

THE COURT REPORTER

Newsletter of the Walnut Creek Racquet Club

June 2026



Noa Ramo-Larios sets up for a forehand winner.



Dan Kaplan

PHOTOGRAPHY

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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Happy June!

Do you ever see players do things where you end up scratching your head? You know – things that players keep on doing but shouldn't. Here are a few examples that stand out. You might say that these qualify as pet peeves as well.



Garvin Tom
2026 WCRC President

Standing near the service line to volley. Now, I'm not talking about everyone here. There are certain levels where volleying off the net would be more effective, like 3.0 or 3.5 women where you tend to see more lobs and high floaters. But for the rest of us, this puts us at a disadvantage. First, most volleys you hit from the service line will be from below the waist, so now you're forced to hit the ball up and over the net. Second, you limit yourself on angles and lose the offensive positioning that you would get from being at the net. You might think that you're giving yourself more time by standing near the service line, but that time is insignificant compared to the advantage gained by being close to the net.

Too many lobs. If the lobs are working, then great! There are some people who are specialists at lobbing, but if your lobs aren't working – either they're going long or your opponents are putting them away at the net – then it's time to use another strategy. Lobs shouldn't be the number-one option for most players. Obviously, you must keep it between the sidelines like all shots, but now you need to worry about depth. If the lob is too short, then you just set your opponents up for an easy putaway, or even worse, a ball to your partner's throat. Instead, force your opponents to hit volleys, and put a little more topspin on your groundstroke to dip the ball at their feet or hit it between your opponents.

And finally, whenever I see a team play two back at the baseline, way too often do I see their opponents continue to hit the ball crosscourt to one of them. Why? How about hitting the ball down the middle between your opponents when they're both playing back? First, it's a much safer shot because you're now taking the sidelines out of play. And second, now you force your opponents to communicate with each other to see who's going to take it. I get a lot of cheap and easy points that way because of miscommunication. Try it out and I guarantee that you'll win some points that way, too.

See you on the courts.

Garvin Tom



M EMBERSHIP

Welcome to Our 8 New Members
Current Membership: 1,207

Alexandra Arenson	Moraga	5.0	Valerie Peters	Walnut Creek	3.5
Patrick Grafton	Napa	4.0	Manish Singh	Alameda	4.0
Sabrina Grafton	Napa	3.5	Michael Treppa	Clayton	3.0
Chamane Ifland	Vacaville	4.0	Jim Zygutis	Alamo	3.5



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

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:

Dan Helmer



NATIONALS BOUND ! ! !

Nori Swanson's 40+ 4.5 are on their way to nationals! They went 17-3 in matches at Gold River over the weekend to take sectionals...it was a 3-2 win over Mt. View in the (very windy) finals for the win.



Dana Greason, Mariia Gryukova, Marina Wills, Leone Patterson, Britni Arguelles, Seena Shankar, Nori Swanson, Molly Neal, Fenny Widjaja, Jamille Lee, Alexandra Gunnell.

Also going to nationals but not photographed...Sara Schipani, Sonnett McKinnon, Chrissie Costamagna.

Nicole O'Brien

Interview and article by Ian McLaughlin

It's well established how important (and undervalued) our teachers and educators are in molding the next generation. For the best teachers it's more of a passion than just a profession. That is definitely the case for WCRC member Nicole O'Brien, who is preparing to begin her thirtieth year as a public elementary school teacher with the Antioch Unified School District this year, where she teaches 3rd grade at Jack London Elementary School. That's certainly a lot of "back-to-school nights", progress reports, and parent-teacher conferences!

A Bay Area native who grew up in Saratoga, Nicole knew she wanted to be a teacher from a very young age, due to the influence of her own second grade teacher, Ms. Gomes, which underscores how much of a lasting impact good teachers have on their students' lives.



Nicole also has an extensive tennis resume that dates back to her youth in Saratoga, where her stepfather first got her out on the courts around age 7. Nicole enjoyed the sport and it suited her well, so she began taking lessons, and before long she started competing in junior tournaments, while also playing regularly at the renowned Bay Club Courtside in Los Gatos. Needless to say, Nicole had found her sport, and she continued playing junior tournaments, then competed on the varsity team for Saratoga High School. After high school Nicole attended St. Mary's College in Moraga. Her tennis game was so well honed at that point that she played for the St. Mary's tennis team for four years. Nicole earned both her B.A. and her teaching credential from St. Mary's, while also competing on their tennis team.

After college Nicole moved to Walnut Creek to embark on her teaching career. She started like many

newly-minted educators do, as a student-teacher. She supplemented her student teaching income with a side gig as a server at Sunrise Bistro, which offers the "best breakfast in town" according to Nicole.

During that phase of her life Nicole took a lengthy hiatus from tennis, and she didn't even pick up a racquet for nearly a decade. She found that she didn't actually miss the sport due to her burnout from playing so much tennis through high school and college, and as she was so busy preparing to



launch her professional career.

Armed with her full teaching credential and her student-teaching experience, Nicole was offered a full-time position with the Antioch Unified School District in the late 1990s, before her daughters were born, and she's taught all elementary school grade levels in the district during her lengthy career. She enjoys teaching elementary school kids because she's able to witness and foster so much social, emotional, and academic growth in her young students.

As she settled into a job she enjoyed, Nicole also settled in Pleasant Hill to raise her two daughters, Kiley and McKenzie, who were born shortly after Nicole

started teaching full time.

Both Kiley and McKenzie were educated through the Mt. Diablo Unified School District in Pleasant Hill and are now adults, with Kiley (now 22 years old) about to graduate in June from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo as a public health major and applying to nursing school, and younger daughter McKenzie (almost 21) studying criminal justice at Boise State University and planning to pursue a career as a criminal investigator. Clearly Nicole's daughters take their education seriously and have been instilled with ambitious career aspirations.

Even after nearly three decades in the profession, Nicole still loves teaching, and that passion comes through in her work.

This year she was nominated as "teacher of the year" for the Antioch Unified School District, one of the highest honors a teacher can receive and well-deserved.

When she's not teaching or playing tennis Nicole can often be found hiking with her energetic canine companion Luna, a six-year-old mixed breed who accompanies Nicole on hikes through their favorite destination, the trails of Briones Regional Park.

And on top of it all, Nicole retains her lifelong passion for the game of tennis. After a second hiatus from the game due to her hectic schedule, Nicole has been a steady presence at Heather Farm once again since 2023, where she regularly competes in USTA league as a 4.5 player on several



teams. While Nicole used to compete primarily in singles, she's now mainly a doubles player ("My body's too old, I can't handle singles anymore," she says with a self-effacing chuckle.) Like almost everyone who plays for WCRC, what Nicole loves most about Heather Farm is the community of people at the club, which she describes as the perfect mix of fun and competitiveness, and a huge part of her social life.

WCRC member Nicole O'Brien is many things, including a devoted parent and an excellent tennis player. But first and foremost she's an educator and the embodiment of the



Nicole O'Brien continued...

words sung so beautifully by Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young in the early 1970's: "teach your children well ... feed them on your dreams ... and know they love you." The next time you see her at Heather Farm, feel free to bring Nicole an apple if you're the type who wants to be the teacher's pet. ▲



2026 WCRC Men's & Women's Summer Singles League Registration Form



Full Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Email _____

NTRP Rating: _____

Great prize selection for winner and runner-up in each division!
Keepsake items for all participants!

I would like to enter the following divisions:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Women's 3.0 | ☐ Men's 3.0 |
| ☐ Women's 3.5 | ☐ Men's 3.5 |
| ☐ Women's 4.0 | ☐ Men's 4.0 |
| ☐ Women's 4.5/5.0 | ☐ Men's 4.5/5.0 |

I am a: ☐ WCRC Member (\$25)
☐ Non-Member (\$35)

Checks to: Walnut Creek Racquet Club
c/o Steve Lehmer
P.O. Box 30173
Walnut Creek, CA 94598
Or Online: wcrc.net/login

Dates: April 20 - Aug 30th
Entry Fee: \$25 WCRC Members
per bracket: \$35 non-WCRC Members
Note: 4.5/5.0 combined in regular season, but will have separate playoffs/championship.
Scheduling: This is an open schedule. Players are responsible for scheduling their own matches. Players will be provided with a contact list of participants in their division.
Format: Best two out of three sets. When opponents agree, a super tie breaker (10 point) can be used in lieu of the third set. Winner gets unopened can.
Match Site: Any site mutually agreed upon
Scoring: The winner is responsible for reporting the match score by logging on to www.wcrc.net
Standings: Division standings will be updated on a real time basis as scores are posted
Tournament: End-of-season tournament with draw determined by league standings.
Tournament will begin in Sept, with 1 round per week, scheduled by player arrangement. Hosted tournament at Heather Farm scheduled on October 9-11 for Semis and Finals.
A minimum of 4 players are required to generate a draw.

Questions? Call Steve Lehmer at (925) 285-0028 or via e-mail Lehmer@pacbell.net



Tennis News



4.0 WC-A 40+ Day Team

The WC Day 4.0A Team, captained by Stacey Blackman and Megan Patterson, competed at Sectionals in Fremont from 4/28-4/30. We finished 1st in our bracket with a 3-0 record (8 wins, 1 loss)!

Thursday morning brought a rematch against last year's Finals opponent, Marin Tennis Club. We knew the competition would be tough, and the match absolutely lived up to expectations. It was a battle across the board. Unfortunately, this year our opponents took home the NorCal Title in a hard-fought 1-2 match that came down to an 8-10 tie-break. It truly could not have been any closer. We are incredibly proud of our team this season - the support everyone showed one another, the new partnerships formed, and the friendships built along the way made this journey so special.

Pictured below - Megan Patterson, Patricia Birks, Ana Larmer, Stacey Blackman, Kristen Foster, Cassie Kim, Corazon Bellamy, Margaret Harrison, Laurie Radonovich, Arwa Kad-doura & Anne Poirier

Team Members not pictured - Christine Hohenstein, Babe Franey & Sonia Barnoff



Tennis News



A new team makes good!

We put together a new group of players and had a great 40+ 3.0 Men's season, winning our league and making it to Sectionals. Which is always a challenging and learning experience. This one proved the same. Higher level tennis, more pressure and great fun. No, we didn't win it all, but there were some victories and certainly good times and of course there is the USTA pin and a really nice USTA hat!. We had a great season!

Derryl Acosta, Michael Acosta, Lonnie Arroyo, Gaurav Chohan, Faruk Jaffer, Bruce Koliha, Dan Kwan, Albert Malvehy, Richard Morigin, Ahmad Nisar, Vikas Prakash, Brian Rong, Frank Wang, Joe Ibrahim (Co Captain), Glenn McBee (Captain)





Tennis News



65+ 6.0 Men's Team

Our team worked hard coming from last place to take a place in sectionals. We had to play sectionals with a number of our strong players unable to play due to injuries and ineligibility to play in sectionals. Nevertheless, we had a great time in Fremont. We saw the other Walnut Creek A team. We took some lines and lost some lines. In the end Sunnyvale dominated and will go again to nationals. Next year is another opportunity. Alan Roth, Captain of Walnut Creek A 65 6.0

65+ 6.0 men's team: Alan Roth captain, Lou Castaneda, Gary Bettencourt, Ed Hawkyard, John Honaker, Mark Keeling, Bill Ogden, Rich Overby, David Pilosof, Bob Satcher, Perry Seto, Carl Taibl, Eric Wall, Dean Williams, Ed Zerbini











Calcutta 2026 - Recap

Thank you to everyone who put in their hard work to make this very special event so amazing. This tournament and party takes a lot of work behind the scenes to come off so flawlessly. I would like to thank the following people personally for their assistance...

Our amazing board who helped handicap this event: Garvin Tom, Cara Mia Barnacascel, Heidi Belton, Karen James, Rebecca Kay, and Glenn McBee. Thanks to those who organized, picked up and/or ordered all the food, gift cards and alcohol for the party and the tournament: Karen, Rebecca, Cara Mia, Jennifer Grant and Markstein Sales for their amazing alcohol donation. Sally (all the way from Florida) rehired our amazing taco truck which was once again delicious food! Great job Sally!!!

Thank you to everyone who helped set up and clean up at the party: Cara Mia, Garvin, Logan, Justin, Karen, Alex James, Kevin Kyono, Steve Lehmer, Bob Satcher, Christy Dundon, Kim Caison, Bill Belhumeur, Mary Soe, Tanner McAwesome, Angela Merola, Kimi Watada, Walt Thomas, Mark Joseph, Glenn McBee, Rebecca Kay, Annika and Sanvi Panda.

Thanks to Logan Snyder for his bartending skills! Our auction was quite successful with a total of \$4,194! Our highest team bid was \$370 for Karen James and Pat Beauchemin.

Thanks to those who help set up Saturday morning, as well as throughout the day filling up coolers, rotating food, and breaking down and clean up after the tournament. It's no joke how many people it takes make this tournament run smoothly.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Mt. Diablo High School Tennis Program. David Pintado graciously brought all of our donations to the much needed club! Thanks to Bob Satcher who once again caught all the auction action as well as everyone playing in the tournament the following day.

ALL of our photos can be found here: <https://wcr.zenfolio.com/p547307081>

If there is a specific photo(s) you'd like me to email you, please click on the photo and in the top right corner it has the image number. Please send me that number so I can email you the correct photo.

Additionally, I'd like to thank all the participants who played with integrity and fairness throughout the event. Without you guys we would not have a tournament. Thank you to all the players who stepped up to score keep as you know it is a necessity.

Congratulations to the raffle winners:

Friday night winners: Christine Hohenstein, Ro Kim, Elizabeth Wright

Saturday "scorekeeper" winners: Christy Dundon, Sanvi Panda, Annika Panda, Christian Joos, Pru Pruden, Mo McKenna, Kevin Kyono, Pat Beauchemin and Garvin Tom

Thanks to Logan Snyder the tournament director, all those years growing up on the courts have paid off and now he can run a very complicated tournament smoothly and even caught up when we were delayed in the beginning with only 7 courts. You rocked it Logan!

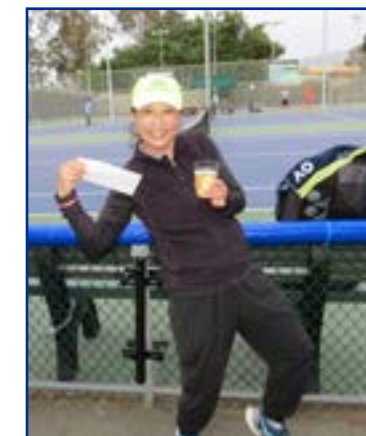
We had quite a lot of new faces this year and from what I heard from the feedback, everyone had a great time. There was a lot of excellent tennis this year. We had 12 matches decided by 5 points or less!

We look forward to another successful Calcutta next spring!

Thank you for participating!

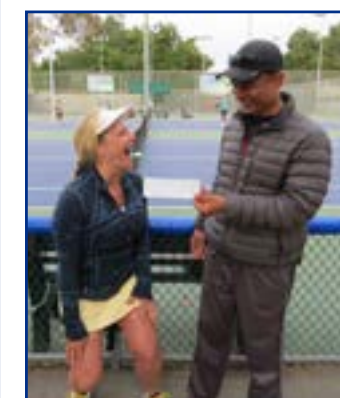
Tammie Snyder

Calcutta 2026 - Winners



Main Draw:

Kevin Kyono and Crew spent \$190 on the main draw winners Michelle Gonzales and Chris Alexander raking in a total of \$1,384! His consortium of 9 ended up splitting \$2 for their investments in 8 teams! Michelle and Chris split \$377 for winning the event. Their opponents Ro Kim and Kaveh Moraghebi split \$294 and Ro also bought herself for a great price of \$41 in the silent auction. Her investment paid off big with a \$839 return!



Consolation Draw:

Panda made a smart investment and bought his own team of Laura Johnson/ Debashis Panda for \$240. As the owner he received \$630. Laura and Panda split \$252 for winning consolation. Their opponents Lang Lindsay and Justin Snyder split \$125.82 while bringing their owners (Pru Crew) \$294 for their \$190 investment.



WCRC Men's & Women's 2026 Summer Dubs League



Available Divisions

ATTENTION: Players with different ratings can pair up just like in mixed (e.g. a 3.0 and a 4.0 can pair up to play in the 7.0 division). Note: any pairings where the difference between players' ratings is more than 1.5 ratings points is not eligible for the tournament (a pairing with a 3.0 and a 5.0 cannot play the 8.0 tournament)

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------|
| 6.0 | ☐ Men's | 6.0 | ☐ Women's |
| 7.0 | ☐ Men's | 7.0 | ☐ Women's |
| 8.0 | ☐ Men's | 8.0 | ☐ Women's |
| 9.0 | ☐ Men's | 9.0 | ☐ Women's |

(you are eligible to play your level as well as one level above your current USTA rating)

League Cost

- \$40 per team (both Walnut Creek Racquet Club Members)
- \$50 per team (one WCRC Member, one non-member)
- \$60 per team (both non-WCRC members)

League Information

Players may enter the WCRC Summer Dubs League in more than one division (i.e. 6.0 and 7.0), as long as he/she is playing at or above his/her level. If a player is entering in more than one division, he/she may enter with the same partner or a different partner but may not enter with different partners at the same level.

The league runs from May 1, 2026 - September 7, 2026.
The tournament is scheduled for September 19-20, 2026.

Questions? Call Garvin Tom at (209) 969-5445
or via e-mail gtom12@hotmail.com

WCRC Men's & Women's 2026 Summer Dubs League

(Also on-line at www.wcrc.net)

	PLAYER 1	PLAYER 2
Name		
Mailing Address		
City		
ZIP Code		
Home Phone		
Work or Cell Phone		
E-mail address		
NTRP level		

Are you a WCRC Member? ☐ YES ☐ NO Partner WCRC Member? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Division for which you are registering (please check each division):

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------|
| 6.0 | ☐ Men's | 6.0 | ☐ Women's |
| 7.0 | ☐ Men's | 7.0 | ☐ Women's |
| 8.0 | ☐ Men's | 8.0 | ☐ Women's |
| 9.0 | ☐ Men's | 9.0 | ☐ Women's |

Registration Fees (note - if you are interested in joining the Racquet Club, please register for membership here <http://www.wcrc.net/membership>).

- * \$50 per team (both WCRC Members) • [\\$40 per team for on-line registration](#)
- * \$60 per team (one WCRC Member, one non-member) • [\\$50 per team for on-line registration](#)
- * \$70 per team (both non WCRC members) • [\\$60 per team for on-line registration](#)

If you would like to register by mail, return this form with a check for registration fees (payable to Walnut Creek Racquet Club NOT WCRC) mail to:
Walnut Creek Racquet Club, P.O. Box 4574, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

League Information: Players may enter the WCRC Summer Dubs League in more than one division (i.e. 6.0 and 7.0), as long as he/she is playing at or above his/her level. If a player is entering in more than one division, he/she may enter with the same partner or a different partner but may not enter with different partners at the same level.

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OPERATING HOURS AT WCTC

June 2026

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

SUMMER IS OFFICIALLY HERE!

With warmer weather in the forecast we wanted to share some helpful tips to keep you safe out there. Hard courts add reflection and residual heat, making the temperature on court even higher, so here are a few ways to beat the heat this month. Drink water every 15 minutes, even if you don’t feel thirsty. Take frequent breaks in the shade to prevent overheating. Wear sun protection, hats, sunscreen, loose or compression coverings to help reduce the impact of UV rays on your skin. Stay safe and have fun out there!

USTA CAPTAINS – NEW INTENT TO CAPTAIN FORM

Beginning Summer 2026 leagues, all captains intending to field a team out of the Walnut Creek Tennis Center must make known their intent to captain a team by submitting an application (one per team) by the deadline for the upcoming season. Forms are available in the links below and on the CourtReserve Player Portal: Adult USTA & Leagues > League Team Application.

55+MX and Combo Team Application Deadline: July 13, 2026

Daytime League Team Application Form

Adult League Team Application Form (Evenings/Weekends)

JUNE PASSHOLDER SPECIAL

Spend \$40 or more in the Pro Shop and receive \$5 off your purchase. Offer may be redeemed one time only with promo code JUNEPASS and cannot be combined with any other discounts or promotions. Valid on all Pro Shop purchases, including balls, strings, and stringing labor.

MAY PASSHOLDER SPECIAL WINNERS

Here are the winners of the top five closest guesses to our novelty guessing game. The total number of items was – 391

- 1. A 4-month Extension to Current Court Pass – Thomas Kermoian
- 2. A Tennis or Pickleball Backpack – Tisha Kermoian
- 3. Free String Labor or Paddle Refresh (re-grip) – Mary Soe
- 4. 1 Can of Tennis Balls or 3 Pickleballs – Mary Russell
- 5. One 9-Day Advanced Reservation (9-days) *must be used before June 30, 2026 – Dan Helmer

SUMMER CLASSES

Our Summer I classes started on the first of the month. There are still spaces available in many Adult and Youth classes for both tennis and pickleball. Click here to see which one of your favorite classes still has room! Can’t make our first Summer session? Summer II starts on July 13th!

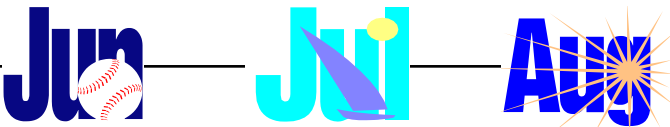
SUMMER CAMPS

Youth Tennis and Racquet Sport Camps have begun! These camps run weekly from June 1st through August 14th:

- ☐ Little Tennis/Rallyers (ages 4-6) 9a-11a
- ☐ Little Tennis/Rallyers & Activities Extension (ages 4-6) - 9a-12p
- ☐ Youth Improvement Tennis Camp (ages 7-15) - 9a-12p
- ☐ PM Paddle Sports, Activities & Swim (ages 7-15) - 1p-4p
- ☐ All Day Tennis, Paddle Sports & Swim (ages 7-15) - 9a-4p

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



June 8	USTA 40+ Season Opens
June 9-11	USTA 40+ DT Sectionals
June 11-14	USTA 55+ Playoffs Round 1
June 12	USTA 18+ DT Season Closes
June 14	USTA 18+ Season Closes
June 18-21	USTA 55+ Playoffs Round 2
June 20th	WCRC The Longest Day Tournament
June 22	USTA 70+ Team Registration Opens
June 22	USTA 55+ Mixed Team Reg Opens
June 22	USTA Combo Doubles Team Reg Opens
June 22-26	USTA 18+ DT Playoffs Round 1
June 25-28	USTA 18+ Playoffs Round 1
June 25-28	USTA 55+ Playoffs Round 3
July 6-10	USTA 18+ DT Playoffs Round 2
July 9-12	USTA 18+ Playoffs Round 2
July 10-12	USTA 55+ Sectionals
July 13-17	USTA 18+ DT Playoffs Round 3
July 16-19	USTA 18+ Playoffs Round 3
July 27	USTA 55+ Mixed Team Reg Closes
July 27	USTA Combo Doubles Team Reg Closes
July 27	USTA Combo Doubles DT Team Reg Closes
July 27	USTA 70+ Team Registration Closes
July 28-30	USTA 18+ DT Sectionals
Aug 1	WCRC - Mid-Summer Tournament
Aug 7-9	USTA 18+ Sectionals (Opt 1)
Aug 14-16	USTA 18+ Sectionals (Opt 2)

TREASURER’S REPORT

Cara Mia Barnacascel
January - April, 2026



Income	
League Dues	
Total for League Dues	\$371.79
Membership Dues	10,737.55
Total for Income	\$11,109.34
Gross Profit	\$11,109.34

Expenses	
Bank Service Charges	25.00
Board Meeting	862.28
Captains Meetings	528.51
Contributions	771.55
League Expenses	
Total for Summer Singles Expenses	\$927.05
Total for League Expenses	\$927.05
Office Supplies	290.91
Program Expense	200.00
Rental Fees	1,195.00
Sectionals Fees	1,540.00
Software	279.96
Supplies	495.94
Taxes	20.00
Tournament Expenses	
Total for Calcutta Expenses	\$1,212.97
Total for Tournament Expenses	\$1,212.97
Website	19,395.00
Domain Name	334.90
Total for Website	\$19,729.90
Total for Expenses	\$28,079.07
Net Operating Income	-\$16,969.73
Net Income	-\$16,969.73

Balance April 30, 2026	\$51,307.96
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SAVE THE DATE!



THE LONGEST TENNIS RALLY *2026*

..... ♥
*Do What You Love
to **End** Alzheimer's
and all other **dementia***
(formerly The Longest Day)



SAT., JUNE 20, 2026
3:30–8:00 PM

⌚ PLAY STARTS AT 4:00 PM



WALNUT CREEK
TENNIS CENTER
AT HEATHER FARM



MIXED DOUBLES

Fun Tennis • Community • Purpose



FUNDRAISERS: Glenn McBee, Kevin Kyono, Doug Fish and Euna Roh