

PAK President's Report January, 2022

NEWS

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Happy 2022! Many of us are so happy to see 2021 gone, but I, for one am grateful for that crazy year because it saw the birth of Pickleball Association Kauai. Our growing pains included how to start a new organization with a pandemic going on. We persevered with Zoom director meetings, phone calls, email, and messaging...by the thousands! I am from a generation where face-to-face meetings are essential, yet we all made it work, because we were committed to our cause. We hadn't even defined what we wanted to achieve yet, but we knew that the lack of public, dedicated pickleball courts with decent surfaces and amenities was not acceptable and that Kauai players and visitors deserved better. Coming into 2022, we are miles ahead of where we started, and gaining momentum towards our stated mission. Yes, we have a mission now: ***Pickleball Association Kauai will develop, operate and maintain quality dedicated pickleball venues with the spirit of Aloha.*** This simple statement was dissected and discussed at great length before adoption, and every word resonates with us as everything we do has to be a step in achieving that mission. We have a dedicated Board of Directors that work together amazingly and believe in what we do. Our non-profit status will allow us to fund-raise effectively when the time is right, which is after we identify a suitable place to erect or refurbish our facility. Our membership campaign, just started on December 1, already has almost 200 members, with more coming in every day. We believe that once we secure our "alpha courts" (the first such facility on Kauai), that the sport of pickleball will have a venue that will be the epicenter of tremendous growth of the game and spawn additional facilities throughout the island. We have a "Field of Dreams" mentality that ***"If we build it, they will come."***

When we started PAK, we searched for an organizational framework that we could emulate. We knew that our vision had been successfully completed in many other places, as evidenced by the explosive growth of dedicated pickleball

venues across the country. We chose to emulate the efforts of Sequim, Washington. This small rural community with a population of 8,054 had caught pickleball fever, and had outgrown the basketball courts and gym that they played in. In 2015, they organized a formal club with 45 members, and within 2 years, had their non-profit status, fund-raising and agreement with the City to build and oversee court construction. Courts were completed and opened for play in June 2018, and Sequim Picklers now has almost 300 members and growing.

(Insert picture, previously sent of Sequim Courts)

We are grateful for the guidance we got from Board treasurer Katinka Nana. We copied so much of their organizational efforts, from board structure to website content, and we owe their organization a debt of gratitude. I always say that copying someone is a high form of praise, and this came full circle recently. Recently, Sequim Picklers' Director of Communication contacted our Director of Communication, Juliet Peters and said they are thinking about redoing their website, and said they loved ours! She called it "beautiful, simple and easy to navigate" and wanted Julie to contact her (which has been done). Julie is getting famous in the web page design world through PAK. As a former Facebook employee, she helped solve some tech issues the Western Region of the USA Pickleball organization was having. She has since been appointed as their Facebook administrator and to take a lead role in building and maintaining their web site. We hope that all this work will not interfere with her playing in pickleball competitions around the country. Juliet and her sister recently won a gold medal at the National Championships in December, 2021 (see more about this elsewhere on this site).

In other news, the high COVID counts at this writing has forced us to reschedule our inaugural Tournament in February. We had high hopes of hosting a tournament that would be highly attended and well organized. It would serve as a showcase of our competence and commitment to the sport, and we had hoped would attract competitors from around the state and country. We have scheduled a new date of May 27-29, 2022 with a place to be announced soon. Rumi Masumura is chairing the event, and it promises to be great. Save the dates and start looking for your partners!

I would like to remind our members and friends that our website is constantly adding new content, so please visit the site often. Our Rules of Etiquette is an example, and I personally am looking forward to Jack Hodges' next posting of "From the Picklehood". Bookmark the website and watch us as we move towards the fulfillment of our mission!

Mahalo,

Nolan Ahn

President, PAK