

It comes as no surprise that since our courts were first built in 2016 we have seen tremendous growth and interest in Pickleball here at Christina Lake. Naturally this growth demonstrated the need for additional courts to be built and they were in 2019. Pickleball at Christina Lake took hold and our club caught the attention of the RDKB, the Parks and Recreation Department and in particular Christina Gateway who's Economic and Community Development Coordinator spearheaded and was successful in obtaining the Federal trademark ownership and designation of "*Pickleball Capital of Canada*". Donna Wilchynski remains an invaluable support to our club and provides guidance when and where possible.

It goes without saying that the 2020 portion of our first official year as a not for profit has been quite unusual. Notwithstanding that fact that Covid-19 has derailed our plans and affected our momentum, a great deal of time and effort has already been spent by many to build, coordinate and showcase our club in a manner befitting our unique group here at the Pickleball Capital of Canada. As a resort destination our structure has to accommodate a fast paced seasonal component and I believe our ideas will do just that. We also recognize the need to be flexible and adapt when we see that certain ideas aren't working.

Countless hours have been spent in an effort to expand our reach. Like many businesses we have tried a multifaceted approach. Our club has had a presence on Facebook for some time and have just recently created an Instagram account. We not only post pickleball related pictures and information, we include and promote the community here at Christina Lake. Follow us on Instagram: @christinalakepickleball. Once again, through the financial assistance of Christina Gateway, we have also posted two signs at our courts directing people to our website for more information ([www.christinalakepickleball.com](http://www.christinalakepickleball.com)). We also posted our tournament on the [pickleballtournaments.com](http://pickleballtournaments.com) website which has a reputation for being the leading pickleball tournament software and as such is widely used by tournament directors across North America.

A number of projects have kept us busy over the last year. We "piloted" some organized inter club play and although it was mostly run on Saturday's at 10 am for 4.0 level players we had a few 3.0/3.5 level play days organized too. Despite an overwhelming interest in this coordinated play we had to limit our play to the use of 3 courts. We were also mindful of the fact that peak time for general play started at 8am and seemed to thin-out at 10am. It is our plan to offer this type of coordinated play going forward while keeping an eye on the demand of our public courts.

As some of you know our website continues to be a work in progress. Two items in particular that will be offered are: coordination of play groups (ie men's night) and Membership purchase/renewal.

The Hook Line and Dinker tournament in June will be offered as an annual tournament as will Picklepalooza in August. Our plans also include possibly offering a third tournament in September. Although our first Hook Line and Dinker tournament was cancelled we managed to catch a glimpse of its popularity and it was good! With tournaments of course comes the need for referees. Our plans involve identifying and/or training people to be able to referee those games.

From a birds eye view we would also like to be able to offer more learn to play clinics, youth play opportunities and skills clinics to name a few.

As mentioned, we will be offering Membership purchase/renewal which will assist with our fundraising efforts. In addition we are currently offering t-shirt sales and are looking to expand that to hats as well. Given the current climate we opted to put Sponsorship on hold. Going forward however we would like to partner with local businesses through a sponsorship program that will benefit all.

Part of our role as a not-for-profit is to apply for grants that are otherwise unavailable to the RDKB where funds are needed to pay for expansion/improvement plans for our club. We have applied for one grant and are hoping to learn of a positive result at the end of September.

We've had many discussions and meetings with the Parks and Recreation Department of the RDKB. We feel confident that the work we've done, in particular to promote pickleball in a manner that demonstrates its positive impact on Christina Lake and the businesses that operate here has not only been recognized but welcomed. At the request of the RDKB, we provided them with a wish list of items we felt we needed in order to run tournaments worthy of the Pickleball Capital of Canada. I believe the relationship our groups have fostered can only spell success going forward. As a result of our last meeting with the RDKB we were happy to learn that a 'master plan' for this venue will be worked on including a shade structure that will cover the corridor between the courts. I should also mention that this list also included an ask for more courts.

In closing, I would just like to say how proud I am of the efforts, time and commitment by our Board, of our members who continue to espouse the values that our club holds dear, and the RDKB, Parks and Recreation and Christina Gateway who's support remains a large part of our success. It really does take a village and to keep the momentum going, we encourage and will happily welcome volunteers to help.

*Cassie Williams*

President

Christina Lake Pickleball Club