

RLTC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Annual General Meeting December 4, 2022

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President's Report

The Board of Directors is pleased to report another highly successful year at the RLTC. This summer was a refreshing reprieve back to normal after two challenging seasons of managing Covid protocols and everchanging regulations. Tennis programs were in full swing including round robins, clinics, tournaments, junior programs, and lessons. The "annual" club social was back after a 2-year absence and was a resounding success, and BBQs once again became gathering places for our membership.

Strong tennis programming was at the core of our successful season, building on last year's overhaul of programs, clinics, and playing opportunities. Enormous thanks to Tennis Director **Zhenya Kondratovski** and Senior Pro **Dan Vila**. We are very fortunate at Rockcliffe to have such high-level coaching talent. Zhenya and Dan continually bring enthusiasm, professionalism, and hard work to the courts, and have created a strong backbone of tennis programming to guide us into next season. Please review our tennis programming report for more details. Given their contributions to the Club's financial outlook, the Board gave them each a financial bonus to thank them for their efforts this season.

This year we introduced the new Club Automation software system to the club which will continue to see improvements as we master the system. While we are aware that the mid-season conversion was challenging, particularly for the staff, this is a fundamental tool that will allow our club to stabilize through future changes in staff and Board members. It allows for accurate and reliable accounting, billing, and staff management, in addition to other critical infrastructure tasks. This year we launched the desktop version of the software, and after settling into the system, it has become clear that members would prefer the mobile application for greater ease of use for daily bookings and registrations. We will implement this app for next season. Thank you to the membership for your patience as we have been building and developing this important new system. I have been working closely with **Gill Kirkwood** to manage this software transition and immensely appreciate his ongoing support.

The Board is grateful for the hard work of our staff team this year at RLTC. In her first season, we wish to recognize and thank **Hélène Anido**, our Club Manager, who worked hard to adapt to this very challenging position at our Club. Hélène brought kindness and warmth to the position and worked hard to meet club expectations. Hélène will be moving on to other career opportunities and will not be returning next season. As an accomplished musician, she continues to pursue her passions and we wish her the best and hope to see her next season with her family at the club. The Board has already activated a hiring committee in search of new talent in the role of Club Manager for the 2023 season.

As we prepare for transition to our 2023 Board of Directors, I wish to say thank you to the following outgoing directors. Thank you to **Mitch Bouchard** who was instrumental in many ongoing grounds committee activities at the Club over a three-year term, including managing long-overdue equipment purchases, arborists, hard court repairs, and landscaping upkeep; **Phil English** who concludes a four-year term has been our fearless treasurer and guided the club finances with a steady hand, while continually acting as a strong sounding board on policy, and providing excellent tournament coordination; **Julie Mouris**, finishes a two-year term as an active member of our Social committee, lending time and energy to club events, even as a busy lawyer with a newborn at home; and **Jordan Samaroo**, who concludes three years as contributor to policy development, contract work, and social events, and has lent energy and enthusiasm throughout the process. Thank you to Mitch, Phil, Julie, and Jordan for providing valuable input, enthusiasm, and a great amount of personal time. It has been a pleasure to serve on the Board with each of you.

This is my fourth and final year on the Board of Directors. As one of the longest serving Presidents in recent years, I am proud of the hard work and accomplishments of the RLTC Board during my three years at the helm. Although the opening weeks of my first term began during the covid pandemic, this remarkable global event allowed for unique reflection about the club's internal processes and prompted a fresh outlook moving forward. I maintained two central priorities as President. The first was to develop formalized internal infrastructure to strengthen the club's procedures and help create consistency during Board members and staff transitions. As such, we initiated new communication vehicles, detailed policies, full billing and accounting software infrastructure, formalized contracts, and operational procedures which can help our club with consistency as we move forward. I leave the Board confident in our new internal processes for incoming directors and staff. The second vision for my tenure was to ensure we tightened up finances and created stability such that we could keep strong reserves for largescale capital expenses. We have seen tremendous growth in the last few years, despite unusual operating circumstances during covid protocols, and I am pleased to leave the Board with our strongestever capital reserve fund and renewed investment into our club. I am proud of all that was accomplished through an extraordinary time-period in our club's history, and grateful for the opportunity to have served such a strong and dedicated tennis community. Thank you to the RLTC membership for your support.

This upcoming season will mark our **100-year anniversary**. This is a remarkable milestone, and we will be looking to bring in this celebration throughout the tennis season. Pull out your vintage tennis whites and wooden rackets! Plans are being developed, so please be in touch with us if you can contribute to any level of planning. We are actively recruiting volunteers to help make this milestone year a success.

On a final note, we wish to thank the membership for their continued engagement and encouragement this summer. It has been a year of growth and change for our club, and we hope our courts and grounds continue to offer our members a safe, healthy, and happy space to play tennis and make friends. The RLTC is a gem within our neighbourhood and should continue to be cherished for the next 100 years. We look forward to welcoming you back to our courts again next season.

Happy Holidays!

Louise Malhotra President RLTC, 2020-2023

Treasurer's Report

Finally, a normal season! There were no closures due to COVID, so spring programming started on schedule, and we enjoyed a full summer and fall of tennis. Membership numbers remained very strong at 516, below last year's record of 575, but higher than any other year in the last 12.

Profit and Loss

We are pleased to report that we have ended the year with another exceptional operating surplus. As indicated in the profit and loss table, our net income is estimated at roughly \$65K. This compares to \$69K last year and \$27K in 2020. This result is due in large part to higher fees, such that membership revenues increased by \$30K despite a slight drop in members. Junior programs remained an important contributor (net income \$14K) but were down significantly from last year, perhaps due to a combination of strong competition from other clubs and insufficient marketing. Also 2021 was an exceptionally good year. Other profit centers were sponsorships (\$22K), lessons and clinics (\$6K) and the canteen (\$4K). In recognition of the key role played by the senior pros, and their contribution to our bottom line, the Board agreed to pay them bonuses totaling \$2.5K over and above their monthly stipends for planning and administration. Hélène Anido also received two bonuses totaling \$2K after meeting targets defined in her contract.

Capital expenditures

The operating surplus does not include the cost of the hard court repairs of \$14,294.30 which is indicated under other expenses as a capital project in the attached profit and loss statement. Nor does the surplus include the cost of tree maintenance work or equipment purchases which have yet to be paid but are also considered as a capital expense. These amount to about \$16,000.

Balance Sheet

The RLTC balance for 2022 stands at \$356,848.73. This represents a significant increase from \$288,521 at the end of 2021. Consequently, our financial situation has improved significantly. Note that this includes \$10,500 set aside for the Ali Khan award, roughly \$16k in other liabilities, and prepaid expenses (light fixtures) of \$21,652.

Bank Accounts

The status of our bank accounts and other savings as of November 22 is as follows:

Current account: \$65,253.54
Savings account: \$25,618.25
GICs: \$242,598.83
Ali Khan GIC for Juniors: \$10,500.00

The Khan Family donated \$10,000 to be used to support junior tennis at the RLTC. This was increased by \$500 through donations from the ALS fund raiser held at the club in memory of Paul Durand in August 2018. The interest from this fund is normally used to recognize two promising junior players at the club, one girl and one boy. Given recent very low interest rates, we have been topping up the amount to provide a total of \$250.

Looking ahead

The RLTC is clearly in good financial health. If the lighting project moves ahead, the club can now afford to cover all the remaining costs. However, it has always been club policy to keep significant reserves in the event of major unanticipated costs, such as failure of our clay court watering system, or anticipated ones such as the replacement of our clubhouse. Consequently, we plan to continue building our reserves to minimize – and possibly avoid – the need for a special levy when the time comes. The attached capital plan lays out our best estimate of the expenses we expect to incur over the next 5-10 years and how these will affect our financial position. It also assumes that our net income will probably fall in 2023 due to higher staff costs.

~ Philip English

Grounds and Club House Report

Hard Courts

This season saw the full crack repair and resurfacing of our four hard courts. The work done by **Chris Smith** and his team with **Canada Courts** was completed in June. We opted to keep two courts open throughout the work to maximize court usage for our membership. The Board was well satisfied with the quality of the courts and pleased that membership reviews have been positive. We received a significant discount on the work since it had originally been slated for August of last season, which the contractor had to cancel without notice. As such, work completed was 30% less than originally quoted, for a total cost of totaled \$14,294 plus tax. As added value, Chris and his team repaired the backboard court and added a custom logo.



Clay Courts

Our advanced purchase of clay last season allowed us to open as soon as the weather was appropriate. As such, we have again this year already ordered the clay for next season to allow for quick spring turnaround.

This fall the Board undertook exploratory repair work in October to understand current drainage issues, based on observation of recurring patches of dry areas. Our underground irrigation system is connected by water cells which distribute the water around the court, while allowing for adequate drainage during wet periods. The Board had previously identified a need for a proper cost analysis of full clay court repair, should it be necessary. The Board engaged court contractor PC Court Company to provide a comprehensive analysis and repair of two dry areas of court 1 and 2. The work was completed in October. Preliminary analysis indicates that there were two separate issues in each area of investigation. These issues were addressed and when the irrigation is turned on in the spring, we will have a better understanding if repairs were successful. Further costing analysis is still to come from the contractor, and will allow us to accurately budget future clay court maintenance in our capital expense planning. We were encouraged to hear that our irrigation system is well suited to last a long time if we take appropriate remedial steps. The Board has reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring the viable long life of our clay courts by investing money in its repair as needed. We continue to build our capital reserves to fund this work. Thank you to Paul Bernier and Gill Kirkwood for their continued interest and expertise in the system. We look forward to updating the membership when a long-term plan for the courts has been fully identified and costed.

In other clay court updates, we are pleased to see that more members are performing a court sweep after their play time. We have invested in more court brooms and additional line rollers to make this job quick and simple for all members. Thank you to those who have started making this important contribution to the club. We encourage all members to end their tennis time a few minutes before the hour to sweep the court for the next members. If we all contribute to maintenance, the courts will be in excellent shape for the entire season.

The start of this season saw some challenges in consistent staffing for the early morning court maintenance. The club for many years had the same independent court maintenance contractor who left a void to fill when he retired. Thank you to students **Roman**, **Dante**, **Dylan**, **Gavin and Idhrak** for stepping into these early morning shifts for the summer months. We continue to seek long term solutions for this position for next season and welcome any suggestions or recommendations of early morning maintenance staff.

Grounds

This year saw the return of grounds management company **Viridius**. They performed weekly maintenance with trimming, grass cutting, and handywork through the season and this year their scope included fixing the shed roof. Generally the Board was pleased with the grounds conditions. One area that was insufficiently serviced was weeding around the clay courts, as this job used to fall within our early morning work scope. Although the work was remedied later in the season by Viridius, this is a point of consideration for next season. As mentioned, morning clay maintenance has been a challenging area to fulfil, and the Board will discuss a new strategy for the 2023 season and further determine the renewal of maintenance contracts for next season.

Last year the Board voted on extensive remedial work required to bring the tree foliage back to a healthy level after many years of missing funding toward this work. The original contractor could not fulfil the obligation, so the Club hired arborist Family Tree Plant Health Care to conduct much needed trimming of trees throughout the property. The work was completed outside of the season in October to minimize court disruption. Once the spring arrives, members will feel the enormous difference of a carefully pruned-back treescape. There will be more light and significantly less leaf debris upkeep on court 5—8 with the reduction in the canopy and vine overhang. Likewise, there will be less moisture on court 4 because of the adjacent tree droppings and heavy shade. The Board recommends a long-term plan be put in place for continual upkeep to ensure a healthy canopy for our club for future generations.

The proposed work on the lighting project stalled this year due to other time-consuming critical club tasks which took priority, namely the extensive integration of our new software integration and training for staff on both systems. However, the Club is currently in a good position to reapply for the lighting permit and conduct the necessary discussions with both city and neighbours. Next season, there is a fresh committee already formed to tackle the tasks of determining next steps with respect to the lights.

Clubhouse

We wish to thank our club house staff members both on and off the court. Thank you to our team led by Club Manager **Hélène Anido**. Thank you to assistant manager **Morgan Wark**, club house attendants **Axelle, Hanshul, Finn, Roman, Dante, Emma, and Jack** for their efforts this season. There was a lot of change and several new faces, and we are pleased with the fresh enthusiasm of our staff. The June Social was an excellent example of great teamwork this season. Thank you, Hélène and team!

The Canteen generated approximately \$4k net income. This year we added a new Grab-and-Go refrigerator to replace a broken refrigerator and to speed up service. We also employed a professional cleaning company to help with the spring clubhouse opening.

Consistent with all food supplier issues, Gordon Food Services prices increased, variably, depending on the product. Gordon Food Services is a reliable supplier, making ordering convenient. Unfortunately,

when products are reordered, RLTC is not advised of individual price increases. This creates administrative challenges for tracking costs and updating clubhouse pricing.

Following last year's trend, the club continued with some healthier options, including granola bars, sports drinks, cookies, breakfast sandwiches, wraps, smoothies, and the not-so-healthy crowd pleasers... muffins, French fries, chocolate bars, and pizza.

Plans to introduce a larger menu, with healthier items, were delayed due to increased costs, challenging transitions, most notably our software system change, new staffing, and hosting our first social in three years. The 2023 season should be the year to determine how large to expand the menu, and if there will be greater demand/appetite from the membership for more selection, as these decisions will impact staffing.

A more detailed order plan will be implemented for balancing orders between suppliers with the best product/cost/delivery benefit to help improve clubhouse efficiencies and reduce costs. Member feedback is important; recommendations and comments are welcome to help prepare a menu and events plan for all to enjoy.

~ With contributions from Mitch Bouchard, Gill Kirkwood, Kathie Swim and Louise Malhotra

Tennis Programming Report

Thank you to the dedication and positive energy of our senior pros **Zhenya Kondratovski** and **Dan Vila** who worked tirelessly all season to provide exceptional programs for our members. We are grateful as a club to have such a strong coaching staff who are well-respected throughout the city. This summer we were also happy to occasionally see **Jorge Vila** on court alongside his son Dan for additional coaching support during busy clinics.

Junior Development

The recreational summer programs were in line with previous pre-covid years of camp, providing a healthy profit margin which is important for the club's overall finances. This year had 125 participants throughout the summer. Our maximum capacity for each week was capped this year at 30 kids, which worked well in terms of staffing and court layout. Camps were generally well-attended in July but saw sharp drop offs in August. The first week of August camp was cancelled due to low enrollment, likely due the lifting of covid restrictions and increased travel of our membership. Numbers are again more aligned with pre-covid camp experiences.

We continued our focus this year on the recreational junior development because of the decrease in older and more advanced junior players who have shifted to tennis placements at year-round clubs, such as Rideau Sports Centre. The recommendation as a local community club remains to ensure we provide a strong recreational development opportunity for younger kids, both in after-school programming and summer half-day camps. Thank you to our junior coaching staff, headed up by our junior pro **Ronan Boyd**. Their enthusiasm resulted in positive reviews of the recreational camps with campers and parents alike. Thank you to **Gavin, Dylan, and Ethan** for your energy and talents on court.

The club hosted two OTA junior tennis tournaments including the Future Stars and Transition Tour. They were both a solid success and helped the Club support junior tennis within the greater Ottawa region. Next year we hope to include additional tournaments well suited to our Club's age bracket of younger pre-competitive players.

Adult Clinics and Lessons

Thanks to Dan and Zhenya, there was a robust collection of adult programming this season. The focus this year was on ensuring that players were assigned to the appropriate clinic levels with offerings at multiple levels. Dan and Zhenya used the Open House as an opportunity to help place players, however it continues to be challenging to ensure correct placement without a stringent ranking system. We continue to rely primarily on self-evaluation, but the Board may reconsider this stance for the next season.

The Women's clinics, beginner (C/D) and intermediate (B) clinics were popular in the spring season. Spring five-week sessions had solid uptake in most categories. We moved to a new format for summer registrations, this year offering an option to purchase one clinic day at a time, since so many people travel during the summer months. The Board tennis programming committee will review this format in the off-season to determine the best option for our membership clinics.

Private lessons continued to be in high demand this season and the coaches did their best to accommodate requests. Two full time tennis pros and some lesson time with junior instructors were needed to meet the high lesson demand. The club is very lucky to have such talented, kind, and dedicated

coaches who consistently go above and beyond their job descriptions to make programs and lessons so enjoyable for members.

Round Robins

Round robins continue to be a major draw for members and are coordinated by dedicated club volunteers. The Monday and Friday round robins for all levels were again organized this year by Paul Bernier and Gill Kirkwood. They continued the tradition of casual fun play in a relaxed environment, making it easy for new members to get involved. Nic Fortier did a great job again with popular Wednesday night advanced round robins this season, pairing heavy hitters and maximizing singles play when possible. Richard Martineau again handled the Tuesday high intermediate sessions this season, which was well-organized, fair, and well-communicated. Joel Weiner successfully navigated the low-high intermediate play on Sundays. Players often enjoyed a social time with food and drinks after the round. Thank you to our incredible volunteers who make the club round robins so successful.

The Rovers (Men's 55+ League)

After a two-year hiatus, the RLTC Men's inter-club team, the Rovers, were back in action. Although with mixed results, surely with fine form and good fun! Thanks to **David Goldfield** and **Barry Frewer** for managing to field 8 players every week. We hope to continue this league tradition next season. There is the opportunity for a daytime Women's league, and we would welcome a volunteer to help coordinate.

RLTC Club Tournament Circuit

It was another successful season of tournaments. We were able to return to our usual schedule, beginning with mixed doubles in early June. Fourteen teams entered, one less than the year before. Frégine Sheehy and Hector Cameron were our new champions. The women's doubles followed in late June with six teams, two less than in 2021. Paula Dunn and Donna Sianchuk beat both the first and second seeds to emerge victorious. In July, 13 teams contested the men's doubles, down from the 20 teams in the previous year. Unfortunately, player injuries prevented the finals from taking place, but new members Imran Syed and John Wins-Purdy were awarded the cup. The overall level of the tournament is at a peak at our club and excellent matches were viewed by the membership.

Both adult singles tournaments were held in September. The men's tournament was divided into two divisions to encourage more participation. This year 36 men competed, 22 in the A division and 14 in the B division, compared to a total of 40 in 2021. **Hector Cameron** managed to unseat our previous champion, Daniel Alfredsson, in an exciting final. Eric Khalat prevailed in the B finals which lasted over one week due to weather and travel delays. **Joanne Homza** is our new women's champion defeating previous champion Jennifer Munn. That tournament attracted 11 participants, down from 16 the year before.

Once again, players exhibited the friendly, yet competitive approach expected in a club tournament, and the finals provided great opportunities for responsible socializing on the deck. Tournament organizers tried their best to be flexible while keeping the schedule moving forward. The committee was once again led by **Phil English**, with strong support from **Pablo Gonzalez**, who will take over as tournament director next year. As always, we welcome feedback on our tournament programming.

[~] With contributions from Louise Malhotra and Phil English

Social Report

To open the 2022 season, the Club held a free "program sampler" week for new and returning members to sample the different styles of adult clinics and get excited about the season. This format was well-received by all participants and the maximum number of players were on-court. The Open House on May 14, the first one in three years due to the pandemic, closed out our opening week, with a fun adult round robin, the Smash Cage, and a free BBQ. It was the most well-attended Open House in Club history. Members were happy to be able to mingle again!



The Club was also able to bring back the Annual Social on June 23rd. Members dressed up to the nines to enjoy a beautiful, warm evening of delicious food from local caterers (Epicuria and Mickelson & Brockwell's), fancy cocktails, and live jazz saxophone. Thank you to the strong efforts of the staff lead by **Hélène Anido** for managing the on-site details and myriad of logistical details. Thanks to **Marlow Stainfield** for stepping up for some creative bartending! Thank you to the Board Social Committee **Julie Mouris**, **Kathie Swim, Jordan Samaroo, and Laurie Maybury** for coordinating the planning efforts for the event, and **Phil Anido** for lots of volunteer support for this event and many others throughout the season.



Throughout the rest of the summer, the Club held BBQs including a themed Hawaiian Feast that was a lot of fun, with members dressing up and enjoying poke bowls, Hawaiian pizza, and Hawaiian music. Tournaments also became a natural avenue for our social events. It was great to see so many members come out to watch tournament final matches and stick around to socialize and have a drink on the clubhouse deck!

Social Media

Huge thanks go to **Julie Smyth** for working hard to keep our social media posts up-to-date and relevant. Julie has managed our social media accounts for many years and continues to do a great job posting stories relevant to our club and to our wider social tennis community. The clubhouse staff continues to use Twitter to update members on playable court status and we will continue to use this medium to keep in touch with our members.

Centennial Plans

Plans to enhance our existing summer social schedule with additional Centennial celebrations is now underway. Extra efforts will be made to highlight our centennial year and volunteers are needed to help mark this milestone year! We cannot do it without the commitment of a few dedicated volunteers to take on specific tasks. Email us to let us know how you can help! president@rltennis.ca

Photos, memorabilia, and stories from our Club's history are welcome! Please contact the club if you have interesting historical tidbits to share, as we would like to feature pieces of our history in our membership newsletters.

The top of our new Mixed Doubles Championship trophy is a small silver cup from the RLTC 1924 doubles tournament. It was rediscovered in 2021 by the daughter of member Martha Currier in Toronto, and sent to the club. This serves as a beautiful reminder of our club's longevity and history!



~ With contributions from Julie Mouris, Laurie Maybury, Kathie Swim, Jordan Samaroo and Louise Malhotra

Biographies of Board Director Nominations

Ellen Bruce

It would be an honor for Ellen to serve the club as she would bring enthusiasm and a fresh outlook for the 2023 historic centennial year. Ellen was a new member in 2022 and had an enriching experience, meeting new friends and participating in many social and tennis activities. As well as being a long-time player, Ellen is a New York Times and USA Today bestselling author of 35 novels and winner of numerous industry awards including the Colorado Award of Excellence. Prior to embarking on her writing career, Ellen was an Industrial Design graduate from Carleton University and worked for several construction companies.

Andrew Clark Alfaro

Andrew is currently a student of law at the University of Ottawa and played tennis on the University's tennis team for four years. He has experience running private tennis lessons and junior tennis camps in nearby Lindenlea and looks to use this knowledge and expertise contributing to tennis programming at the club. Outside of tennis, he enjoys playing soccer and chess.

Nicolas Fortier

Nicolas is a long-time and current resident in the area of the Club, growing up in both Manor Park and Rockcliffe, and has enjoyed the Club on and off since childhood. Over the last 2.5 years, he has volunteered as the principal coordinator of the Wednesday Advanced Round Robin, coordinating and challenging groups as large as 20 plus players. Nicolas is an active member of the community and, among other initiatives, has successfully promoted traffic calming measures. He has been a principal intervenor to help ensure that the Caldwell-Carver Conservation Area maintains a balance between public access and respect for the fauna and flora of the area. Nicolas has worked directly with the Councillor's Office and City staff on community projects. His professional life includes more than 20 years with the Government of Canada, where he is presently in the role of Director of Public Affairs. Nicolas has an active family life as a husband and a father of two young boys, ages 3 and 5 respectively. His interests for the RLTC board related activities include grounds and court maintenance and the lighting project.

Rémi Fournelle

Born in the Laurentians (Ste-Agathe-des-Monts,QC), he completed his studies at Sherbrooke University in Economics. He moved to Ottawa to start his working career as an Economist and joined Statistics Canada. After a few years in the public sector, he left the government to create his own business in the tourism industry. Later, he bought a manufacturing company in Montreal. He retired last April 2022. Since his early age, his main activities are tennis and golf in summer and alpine skiing and skating in winter. So joining RLTC with his wife was natural when you want to spend a lot of time outside playing a great sport and meeting new people. He is a hands-on person with an easy-going personality and with free time who would like to bring some of his different professional experiences (surveys, statistics, organizational skills) to the Board.

Marc Lepage

Marc LePage recently retired from a career in the foreign service (Cuba, Sweden, Washington, San Francisco, San Diego). He also worked extensively in academic research in leadership roles at the Medical Research Council of Canada, Genome Quebec, and Genome Canada. He and his family (Nina, Frederick and Sophia) have been very active members of our club - regular round robin tournaments, tennis lessons and the occasional tournaments. In his research career he has worked extensively with non-profit organizations and now that he has more time to devote to his tennis life, he has offered to assist other volunteers for the continued success and good governance of our club.

Courtney March

Courtney March (she/her) is a lawyer with Gowling WLG in its Employment, Labour and Equalities Group. In her spare time, she enjoys playing tennis, cooking, and hanging out with her dog, Mabel. Prior to joining the Rockcliffe Lawn Tennis Club, she did an extensive amount of research to find the best tennis club in Ottawa - and she is so glad to have landed here. From its dedication to tennis and high-quality courts, to the kindness of its members, Courtney has enjoyed every second at the Club. For this reason, she joined the Board with an eye towards expanding its membership and advocating for its future success.