



THE STICKY WICKET

DECEMBER 2022



THE NCC, WE ARE FAMILY

At this time of the year, it is the privilege of the National Croquet Club to honor the special members of our family who contribute to making our beautiful facility look and run so smoothly. These family members welcome and greet us, feed us, and keep all 10,000 square feet of our clubhouse meticulously maintained and our lush 10-acre oasis meticulously manicured, planted and pruned.



SANDY JAMES FINE FOOD & PRODUCTIONS: **Christian, Kathy, Scott, Shavon, Melody, Tiffany**

These are our Sandy James family members who, in addition to bringing us the most delicious food, know each of our names, and our food and drink favorites and requests.



STAFF: **Marie Sweetser**, General Manager and Membership Director; **Scott Reiser**, Events/Catering; and **Jennifer Othen**, reception. They are the master jugglers of the NCC universe who keep everything humming.



GROUNDKEEPERS: **Alfonso, Efrain, Omero (grounds supervisor) and Alfonso, Sr.**



HOUSEKEEPER: Meet superwoman **Maria Orengo**. She keeps our home away from home spotlessly clean top to bottom.

**YOU ARE ALL OUR FAMILY AND WE ARE FULL OF GRATITUDE FOR EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

*The Sticky Wicket is a publication of the National Croquet Club,
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Editor, Mary C. Churchill & Pagination, Franck Meunier*

EDITOR'S NOTE

WHY THE STICKY WICKET?

In the midst of this current important election to determine the four members 2023 Club Board, we look forward to the December 8 Annual Meeting where results will be announced. To clarify the **purpose of this new newsletter**: The Sticky Wicket, aims to inform, educate and entertain, to provide information that illuminates what we do and who does what. It is not the purpose of this newsletter to take sides in controversies; it is, however, very much the purpose of this new newsletter to communicate, to provide more news and information monthly. **We are observers and reporters. We are also cheerleaders.**

The Sticky Wicket is a Club member publication. We will be sleuthing for backstories; we will highlight those who win and those who play, those who socialize, and those who make news. Each issue will include news and updates, a Come Play feature, a monthly report on the Board of Directors' actions and discussion, Tips from the Pros, a cartoon for a laugh, a tournament calendar and a Croquet Museum artifact. **We are men and women in white. And we are so much more!** Spotighting Club members whose careers and talents will interest others, will add character to faces.

We hope *The Sticky Wicket* encourages you to **engage more, learn more and above all, to participate!** And we want to hear from you. You, too, are an observer.

In the spirit of this 2022 holiday season, we wish you all the Joy of being a member of this wonderful community of croquet enthusiasts. **How fortunate are we?**

Mary C. Churchill, Editor
mcchurchill@gmail.com



AND NOW, SOME TIMELY WORDS FROM THE CFA CHAIRMAN



In this article, I want to address the false rumors circulating that the capital improvements the CFA (Croquet Foundation of America) is planning will result in higher dues for Club members. **All capital improvements are funded exclusively by generous donors**, who want to create a legacy of enjoyment for the many Club members and visitors who come here to learn and enjoy the sport. **These projects are their gifts to us all!**

Please express your appreciation to those we will be identifying who participate in making these projects happen. If we incur debt to move ahead with projects currently, rest assured that even the debt will be repaid from current Legacy gifts, those to be received in the future, as well as from increases in operating revenue resulting from the project itself.

And finally, **a word about dues.** I hear there are concerns about the size of the recent dues increase. The current cost for a full, single membership was raised by 24% to \$1,550 from \$1,250. Many special membership incentive discounts are no longer justified and have been reduced or eliminated, such as "first-year introductory," "dual club", and the large couples' discount.

That may seem like a big jump, but **this comes after 16 years of inflation that would have increased the \$1,200 cost of a full membership in 2004 to \$1,893 just now.** The recent increase was actually the **first really significant annual dues increase since 2004**, despite major increases in operating costs throughout that period.

The CFA works hand-in-glove with the Club to keep the Club's cost for sharing our space at a level that allows the Club to **attract and retain new and existing members** to meet the CFA's mission to grow and develop the sport.

Currently, even with the recent increase, **the Club will be providing less than 50 percent of the NCC's annual operating cost this year**, never mind paying for any of the many planned capital improvements. The CFA and the Club are dedicated to maintaining dues at an affordable level to allow continued membership growth. That growth will, in turn, help moderate the need for future dues increases.

Stay tuned next month for an update on the exciting enhancement plans we have for the Center. We welcome your input.

M. David McCoy, Chairman of the CFA Board



JOY TO THE NCC WORLD

What is **Joy**? A feeling of great pleasure and happiness.

Joy is the antidote to sorrow. It ebbs and flows.

Joy is making a jump shot or a long hoop.

Joy is playing well anywhere, anytime.

Joy is seeing your partner make a spectacular play.

Joy is looking at the beautiful lawns.

Joy is a belly laugh at the bar.

Joy is a belly laugh anywhere.

Joy is conversation and friendship on the porch.

Joy is being happy and grateful—and knowing it.

Joy is being a proud member of a community with a purpose.

To paraphrase the great sage Mae West, too much **Joy** is wonderful!

May you cultivate **Joy** in your life this NCC holiday season and beyond in 2023!

The Sticky Wicket



2022 Lighting of the Tree with Caroling (thank you Marianne Davidson!) and Good Cheer

TIP FROM THE PRO

The Side Wicket Drill

One thing to keep in mind is that playing games will not improve your game. You need to go out and practice, and that means reserving a court just for yourself and maybe one other person.



Dick Scherf

Start out with drills: repetitive practice shooting that will improve a certain aspect of your game. For example, practice shooting at the side of a wicket. I believe that this drill will improve your game the fastest. Step off two yards (six feet) from the side of a wicket. If you have a partner for your practice session, have him or her step off two yards to the other side of the wicket. The side edge of a wicket is the narrowest piece of equipment on the court.

You will need only one ball. When you shoot, make sure that you are looking down to see your mallet hit the ball. Remain looking down until you hear your ball hit the wicket. You will accomplish two things: 1) you will improve your aim, and 2) you will begin the very important habit of keeping your head down throughout your shot. You can alternate shots with a partner, and the two of you each can critique each other's shots.

When you can hit the wicket eight out of ten times, then move out to three yards. Do this drill every time you come to the court.

I'll describe several other drills in the future. Have fun out there!





Dine & Discover Lunch Series



June Rochedieu

Welcome to the Dine & Discover Series organized by **June Rochedieu**. Many NC Club members have requested a luncheon series that would offer an opportunity to dine with fellow members, friends, neighbors and guests.

To complement the luncheon series, talented and highly accomplished members of our Club will enlighten, inspire, educate and entertain. Space is limited so please reserve early with Jennifer.

Save these Dates

- Wednesday December 14th – 12:00 – 2:00 PM in the Ballroom – **Dr. Madeline (Maddy) Singer**, Motivational Speaker
- Wednesday January 11th – 12:00 – 2:00 PM in the Ballroom – **Tom Lindley & Dr. Phil Robinson** – “Alaska”
- Friday February 24th – 12:00 – 2:00 PM in the Ballroom – Sponsored Complementary Lunch – Financial Planning – **Craig Kirshner**, Pres. In addition, **David McCoy** – The Future of NCC
- March TBD – The New National Croquet Museum Ball
- April TBD – “NCC Club’s Got Talent” – Select Members will showcase their talents

Come Play

Want an easy way to play a game?

Just Show Up Tuesday and Thursday afternoons

It's a new season as the Snowbirds are returning, and both Wine & Wickets and Twilight Croquet are off to a great start!

Lenore Orlowska-Warren (that's me) has generously taken over hosting Wine & Wickets on Tuesday afternoon at 3:15 and **Don Whelan** has returned to host Twilight Croquet at 3:15 on Thursday afternoons which he created along with Dale Locke in 2011. In 2017, Don was awarded the CFA Volunteer of the year award for his outstanding efforts.

Wine & Wickets features a fun game where you meet and play with croquet members randomly picked. We play **two Golf Croquet 45-minute games**, record the scores, and then have a playoff to declare the winner. Pictures are taken and an occasional prize given. As the name suggests, you may bring a glass of wine to the courts. Created by Sue Varey and Jill Harrold in 2015, Wine & Wickets offers an easy way for croquet members to play without having to reserve courts or schedule games.

Twilight Croquet on Thursdays is returning to its original format where each participant receives a chip to form teams for two 45-minute GC games. Depending on the outcome of the two games, a winner is declared, and photos taken. Afterwards, join everyone for a beverage, adult or otherwise, and perhaps a Sandy James light dinner.

Come play!

Lenore Orlowska-Warren

NCC CLUB BOARD ELECTIONS

Annual Meeting, Thursday December 8, 6 pm meeting; 5 pm cocktails.

Have you voted for the Club Directors? If not, see your email, or contact **John Strasser**, johnrstrasser@aol.com

SHARKTOOTH Open GC Tournament



Tom Lindley, Mary Galasso, Alex Galasso, Caryl Firth at the Sharktooth Open GC Tournament at the Sarasota Country Club. Alex won Championship; Tom won Third Flight and Caryl came in second; Mary was second in Fourth Flight.

USCA Senior Masters Tournament at NCC



Stuart Price lines it up



Bob Van Tassel



Bill Trower and David Spivey take a break



Hall of Famer **David Ekstrom** suits up for the rainstorm

Nine Wicket Nationals



National Croquet Club members were big scorers. **John Warlick** won doubles Championship (with **Macey White**); **Doug Moore, David Isaacs, Bettina Hinckley, Sandra Knuth, Suzanne Turner, Patricia Duncan and Michael Gibbons**, all scoring high.

First Flight was all NC Club: **Gail Warlick** tops in singles, and in doubles with **Cheryl Harders; Jim and Nancy Sansalone and Bettina Hinckley** right up there.

Thank you, **John Warlick** for organizing, teaching and promoting 9W.