

Members Speak Their Minds Loud and Clear

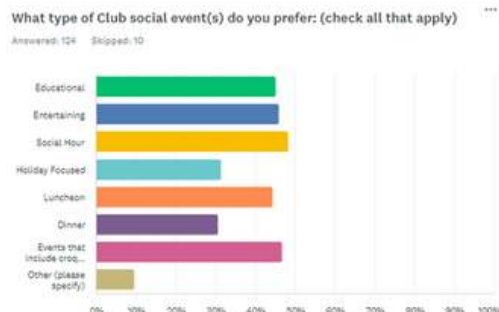
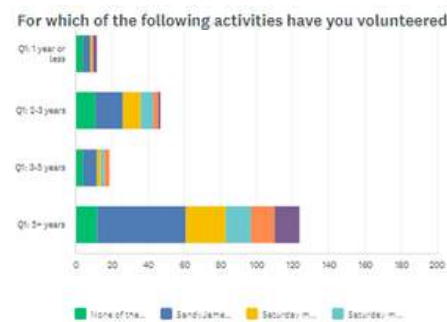


Franck Meunier

On behalf of the Social, Croquet, Volunteer and Membership Committee Chairs, I would like to express a heartfelt thank you to everyone who responded to this year's Member Survey! Your participation hit about a third of our membership—an impressive feat surpassing the average 10–15% from traditional market research polls.

Here are some key takeaways: Mornings remain the favored time for games, with organized events like Strikers and Wine & Wickets drawing peak attendance. New members lean towards afternoon and evening plays, while those with 3-5 years tenure prefer midday sessions, and the seasoned veterans of 5+ years opt for early mornings. **GC is in high demand**, with requests for more beginner clinics for GC and advanced sessions for A6W.

Our **stalwart members with 5+ years of tenure shine as volunteers**, while newer members express interest but feel hesitant due to lack of experience with the games or technical skills. **The 3-5 year tenure group appears to be less involved in volunteering activities.** Various reasons were cited for not volunteering, including scheduling conflicts, travel constraints, health issues, and other commitments.



When it comes to organized social events, both new and long-standing members actively participate, while the 3-5 year members exhibit the lowest participation. Scheduling remains a primary barrier to event attendance, with a strong desire expressed for **more social gatherings** (not necessarily revolving around croquet) at different times of the day or the week.

According to over half of the respondents, **we love the welcoming atmosphere of the NCC and social camaraderie of the game.** Close behind is our **picturesque venue**, where the beauty of the grounds and the conviviality of the **clubhouse** create the perfect setting to relax with a drink, food and friends.

Unsurprisingly, the majority of respondents look forward to **facility upgrades**, including more lawns and improved equipment. Additionally, concerns were raised about the negative attitudes of certain members, reflecting the importance of fostering a positive and inclusive environment for all.

On the question of **dress code**, members overwhelmingly love the whites! Nearly a third of the responses suggest a looser policy on the dress code with light colors or lesser restrictions during evenings and weekends.

Your input has been invaluable, providing crucial insights for our committees and guiding us in tailoring our plans to enhance your playing experience in the upcoming seasons.

Franck Meunier

Word graph from open-ended question
What do you like best about the NC Club?



The Sticky Wicket is a publication of the National Croquet Club
700 Florida Mango Road, West Palm Beach, Fl
Editor, **Mary C. Churchill**. Pagination, **Franck Meunier**
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Marianne Davidson, Lenore Orlowska-Warren.
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NC Club President's Column



Phil Robinson

Tom Lindley, our president, is away for the month and the honor of writing this column falls to me, the vice president. I have some big white shoes to fill.

In the newsletter of February 2024, Tom talked about volunteering. He feels that every member should volunteer for something. By volunteering, you become more invested in the club as well as getting to know the other members on a more personal level. An area where you can volunteer is on a committee or a task force. This column will focus on committees.

Committees are important, for a variety of reasons. They offer the opportunity for:

1. Member opinion in decision-making, and serve needs of the membership through interaction and compromises.
2. Group problem-solving.
3. A forum for presenting multiple points of view.
4. A training ground for future club leadership.

Some committees offer the members the ability to use their special skills to improve the club, such as in audit and finance.

How many of you know how many committees we have? There are eight. They consist of membership, croquet, volunteer, grievance, social, nominating, finance and audit. They serve an ongoing function and they continue indefinitely.

Let us briefly explore the function of the committees. The membership committee is charged with recruiting new members and retaining existing members. The croquet committee oversees the croquet tournaments, programs and events. The volunteer committee is charged with finding volunteers to teach new members how to play the various games of croquet. In addition, they find volunteer coaches for the CFA's outside events catered by SandyJames.

The grievance committee is charged with advising the Board on matters concerning member conduct. The social committee, finance and audit committees are self-explanatory.

In summary, I have tried to spur your passion for volunteering and hope you will become involved in a committee when a vacancy occurs. Volunteering will give you a better sense of belonging to the club as you make friendships.

Phil Robinson, Vice-President, Board of Directors

The President Takes a Break



Tom Lindley in you know where

Volunteering at Events Is Win-Win for the Club and Croquet. Try it. You'll Like it!

At its April 9 meeting, the Club Board discussed the report from our great Volunteer Committee Co-Chairs **Lynn Foley and Susan Langston**. It was an outstanding year for events! Since Sept. 12, the CFA has had 50 events requiring a total of 328 volunteer opportunities (coaches). Seventy-nine members volunteered to help coach those events, exposing new people to the game that we all love, and ten members even volunteered more than 10 times each! Some members, however, failed to help even once.

Susan and Lynn reported that sometimes it is a struggle to get enough coaches for the bigger events (150+), especially on weekend evenings. While volunteers love the experience, overreliance on a few can cause "burn out." A Task Force appointed by President **Tom Lindley** is finding creative ways to encourage others to sign up, and several of those new ideas will soon be implemented.

Volunteers receive recognition for their service in numerous ways. Before the event they have an excellent full meal that includes beverage (including wine), salad, entrée, and dessert. They also collect coupons for dollars off certain costs at the NCC. Whenever possible "newbie" coaches are partnered with experienced coaches. During the meal, instructions are given on where to go and what to do.

The coaching involves 60 or 90 minutes demonstrating a few basics of golf croquet, then helping players learn and have fun. Many large events are composed of a company's best and most productive employees from around the country or the world, and our volunteers have fun meeting them! Be a "good citizen" of our Club and give volunteering a try. As the saying goes "Try it! You'll like it."

A Winning Combo: Martinis & Mallets

Martinis and Mallets was the theme for the April 25 Friday evening croquet tournament where contestants displayed some mighty fine croquet, and had some fun doing it. Tournament Director **Stephen Tasker** coordinated this trial, sold-out event, featuring French martinis and cash prizes. Might we see more evening games? We certainly do hope so.



1st place – Bob & Jane Louise Smith, Stephen Tasker



2nd place – Trudy Crowetz & David Eckstrom



3rd place – Tom Cooper & Matt Meyer



Franck Meunier sampling the French Martini plus...



Full house pre-game, attentively listening to Stephen Tasker for team assignments.

"A community that is engaged and working together can be a powerful force"
-Idowu Koyenikan



Show Your Support Sponsor A Court!



You may have noticed very attractive Court Sponsor signs popping up below our beautiful new deadness boards. This initiative will raise funds to help cover the cost of our planned new courts and the upgrades to the facility.

Since the CFA's top priority now is building expensive new courts and associated amenities, we are holding off on a number of other major expenses until we have a better fix on what the County and FEMA will require us to do, and what that will cost.

Court Sponsorships allow us to finance the six new courts planned on the original property and the four new courts planned for the property we purchased adjoining ours beyond the shed.

Prices are \$50,000 for veranda-facing signs and \$35,000 for those that face away. This is a way you can show your support for the Center and create a current, visual legacy as well. It can also be a very thoughtful way to honor a loved one or a special person.

Just call or text me (646-342-3221) or speak with Marie about your preferences and reserve your court sign now. Don't wait! Only 12 sponsorships left!

David McCoy, Chairman, Croquet Foundation of America

Barbara Bailey displays her painting at the Club Art Show which she initiated, organized and sponsored awards.
Thank you, Barbara!



Some "Young Bloods" Are Coming to a Croquet Court Near You New Members Determined to Excel

Some cut their first croquet teeth during NCC's Summer League. Others came for NCC's free Saturday morning clinics and got hooked. Others came with friends. Left with more friends. One of the Young Bloods remarked that she was drawn to croquet because she "Could shoot pool and be out in the open air at the same time." Another, newly retired, said "I tried all sorts of activities to fill my new found time from pickle ball to belly dancing. Croquet was the best fit."

They are enormously talented and dedicated to the sport. Quick learners. They picked up the mallet and mastered the swing and grasped the strategy all in a New York minute. They play and play, practice and practice. They take lessons to hone their skills. They are outstanding and frequent event volunteers. They compete fiercely in tournaments. And they honor and observe the etiquette of this gentle person's sport.



Jane Grandusky, Fiona D'Aguilar, Jody Gill, Diane Waterfall.
absent, Susan Langston

The high level of play that the Young Bloods have acquired in a matter of a few months is nothing less than remarkable. There are trophies and crystal bowls likely waiting to have the names of the Young Bloods engraved on them.

In a recent tournament one of the Young Bloods defeated the player who ultimately won the Championship. The gracious, vanquished, seasoned player walked off the court dazed, dazzled and bewildered murmuring beneath his breath "What just happened?" A Young Blood just happened, my friend, a young blood.

Will one of this super talented freshman class of players become the Caitlin Clark of croquet? Could very well be. NCC warmly welcomes the Young Bloods, a new generation of nascent outstanding croquet players, **Fiona D'Aguilar, Jody Gill, Jane Grandusky, Susan Langston and Diane Waterfall** to our family. You go, Young Bloods. You go.

Sheila Petersen

Palm Beach/ Treasure Coast Inter-club League Topnotch Play

During the months of December through April, eight local clubs, Beach Club, Boca Raton Club, Croquet Club of Florida, Croquet Club at PGA, The Little Club, Mariner Sands Country Club, National Croquet Club and the Royal Palm Yacht and Country Club play a series of golf croquet matches in an inter-club league.

Wednesday April 24 the Beach Club hosted the Championship Tournament with **Danny Huneycutt** as the tournament director. **Clint Fowlkes** organized the NC Club team this year.

Play began at 8:30AM. Each match was hard fought, played to seven points instead of to a time clock. With no time limit several matches went for an extended period and the semi finals did not start until around 4 PM.

Going into the semi finals were the Beach Club (**Conrad Rugart and Vickie Johnston**), Boca Raton Club (**Joe and Jacquie Harris**), The Little Club (**Neill Trimble and Bruce Hindin**) and the National Croquet Club (**Caryl Firth and Vernon Pierce**).

Coming out into Finals were The Little Club and the National Croquet Club. The Little Club was the defending Champion from 2023. Bruce and Neill set up, attacked, cleared balls, jumped wickets and made terrific shots and Caryl and Vernon gave back as much as they received. It was as competitive a match as I have ever seen.

This was the sixth match of the day, an endurance contest to be certain. **In the end, the National Croquet Club with Caryl Firth and Vernon Pierce prevailed** and put the National Croquet Club on the trophy. Congratulations Caryl and Vernon. And, well played Bruce and Neill.

Thomas Tribby, Beach Club Croquet Committee



Vernon Pierce, Caryl Firth, Bruce Hindin, Neill Trimble, all NC Club members we proudly note

SAVE THE DATES

- May 11 – Volunteer Recognition & Appreciation Brunch (*)
- May 25 – Memorial Day Lobster & Clam Bake (*)
- June 1 – Croquet Day

(*) sign up on the veranda or call Jennifer

OUR NEW MEMBERS

The Membership Committee and NC Club are happy to welcome our new members:

Noni Sparkman

Mark Sparkman

Fluff Barbey



Croquet USA 1931. How about this for dress code?
And what in the world is he doing?

