharth Nigam	Walnut Creek	4.0
Joseph Ibrahim	Concord	3.0	Mike O'Hara	Danville	4.0
Faruk Jaffer	Walnut Creek	3.0	Jane Bernardino	Concord	2.5
Alexis Johnson	Fair Oaks	5.0	Mohammed Sameer	Walnut Creek	3.5
Mark Joseph	Walnut Creek	3.5	Krishna Shanmugam	Dublin	4.0
Jessica Kelmon	Walnut Creek	3.0	Mukund Swaminathan	San Ramon	4.0
Robin Kenny	Danville	3.0	Ethan Voskoboynik	Walnut Creek	3.0
Nancy Korich	Moraga	4.0	Dean Williams	Walnut Creek	3.0
Yan Kozel	Walnut Creek	3.0	Gina Zahedi	Alamo	2.5



Membership questions contact:
Pam Maloney at 925-787-3970 or
email at: pam4tenis@gmail.com

**Scan here to
renew or sign up for
WCRC membership.**



NEW MEMBERSHIP RAFFLE

Each month a random draw
will pick a WCRC member's
name to receive free WCRC
membership for a year!

This month's winner is:

Lucas Askew



WCRC Captains Show Off Their USTA Swag

On a freezing night in February, long time WCRC captains all had a match on the same night and were all wearing their USTA captains jackets'. The captains receive a jacket for captaining over 50 teams for USTA. Lisa has 84, Tammie has 123 and Glenn has 97. Cara Mia Barnacascel was also there but didn't have her jacket with her (she has captained 101 teams!)

Left - Right: Lisa Italia, Tammie Snyder (the Hobbit in the middle) and Glenn McBee.

Serving for the Common Good: Tatiana Omolo

Interview and article by Ian McLaughlin

One of the hallmarks and greatest strengths of Walnut Creek Racquet Club has its wide-ranging diversity, and you'd be hard-pressed to find someone who brings a more diverse background to the club than WCRC member Tatiana Omolo, both ethnically and through her unique life perspective borne of experience.

With her eclectic background, Tatiana is a true "citizen of the world" who views our local community through a global lens. She believes strongly in supporting everyone in our community, especially our most vulnerable populations, through her main passion and profession as a social worker.

Tatiana and her older brother Thomas actually hold Russian citizenship through their mother, who hails from Russia. She spent her early years in Mombasa, Kenya. However, her biological father is Kenyan, so that's where Tatiana completed her earliest childhood education.

Tatiana emigrated to the United States and the Bay Area when she was about seven years old because her stepfather Mark Chase, "dad" to Tatiana, was working in Kenya as a bush pilot, received a job offer in the Bay Area, and brought the whole family with him; they initially settled in Livermore but moved to Walnut Creek in the late 1990's. Mark quickly became a well-known fixture on the courts at Heather Farm due to his long history of playing tennis through high school and with his own father, also an avid player.

Mark is still regularly found on the courts at Heather Farm and has competed in USTA leagues for many years through WCRC, but it took him a long while and many invitations to get Tatiana out to play, despite her athletic background.



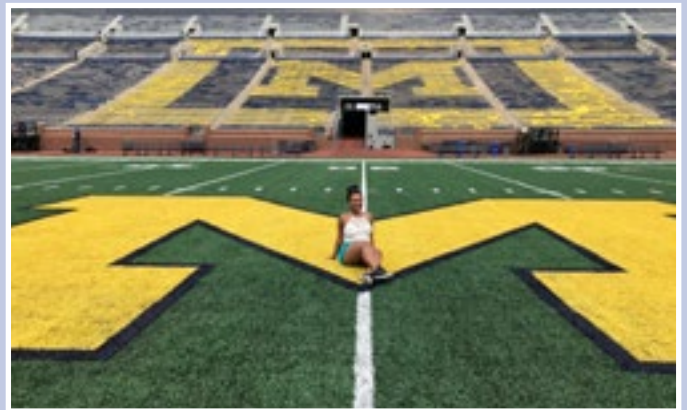
After moving from Livermore to "the nut", Tatiana completed her education in the Walnut Creek School District, starting at Indian Valley Elementary and continuing through WCI and Las Lomas High School, where she earned her diploma. Tatiana's younger brother Nik was born in Walnut Creek as well. Through middle school and high school Tatiana was always involved in athletics, and her main sport was soccer, which she played for the Las Lomas Knights. By the time Tatiana went to college, she began playing rugby instead, both at Pomona College in Southern California after she transferred there from Wellesley, and at Cambridge University when



she studied abroad.

After college, Tatiana briefly remained in the Los Angeles area before heading to the University of Michigan for graduate school (Go Blue!) By that time, Tatiana had refined her career interests down to the disciplines of public policy and social work as the areas where she could effect positive change in the world, and she earned a Masters degree in each field at Michigan. Her first position after graduate school was with a nonprofit in the Detroit area called "Mothering Justice", where she focused on lobbying and grassroots organizing to create better policies to support women and mothers, including access to childcare, paid leave, and reproductive rights.

But as someone who spent her formative years in Walnut Creek and found navigating the policymaking landscape in Michigan to be tiresome and frustrating, the allure of god's country eventually drew Tatiana back home to the Bay Area, and after working for a few years in lobbying and organizing in Detroit, Tatiana decided that she wanted to pursue a career as a clinical social worker so that she could do one on one work directly with at-risk populations and the people who too often fall through the cracks in our social foundation. As with many professions, each state has their own licensure requirements for clinical social workers, and Tatiana is currently pursuing her California license, for which she needs an additional 2,000 hours of clinical experience. As an associate clinical social worker Tatiana has worked with both Bay Area Legal Aid and the San Mateo County Bar Association's private defender program toward gaining the hours she needs for full licensure. It's clear that Tatiana is pursuing a passion more than just a job, because her desire is to use her professional skills and life experience to guide others through the byzantine maze of social systems that can be so difficult to navigate for the underserved populations that need them the most.



When she's not working, Tatiana enjoys spending time with her family that is still in the area, especially her brother and sister in law and her two nieces, who are the fun ages of three and seven. At home in Crockett, where she lives with her boyfriend Skylohr, Tatiana enjoys baking and watching horror movies. She's also mother to "Anza", a mixed breed rescue dog she adopted from



"Joybound People and Pets", the organization founded by Tony LaRussa that most people still know by its former name, "ARF". Tatiana takes many long hikes with Anza, who is very energetic and obsessed with hunting and digging, so much so that soon they may reach China on the polar opposite side of the globe through all the digging Anza does on their hikes.

Although it took Tatiana some time to accept her dad's invitations to play tennis, eventually she was looking for a new way to stay fit, something that was more fun than simply running or working out at the gym, so she took up her dad's offer and started playing some tennis. Given her athletic

Tatiana Omolo continued...

background Tatiana has taken to the new sport, and like many new players she joined a USTA flex league in 2026 to connect with other players. But once she was exposed to the welcoming and inclusive tennis community at Heather Farm, she became a more consistent presence at the club.

She's currently playing for Cara Mia Barnacascel's "Deuces Wild" USTA team, which she first joined in 2024, the exact way so many WCRC players began their USTA careers. (And it's a true family affair because Tatiana's mom Irina Chase also plays for Cara Mia's team.) One thing that drew Tatiana in so deeply to Walnut Creek Racquet Club was that Cara Mia and the entire tennis community at Heather Farm is so positive, welcoming, and unassuming that it's been an easy and enjoyable transition to the new game. Tatiana contrasts our tennis community with the first time she considered taking up the game while she was living in Oakland, where in order to access the same fantastic amenities and high quality of play we enjoy at Heather Farm (a municipal facility),

the only option was to join a prohibitively expensive private club. That type of exclusivity is antithetical to Tatiana's core values, so she waited until she found the right environment to jump fully into tennis.

At WCRC and Heather Farm she has found such an environment, where everyone from the players and captains to the office staff are unassuming, welcoming, and positive, creating the atmosphere we all enjoy so much at Heather Farm, along with the tremendous ethnic and background diversity represented by the WCRC membership. That's the perfect atmosphere for WCRC member Tatiana Omolo, who is always looking for a way to improve her serve, both on the court and while serving for the real win, the common good. ▲



Community Service Day



SATURDAY, APRIL 18th

Sign Up Now!

Community Service Day has moved to spring and there are so many opportunities to come out and give back to your community!

This year's event features **indoor and outdoor projects** for **all ages** at parks, gardens, community centers, libraries, and schools.

Community Service Day

Saturday, April 18th



Projects
for All Ages
Schools
Parks & Gardens
Libraries & Arts
Non-Profits

Volunteer Today

www.walnut-creek.org/service

ARTS & LIBRARIES

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

CREEKS

DOWNTOWN

PARKS-GARDENS-
RECREATION-WILDLIFE

SCHOOLS



Tennis News



Another CPR Training in the Books!

Thanks to our WCRC member David Pintado for offering his services to help train our WCRC community in CPR Training.





Tennis News



WCRC's Jamie Guzzaldo Will be Missed

by Cara Mia Barnacascel

Such a sad and heartbreaking day as we said goodbye to a dear friend who battled Parkinson's. Jamie was taken far too soon. Sean's first combo partner and the beloved husband of one of my longtime tennis partner and friend, Nancy. A truly great guy with a heart of gold. You will be deeply missed, Jamie Guzzaldo



OPERATING HOURS AT WCTC

Monday – Friday: 8am-10:00pm • Saturday & Sunday: 8am-8pm

March 2026

SPRING FORWARD!

Sunday, March 8th is daylight savings time so set your clocks ahead one hour!

MARCH PASSHOLDER SPECIAL

This month all passholders will be eligible for a drawing for some exciting prizes. One lucky winner will get a new Head Boom Tennis racquet. Other prizes include a Head Radical Pickleball Paddle and a 4-month extension to their current pass. All winners will be emailed and announced in the April edition of the WCRC Court Reporter.



SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Looking for fun summer activities for your kids? Lifetime Activities offers a variety of camp options starting on June 1st and running weekly through August 16th:

- Little Tennis and Rallyer Camps (ages 4-6) – NEW extended option available
- Youth Improvement Tennis Camps (ages 7-15)
- PM Paddle Sports, Activity & Swim Summer Camp (ages 8-15)
- All Day Tennis, Paddle Sports & Swim (ages 8-15)



SPRING SESSION STARTS THIS MONTH!

Spring 1: Mar 9- Apr 19 | Spring 2: Apr 20- May 31

Registration for youth and adult tennis and pickleball programs is open now, and there are still spots available in your favorite classes. Check online or in the office for availability regarding specific classes and drop-in options.

TENNIS IS BETTER WITH FRIENDS - SPRING SESSION PROMOTION

Learning is more fun together. This Spring, if you or your child registers for one of our introductory classes, you can bring a friend or family member and get 50% off the second registration. View full terms and conditions here.

NEW COURT USAGE FEES EFFECTIVE MARCH 1ST

Please be informed that new Court Usage Fees will be effective March 1st. We thank the community for their ongoing support and cooperation. Adjusting fees on a cyclical basis is key to ensure that Lifetime is positioned to retain capable and experienced team members, maintain service levels, and continue to provide positive tennis and pickleball experiences for all.

New Court Usage Fees (effective 3/1/26)	
Senior Annual Standard Pass (Age 60 & Over)	\$275
Senior Annual Plus Pass (Age 60 & Over)	\$375
Annual Standard Pass (Ages 16-59)	\$345
Annual Plus Pass (Ages 16-59)	\$425
4 Month Standard Pass	\$140
Youth Pass (15 and under)	\$170
90 Min Court Usage Fee	\$8
Advanced Reservation Fee for Standard Pass Holder	\$7
Advanced Reservation Fee	\$16.50

Visit us online at www.lifetimeactivities.com or stop by the the office at 1751 Heather Drive.
Please call with any questions at 925-945-0105 or 925-945-1102.

CALENDER OF EVENTS

2026

Mar — Apr — May

Mar 13	USTA 40+ DT Season Closes
Mar 14-16	USTA 55+ Mixed Nationals
Mar 15	USTA 40+ Season Closes
Mar 15	USTA 18+ Mixed Season Closes
Mar 16	USTA 55+ Season Opens
Mar 23-27	USTA 40+ DT Playoffs Round 1
Mar 26-29	USTA 18+ Mixed Playoffs Round 1
Mar 30-Apr 3	USTA 40+ DT Playoffs Round 2
Apr 2-5	USTA 40+ Playoffs Round 1
Apr 2-5	USTA 18+ Mixed Playoffs Round 2
Apr 6	USTA 18+ Season Opens
Apr 6	USTA 18+ DT Season Opens
Apr 6-10	USTA 40+ DT Playoffs Round 3
Apr 14	WCRC - Summer Singles League Opens
Apr 9-12	USTA 40+ Playoffs Round 2
Apr 9-12	USTA 18+ Mixed Playoffs Round 3
Apr 10	USTA 65+ Season Closes
Apr 13	WCRC Summer Singles League Opens
Apr 16-10	USTA 40+ Playoffs Round 3
Apr 19	WCRC - WING Singles League Closes
Apr 20	USTA 40+ Team Registration Opens
Apr 20-24	USTA 65+ Playoffs Round 1
Apr 27-May 1	USTA 65+ Playoffs Round 2
May 1	WCRC - Summer Doubles League Opens
May 1	WCRC Calcutta Party & Auction
May 2	WCRC Calcutta Tournament
May 8-10	USTA 40+ Sectionals (Opt 1)

TREASURER'S REPORT

Cara Mia Barnacascel

January - December, 2025



Income

Total for League Dues	\$5,586.65
Membership Dues	27,931.50
Miscellaneous Income	62.38
Total for Tournament Dues	\$5,311.77
Total for Income	\$38,892.30
Gross Profit	\$38,892.30

Expenses

Board Meeting	1,268.12
Board appreciation dinner	\$962.34
Captains Meetings	1,256.61
Contract Labor	641.12
Contributions	500.00
Equipment	221.76
Gifts	486.10

League Expenses

Board Appreciation Dinner	962.34
Board Meeting	1,268.12
Captains Meetings	1,774.53
Contract Labor	641.12
Contributions	500.00
Equipment	221.76
Gifts	486.10
Total for Fall Mixed League Expenses	\$4,409.93
Total for Summer Singles Expenses	\$974.75
Total for Winter Doubles Expenses	\$2,082.06
Total for League Expenses	\$7,466.74
Nationals Fee	1,424.00
Office Supplies	262.38
Post Office Box	234.00
Newsletter Printing	99.99
Building Repairs	3,655.16
Sectionals Fees	3,960.00
Software	917.91
Supplies	1,331.20
Taxes	25.00
Tax Preparation	335.00

Tournament Expenses

Calcutta Expenses	\$12,655.62
Mid Summer Tourny Expenses	\$1,102.10
Total for Tournament Expenses	\$13,757.72
Website	1,617.50
Total for Expenses	40,940.57
Net Operating Income	-\$2,048.27

Balance December 31, 2025	\$67,867.92
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Calcutta Party/Auction	May 1, 2026	Summer Doubles League	May 1 - Sep 7, 2026
Calcutta Tournament	May 2, 2026	Fall Mixed Doubles	Sept. 1 - Feb 18, 2027
Longest Day Tournament	June 20, 2026	Summer Doubles Tourny	Sept. 19-20, 2026
Mid-Summer Tournament	Aug 1, 2026	Summer Singles Tourny	Oct. 9-11, 2026
Summer Singles League	Apr 13 - Sep 6, 2026		

Lifetime Activities What's Happening at the Courts?

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Senior Annual Standard Pass (Age 60 & Over)	\$275
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Annual Standard Pass (Ages 16-59)	\$345
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