

# COLORADO TENNIS

Year 32, Issue 3

The Official Publication Of Tennis Lovers

Est. 1976

SUMMER 2008



## GOLDEN YEARS

Conventional wisdom says that once you reach your Golden Years, you're over the hill. Tennis players just seem to defy convention.



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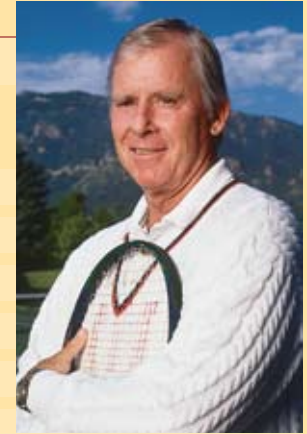
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# COLORADO TENNIS

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### About COLORADO TENNIS

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# coverstory

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TOM FASANO, KATIE NEWELL, LINDA SARGENT WEGNER

HEALTH &amp; FITNESS PROFILE BY

DR. RANDY JONAS

(Dr. Jonas is a Chiropractor and certified Applied Kinesiologist near Cherry Creek in Denver, CO. He helps patients of all ages and athletic ability prepare for the battle field of life.)

# GOLDEN YEARS

## THE SPORT OF A LIFETIME.

It's a cliché, isn't it. You've likely heard it a hundred times, yet how often do you stop and think about what "the sport of a lifetime" really means.

You can ignore all the statistics about how tennis is the ideal sport for a healthy heart, dismiss the research done on why tennis is the perfect whole-body workout, or just plain forget that irrespective of age, tennis is a sport that can be learned and played by the very young and the very old.

Just ask yourself one little question: how many sports can you name that boast specific divisions for players 60 and up? How about 90 and up? And if there are such divisions, how many participants do you see?

As tennis enters its new boom phase, we and many others in the tennis industry are quick to point out how much growth is attributable to juniors discovering the sport. But just as important to tennis' long-term sustainability and growth are the Baby Boomers, who are now entering their 60s. And while many organized sports say goodbye to participants in large numbers long before they hit their Golden Years,

tennis is seeing growth.

Here in Colorado, organized tennis participation among the 60 and over set has risen steadily, if not dramatically, in the last half-decade.

Since its inception in 2001, the Colorado Super Senior league (players 60+) has grown from 303 participants to nearly 800 players in 2008. Tournament participation in the 60s and older divisions has grown more than six percent, but considering the 30s-55s have grown at less than five percent, it's an indication of how players are competing more as they age up.

But it's not just competition that inspires people to play into their Golden Years. It's about parents reconnecting with their grown children through tennis. Grandparents staying fit and active so that they can enjoy playing with their grandchildren.

Tennis gives lifelong benefits in terms of health and attitude, which is very much reflected in the players you'll read about in the following pages. Their stories, as told in our feature *Golden Years*, is more than just a look at older players in the game. It's a celebration of why they play tennis. It's an exploration of the passion they have for life, and what tennis means to them. — Editor

## JON FETCHER (96), ALFRED KAHN (92) STAN WHITTEMORE (90), DAVE ZABEL (72)



photo by John F. Russell/Steamboat Pilot

Something very special has been taking place in the tennis community at Steamboat Springs for many years.

The Fountain of Youth has hit this beautiful resort town. Check out The Tennis Center at Steamboat Springs, and on any given day there will be 90-somethings playing what tennis enthusiasts call the sport of a lifetime.

There's Jon Fetcher (pictured left), 96, who plays tennis every Monday and Friday.

Alfred Kahn, 92, calls his playing partners about 8 every morning to make sure their tennis dates are on. Kahn, a former physician who knows the importance of staying active, plays tennis starting at 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday for 90 minutes each time out.

Stan Whittemore, 90, a Steamboat Springs resident since 1982, jokes that he's still one of the young ones playing tennis. Whittemore said Kahn is a very dedicated man when it comes to his tennis schedule.

"He calls me every morning. I could almost set my watch at 8:10 just to make sure everything's set," said Whittemore, who used to sell machine tools. "He does that every weekday morning. We have fun. It is impressive. Some of the younger fellas will stop playing and come over and say, 'I hope we can do what you're doing at your age when we're that age.'"

Kahn said he started playing tennis when he was 8 in Little Rock, Ark.

"It was on old, dirt courts. Somebody cleared off a piece of property and put up a couple of posts, and we usually poured some white stuff for lines," said Kahn, who went to medical school at Harvard. "I didn't have a chance to play much during the war. In World War II, I

didn't play at all."

Kahn said he started playing to get some form of exercise while he was practicing medicine for 40 years in Little Rock.

"I met a group of my old friends and we started playing in the late afternoon," said Kahn, who practiced internal medicine. "When I left the office, I'd maybe get a chance to play for an hour before I made hospital rounds."

Kahn said it's still enjoyable to play.

"We've lost our agility, but we get out there. It's pretty unspectacular," Kahn said. "It's excellent exercise. We move around, not quite as much as we did when we were younger. The older players tend not to run as much on the court as the younger ones. We have such an excellent tennis facility that's run by Jim Swiggart. They've got this fine group of indoor courts, and teachers if you need them. There is no reason if a person likes tennis that you couldn't play and keep up with it."

Kahn said tennis is a great game.

"Anything that I can do to interest people in tennis I'm going to do it," Kahn said. "It's good for folks to exercise. I tried to get my patients to exercise as much as they could."

Fetcher, who used to play varsity squash during his undergrad days, wouldn't come right out and say he was 96.

He did say: "I was born on Jan. 1, 1912."

"I've always played racquet games. It's a fun sport," said Fetcher, an Illinois native who received his MBA from Harvard and was an electrical engineer. "I started playing when I was 10 or 12."



photo by John F Russell/Steamboat Pilot

### Youth springs eternal in Steamboat

Alfred Kahn (above), 92, stands ready to return serve during his daily doubles match at Steamboat Springs Tennis Center. Stan Whittemore (below), 90, enjoys the competition and the history lessons during changeovers.

Fetcher said he plays old-man doubles, and that he still has an all-around game.

"I wouldn't play it if I didn't have fun," Fetcher said.

Whittemore said 79-year-old Cal Myers is too good to be playing with the 90-somethings. He laughs when asked about how his game is at 90.

"Picking up balls, I guess," is the response he gives when asked what the best part of his game is. "The thing that inspires me over there is the way these kids are learning to hit the ball. It's just beautiful to watch. If only I had that training, I could get out of the cellar."

Whittemore, who has had a pacemaker for the last five years, said he started playing tennis when he moved to Steamboat Springs.

"I enjoy it a lot except when Cal Myers serves to my backhand. He knows I don't like that so he serves to my backhand," Whittemore said.

Whittemore said he and his tennis buddies get a good workout in.

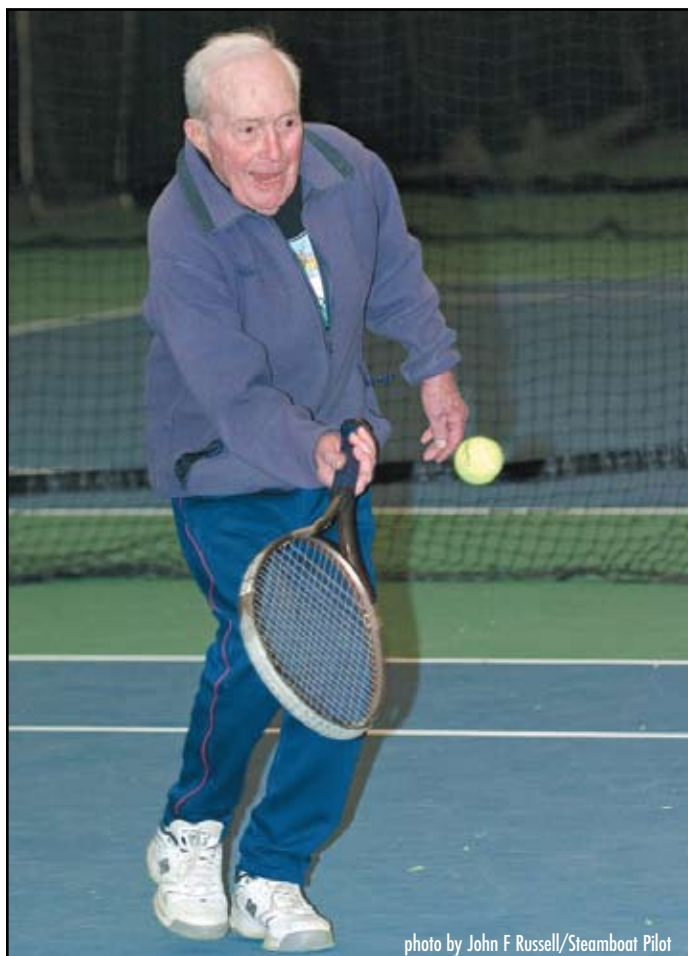


photo by John F Russell/Steamboat Pilot

"I think the exercise is what I enjoy. When you're playing doubles and you have older competitors with you, then it's not so tiring," Whittemore said. "We usually sit down when we change courts, and then they get into talking about the Battle of the Republic. There is one fella who used to teach history down in Texas, and he lives to expound on his experiences."

No matter what the age, Whittemore said the games get competitive.

"John Fetcher has a bad right shoulder so he can't serve overhand, but he serves underhand. Twice he's aced me with his underhand serve," Whittemore said.

Dave Zabel, 72, is the young man of the group. Zabel said he played a little tennis in his 30s, but he didn't start playing a lot until

# TENNIS: A WISE INVESTMENT

by Dr. Randy Jonas

Tennis has become more popular than ever, and especially so for the population of players 65 and over. Whether you played all your life or have just begun, it is hard to ignore all the great opportunities tennis provides. But with these opportunities also comes risks that can be prevented if approached proactively.

Tennis is one of the unique games that can be actively played well into the 90-year mark. It can return many years of health by providing a combination of activity and interaction. For this age group, you may notice a difference in not only your game but the way your body responds to it. Whether you like it or not your game is not the same as it was several years ago. Because of that you have to take a more focused approach to staying healthy, strong and flexible.

There are some very common but preventable injuries that accompany tennis players at all levels. The difference is that the older we are the more chronic injuries like tendonitis (pain in a tendon near a joint), and arthritis (pain in a joint) become. While younger players tend to have more acute strains and sprains. Statistically the legs and arms are more common injury sites than the back in tennis. The most familiar is of course tennis elbow (pain near the outer elbow), but things like chronic knee and shoulder pain also persist. Lets take a look at ways to avoid them.

**Mechanics:** Like it or not this is the single greatest contributing factor in tennis injuries. At all levels proper form can make or break your game. As flexibility and strength decrease, the need for proper form becomes absolutely critical. Taking a few lessons each year insures that your game is keeping up with you.

**Equipment:** Many people fail to upgrade their gear on a regular basis. Shoes should be replaced annually, and must provide both lateral support as well as cushion. Your racquet is often a critically overlooked part of injury prevention. The racquet you have used for 10 years may no longer be helping your game or your body. On both of these subjects, talk to a qualified professional at your local tennis center. An upgrade in equipment is an investment that pays for itself.

**Warm-Up:** Always start your day with a proper warm-up routine. Loosen the joints and give the body time to bring blood to the muscles. Start with a short court routine and increase distance between you and your teammate after a few minutes. Then take a few serves increasing the intensity as you go.

**Cool-Down:** After your tennis match is a great time to work on flexibility by doing a few stretches while the muscles are warm. Consider this the first thing you do for the next time you play. Flexibility is not something you get the day you play. It is something you build up to with a little work each day. A full body stretching routine can take 2-3 minutes, a small investment for the added benefits on and off the court.

**Diet:** Everything as we get older becomes a matter of quality over quantity. From sleep to food. We need less, but require the same overall input. Despite what the nutrition industry tells you, there is no substitute (or supplement) for a good diet. This means lots of vegetables and fruit, moderate grains and healthy fats, and minimal lean meats. This diet is heart healthy, anti inflammatory, and nutrient dense. Supplements such as Omega 3-6-9 fats, B vitamins, Zinc, Magnesium/Calcium, MSM, and Chondroitin Sulfate provide the building blocks for joint cartilage, and your bodies natural anti-inflammatory hormones. Take time to discuss with your health care team the best options for you.

**Exercise:** If you suffer from a chronic joint problem chances are the joint hurts from years of muscle imbalance. If you use a gym, then you should focus on balancing both the front and back muscles and also offer tennis specific exercises. Don't neglect one part of the body like the legs and calves. These are your shock absorbers, and having weak shocks means that something else i.e., the hip and back has to absorb the impact. This is where a couple of sessions with a qualified physical therapist or personal trainer can provide great long-term benefit. Chiropractic adjustment to the extremities and spine provide proper joint movement, healthy input to the brain, and can compliment any health regimen.

Continued on page 30

## JIM GLEASON (72)

Life hasn't always been easy for Jim Gleason. The son of a miner, Jim found life in Idaho Springs, Empire and the Streeter Coal Mine community in Axial, CO to be a mixed blessing. Sometimes, the only running water to be found was in the nearby rivers, where he learned to become a fly fisherman. But because of his rustic upbringing, Jim learned he could find relief from life's troubles in sports.

Jim grew six inches after high school, just in time to meet the love of his life, JoAnne. They will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary this fall. Introduced to tennis and skiing by a good friend, Norm Roglitz, he quickly found that his 6'4" frame gave him some competitive tennis skills, such as his infamous serve that can force the returner into a wall if he is so compelled. Anyone who plays with him comments on his smooth groundstrokes and the fact he is nearly impossible to lob. "Right away I realized that if you were decent at tennis, you could go anywhere in the world and meet people."

After putting himself through college with more jobs than he can remember, Jim graduated from DU (he pitched for their baseball team) with a degree in chemistry and went to work at the Federal Center, where they had a great tennis program. USTA programs came later and his seniors team on which he played doubles went to Nationals at the 4.0 level, and to Sectionals at the 4.5 level. He was also successful with his daughter, Katie, in several father-daughter events, winning many tournaments.

The one constant in Jim's life has always been the commitment to exercise. "Sometimes I feel bad on my way to the gym, but I've never felt anything but great when I'm done," he said. His life philosophy is simple. "If you exercise and play tennis, your life will be better. You will feel better and your brain will function more effectively. You will have connections to people no matter what age you are or where you are living." His doubles philosophy is "to always be complimentary to your partner, win or lose, and to encourage and support them. The bottom line is having fun." Jim's attitude is why everyone loves to play with him, and fights to get him as their doubles partner.

Five years ago, JoAnne lost her kidneys, forcing Jim and JoAnne to move from Frisco, Colorado, to Tucson, AZ for the lower altitude. As her full time caregiver, Jim appreciates that tennis continues to give him an "outlet for stress relief, friendships, and a chance for competitive play."

He recently played in the Senior Olympics in Tucson and looks forward many more years of great tennis to come. Now that his granddaughter, Kaitlyn, is playing for ThunderRidge High School, he hopes to play some tournaments with her, as well. "Tennis is a life-long sport. I'm looking ahead." – KN



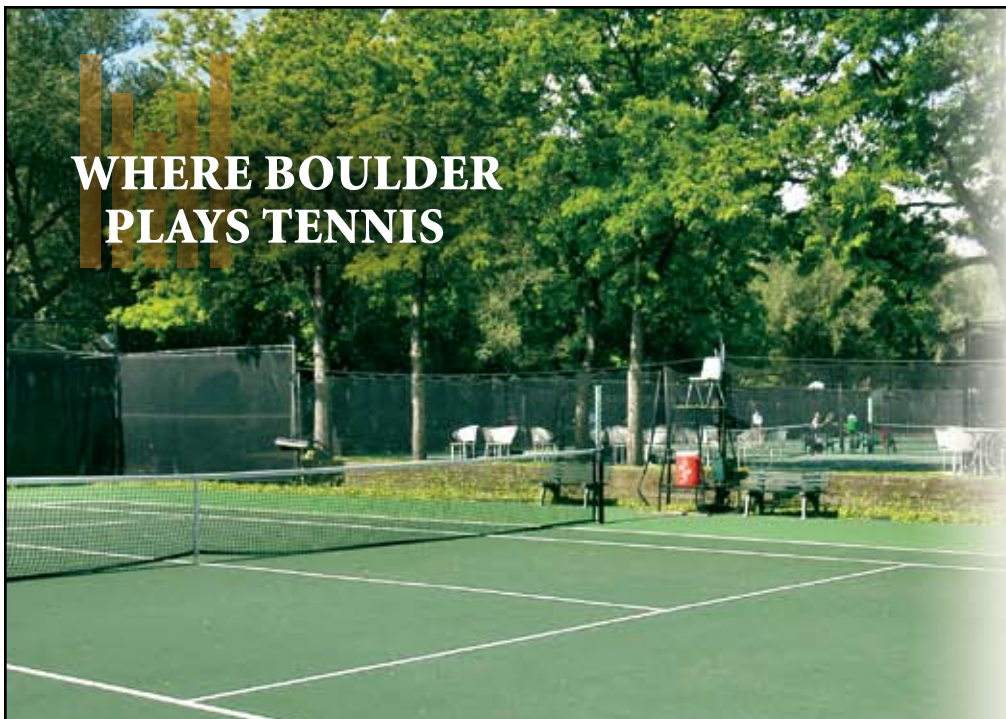
photo by Kaitlyn Newell

### Dr. Jonas says:

#### TOTAL BODY WORKOUT:

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**KATIE KOONTZ (69)**

It's hard to catch up with Katie Koontz simply because you can't catch her. She may be retired, but that only gives her the opportunity to go faster – and further – than she did when she moved to Denver in 1960.

The court sheets at the Denver Tennis Club are sure to include Katie's name at least five or six times a week. And from January through March, she plays league tennis in California, racking up even more time on the court.

Tennis means the world to Katie, who has traveled the globe making new friends thanks to her on-court skills. She is a multiple national champion (with 21 gold, 18 silver and 5 bronze balls to her credit), earning numerous accolades and awards throughout her tennis career. She has been presented with the Inspiration Award by the Sportswomen of Colorado, and acknowledged by USTA Colorado as the Senior Player of the Year.

In 2004-05, Katie and her partner Norma Veal won seven consecutive national doubles championships. En route, they completed the "Gold Slam" – winning the national indoor, clay, grass and hard court titles in one year – and came just one surface away from going back to back.

Katie has earned numerous invitations by the USTA to represent the United States in international competitions around the world – "It's the equivalent to the Senior Davis Cup," she explains – giving her the chance to compete in Australia, South Africa, Austria and Spain.

Katie loves tennis because she continues to learn something new from the game, and she has the opportunity to create new friendships all the time.

"People around the world generally play for the same reasons," she observes, "the social aspect and the exercise."

She remains in email contact with many of her international tennis friends, who she misses more than the competition at that level.

"I would eventually like to play more internationally, but right now I am enjoying my friends and my new dog in Denver." – LSW



*Dr. Jonas says:*

**PURE ENJOYMENT:** Tennis gives each of us some thing to look forward to and improve upon. Each time you step out on the court you have a chance to achieve another goal.

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**PETER (66) & NELLE (65) OLSON**

It's been said that those that play together, stay together – and one very together couple is Peter and Nelle Olson who play at the Broadmoor in Colorado Springs. As the current club champions at the 3.5/4.0 level, the Olsons are a match on and off the court. Both were introduced to tennis in their 20s (Nelle found that daycare was easier to obtain for tennis matches than golf rounds!) but have found that they're playing the tennis of their lives in their 60s.

"We play tennis together, we ski together, and we golf together. We stay young together!" Peter said, adding it's definitely strengthened their marriage to spend this type of quality time together.

Peter – who brings his passion, analytic abilities, and research to everything he does – keeps his body in shape with his favorite sports. When asked if he works out at the gym he quickly replies, "There are 10,800 minutes in a week, and I use them wisely." He adds, "I play myself to stay in shape. With tennis, golf and skiing, my body is getting younger."

Peter has also learned to find the right balance with exercise, and has researched how too much exercise causes a lactic acid buildup that can be helped with higher pH water. He says his knowledge has given him a body that works better today than it did in his 30s.

"It's been great to watch Nelle, too, and how much harder she can hit the tennis ball and how much farther she can hit the golf ball."

Nelle captains a women's 3.5 USTA league team shares Peter's passion and has a personal goal that includes, "to keep playing tennis as long as I possibly can." She's like the Pied Piper of Tennis down at the Broadmoor, always trying to recruit new players to tennis. "I want to keep it going!" she says. Nelle is passionate about staying active and plays tennis every other day. "I golf on the open days!"

The Olsons rave about the Broadmoor's tennis programs, and specifically about the influence Dennis Ralston has had on their games (Ralston's key words are 'there is no wrong way to hit a ball!'). During one recent drill, Peter was encouraged to write four words on his tennis shoe to keep his focus in the game. Peter selected: "C"



photo courtesy of The Broadmoor

**Dr Jonas says:**

**SOCIAL INTERACTION:** Research shows that people that have a social network and sense of worth not only live longer but are happier. What better way to enjoy this than on a beautiful Colorado day playing with friends.

(your shots are all variances of the letter C from groundstroke to volleys to serves), "Weigh" (weight and right hand always together, body never leaning), "Wait" (wait for the ball to where you can catch, bounce and return) and finally "Frisbee" (no death grip on your racquet, it should be a light, flick-like motion).

Passion for sports and each other overflows from the Olsons. But tennis has become the main activity for this couple.

"If you want to ski better," says Peter, "play tennis. If you want to golf better – play tennis!" – KN



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**BONNIE & MARVIN CHAMPION (68)**

At 68 years of age apiece, this power couple has a multi-dimensional view of the tennis court. Not only do they play tennis four times a week, they are also active umpires in the Colorado tennis community. They are regulars at the Denver Tennis Club and City Park, where they take their winter tennis seriously, playing four times a week, year-round, outdoors.

"We only play outside," say Bonnie. "That is how we have always done it."

Perhaps it was her upbringing.

The youngest of six children, Bonnie taught herself to play tennis by hitting the ball against the garage and playing in the road. The challenges of playing on a road full of

rocks and potholes allowed Bonnie to perfect her unorthodox tennis strokes, especially the slice, which helped her garner USTA Colorado's 2007 Senior Female Player of the Year honors. She also won a gold medal at the Huntsman World Senior Games.

Bonnie's advice to others, "Tennis is great exercise and therapy and it keeps you young. It energizes me."

Bonnie has played tennis for 30 years. The first 20 included league play. Now she plays "hit and giggle" tennis as she describes it.

"Tennis is about meeting friends and creating long-lasting relationships with people on and off the court."

She also plays in national tournaments when she can.

Marvin has played tennis for 25 years. Their four court appearances each week are never together, but that time is well spent with many long-time tennis friends. Bonnie and Marvin do play mixed doubles in tournaments together and enjoy playing in the Senior Games together. They have participated in the Senior Nationals in Kansas, Pennsylvania and California.

Their children also play tennis, including leagues. Bonnie competes in mother/daughter events with one of her daughters when they can.

When umpiring at local tennis events, the Champions love to see the people out there involved in tennis and the competitiveness that tennis inspires in the players. Their favorite part of umpiring is helping others understand the rules of the game.

For four years they have been umpires and

will continue to be part of tennis in this respect for as long as they can be. It has provided a new look at the game they love.

Bonnie and Marvin are also both avid golfers and hikers. "Being active keeps our bodies and our minds healthy," she says. – LSW



photo courtesy of Bonnie and Marvin Champion

*Dr. Jonas says:*

**WEIGHT BEARING EXERCISE:**

**This provides two major factors. First it helps maintain healthy bone density (prevents osteoporosis).**

**Second, when you are up right you stimulate nerves in your back that send information to your brain. It's like turning up a dimmer switch on a light.**

**JODY KNUDSEN (69)**

Jody's special brand of tennis involvement extends far beyond the baseline of frequent social match play. A long-time league and tournament player, she now spends most of her court time enjoying tennis with people all over Colorado and especially in Estes Park, where she lives. She plays tennis three to four times per week with these close tennis friends.

Amazingly she has had the same mixed doubles partner, Tom Clark, since 1986. That's 22 years! Her passion for tennis comes from the relationships and camaraderie she experiences because of her involvement. "I like the exercise and the people. I am going to keep doing this for as long as I possibly can," says Jody, 69 years old.

She credits her good health to tennis and tennis to her good health, finding pleasure in the activity of the sport as well as the friendships and connections to good people through play and volunteering.

Her enthusiasm is not limited to the court. Her volunteer efforts extend throughout many aspects of USTA Colorado, so much so that an award was named in her honor, the *Jody Knudsen Volunteer of the Year Award*, which is given annually to an outstanding volunteer in the Colorado tennis community. Her late husband, John, was also a tireless volunteer for USTA Colorado as he gave countless hours of care and dedication to the Colorado Youth Tennis Foundation among many other tennis causes. – LSW



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## RITA PRICE (82)

Rita Price is a whole bunch of things rolled into one amazing ball of energy and fun. First of all, she's a really good tennis player. World-class good. Rita holds the top ITF ranking in the 80s division. ITF folks, stands for International Tennis Federation.

That's right, she's *No. 1 in the world*. Last December, Rita (shown at right in photo) won the World Championships in New Zealand with doubles partner Jutta Apel.

She also holds seven national championship titles (USTA Gold Balls) – two singles and five doubles – and hundreds of other local and regional titles. Rita is extremely passionate about the sport. She even sold her house so that she can travel the world to play tennis.

She has played with some of the nation's greatest senior players, including Dodo Cheney, who has won more national titles than other player in history (372 and counting). As a matter of fact, she just played with Dodo in a local TV promotional in La Jolla (Dodo is ten years older, so they don't play against one another.) Rita's also been featured in a tennis documentary promoting the sport of a lifetime.

And wouldn't you know it, she's also a fantastic tap dancer.

"I try to grab people at tennis tournaments and teach them dancing," she admits.

But in talking to Rita, you understand that tennis has been much more than a game to this very young 82-year-old (she says she "can't wait to turn 85 to be the young kid on the block again!") The sport has been her lifeline.

"Tennis literally helped me survive a terrible divorce," she acknowledged, adding that "it saved me thousands of dollars on therapy!"

And she can't be more serious that tennis has been her "passport to life," giving her the ability to travel and make friendships of a lifetime. You can keep track of Rita's global tennis adventures on *Rita's Page*, her travelogue at [LAKEWOODTENNIS.org](http://LAKEWOODTENNIS.org).

She played paddle ball as a child, and table tennis during college, even going to New York City to compete in a tournament for two dollars, so tennis was an easy transition. Rita's first tennis tournament was the 1978 Denver City Open.

And about her game? "Well, I win funny," she jokes. "But I've always had great feet! I can run, run, run, run!"

Part of what draws you to Rita is her energy, which she says comes from other people. "I love people. I love an audience," she admits, which is why a group of inner city teenage girls were lucky to interview her last year. Among her words of wisdom was that they "should pursue their true passions and not let anyone persuade them from doing what they love to do!" She also pushed them towards tennis because "team sports you can't do the rest of your life." – KN



photo courtesy of Rita Price

### Dr Jonas says:

**CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH:**  
The leading cause of death in the U.S. is still heart disease. Tennis helps protect us by burning fats, supplying oxygen and increasing blood flow to the entire body and brain. It's the ideal sport for a healthy heart.

**LEE KALEY (74)**

Lee Kaley has been an athlete all his life. Throughout high school and college, he gravitated toward the more traditionally *masculine* sports, so his introduction to tennis was a bit of an accident. Lee was at a picnic in Denver's City Park when he saw a friend playing handball. After Lee chided him a bit for playing such an easy sport, his friend challenged him to hit the ball just two times. Lee quickly accepted, relying on his athleticism to carry him through, but was unsuccessful because of the mechanics needed to hit the ball.

Always a student of discipline, the experience led Lee to pursue tennis. "You have to be committed and disciplined when participating in tennis. Learning is handicapped without discipline. The young children I see who get involved in tennis become better students. I became more of a reader after I was introduced to tennis. I have seen the same happen in children who are exposed to tennis," Lee profoundly states. "Tennis taps into individuality and increases knowledge."

Lee has won numerous tournaments in the 60, 65, and 70 age divisions, including the Denver City Open and Colorado State Open. Although he plans to continue his quest for tournament glory, his on-court play these days is limited due to a back surgery he had a couple of years ago. This summer he will strive to play in an important senior tournament in September. Part of his rehab is staying engaged on the court with the kids who play in his north Denver neighborhood of Montbello and the surrounding areas.

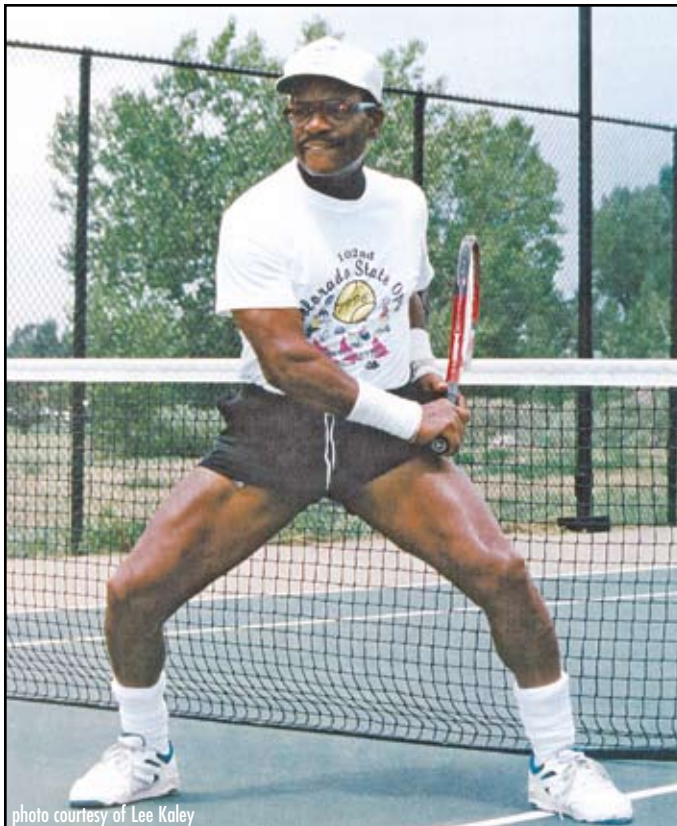


photo courtesy of Lee Kaley

*Dr Jonas says:*

**COORDINATION AND BALANCE:**

The movement coupled with eye hand coordination is a fun and potent way to keep your body acting young. The risk of falls increases as we age, and one way to prevent this is to make sure the muscles around the neck and ankle, as well as nerves in the ear and eyes, are working properly. There may not be a better way to achieve this than tennis.

At an event, "Soul and Salsa", held every summer in north Denver and organized by Councilman Michael Hancock, Lee participates by holding a tennis clinic so that kids can experience the joy of tennis. Lee would one day like to see a public tennis facility like the Gates Tennis Center in the north Denver community. "The bounty and awards attached to this game are unbelievable. The kids in this community would benefit from increased exposure to tennis," Lee says.

Lee's interests extend beyond the confines of the tennis court. He was involved in pro-bono work at DIA, assisting travelers when they needed help, such as accommodations they weren't planning on or if their wallet was missing. He is also incredibly proud of his work as Chairperson for the Rocky Mountain Arsenal's Restoration Advisory Board. This board was an integral part of converting the military facility with hazardous materials into a wildlife refuge.

What keeps Lee on the court is the interaction with quality people and the competition which brings out his abilities. He has found over the years that, generally, people who are involved in tennis are professionally minded and interesting to interact with socially.

His love of tennis is obvious, and he wants to pass on 'the gift of tennis' to kids.

"Tennis to me is a whole universe of everything a human being wants to be, no matter what that is. Tennis shows you that if you are committed to doing something, you can do it." - LSW

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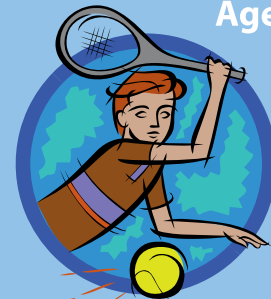
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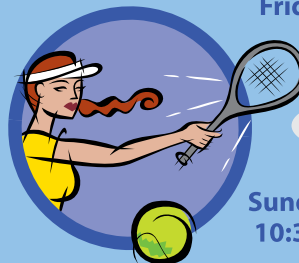
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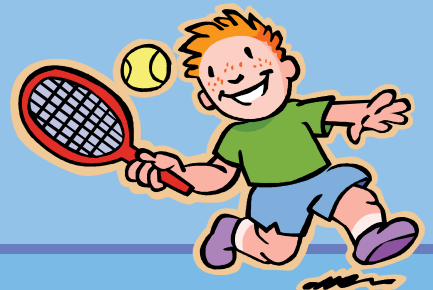
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## KITTY GWATHMEY (68)

Place a tennis racquet in one hand and a ball in the other and Kitty Gwathmey is one happy woman.

The southern accent that comes out of the mouth of the 68 year-old Gwathmey is still prevalent, as is her love for tennis.

A former board member of the Colorado Tennis Association in the late 1980s and 1990s, the Vail resident lives on a golf course but spends a good bit of her time on the tennis courts.

"My grandmother gave me a tennis racquet when I was 5 years old. It was very special for my grandmother to give me something like that," said Kitty, a native of North Carolina. "I had no one to play with, no place to play and I used to take my little red and white tennis racquet and bounce the ball up and down on the sidewalk. That's how I started playing tennis – bouncing the ball just flat."

Kitty said she didn't get rid of that racquet, either.

"I still had the racquet and gave it to my son when he was 7 years old. I still kept that tiny, little racquet," Kitty said.

Kitty's high school days on the tennis court were rather uneventful.

"I didn't make the high school tennis team because I'm really left-handed, but I play tennis right-handed," she said. "But back in the Dark Ages, no one would teach a left-handed person to play tennis. I'll never forget the gym teacher who was the tennis coach who said, 'I'm so sorry you can't be on the team because you're left-handed, so I didn't make the team.'"

Kitty said she ended up meeting a man in Michigan.

"He went to a school in North Carolina – Davidson College – and he was on their tennis team and he started hitting with me. I married him 47 years ago, and I'm still married to him," Kitty said.

Ned Gwathmey has given up tennis, but he still hits with his wife, and teases her about her serve.

"He said if I served and ran to the net, the ball would hit me in the back," Kitty laughed. "But at least it goes in."

Kitty, who remembers the year (1961) when she was taught a two-handed backhand by the University of Michigan tennis coach, said she plays tennis as much as she can. Kitty plays on a ladies senior 4.0 team and is the captain of a Super Seniors 4.0 squad. She calls herself a tennis junkie, and her husband says she watches the Tennis Channel 24 hours a day.

"I still love it more than anything in the world," she said. "You just meet wonderful people. I just love going to these tournaments."

Kitty, a former elementary school teacher who still teaches skiing in the winter, is responsible for bringing tennis to the women of Colorado by running her Ladies Day sessions since 1982, when she worked for Colorado Tennis Association Hall of Famer Bill Wright at Ford Park in Vail. Now she runs Ladies Day every Wednesday at Bachelor Gulch from 9 AM-noon during the summers and indoors in Vail during the winter. She has senior citizens all the way down to girls in their teens who show up for Ladies Day.

"I don't really get to play. I organize the women. I sit and knit and watch the ladies play. I've had some ladies coming there for almost 20 years. They've really improved over the years," Kitty said. "If somebody doesn't organize them, they're going to talk too much and they're not going to play, and they really want to play."

For Kitty, it's all about getting the women to play.

"I want them to play. I don't think it's social," she said. "I feel like they come to play and they can socialize after or they can come early and socialize before. They come and they get three sets of tennis. It's a big \$5 and I provide fruit and balls, and they at least play three sets if not more."

Kitty said she feels so good when she comes off the court.

"No one likes to lose, and I especially don't like to lose, but at least if I've lost my heart's beating and I've done exercise," Kitty said. "I just can't tell you how good I feel when I leave the court, and I love to hit the ball. I can hit a ball with a 6 year-old, and have just as much fun as hitting the ball with a 65 year-old."

Kitty said she'll play tennis for as long as she can move.

"I don't want to give it up," Kitty said. "It's a wonderful sport. I played today with eight women, and then my husband came and said, 'Do you want to hit?' and I said, 'Absolutely.' You help your body in a limited time." – TF



photo courtesy of Kitty Gwathmey

### Dr Jonas says:

**Being active is the single most important thing you can do to increase vitality, and longevity. Tennis offers perhaps the greatest environment for enhancing many aspects of your health. Most tennis injuries are self-limiting (resolve on their own) and respond well to ice and rest. If you have severe pain, or pain that lasts for extended periods, you should consult your qualified and trusted health care professional. But regardless of the outcome an ounce of prevention is worth its weight in gold. Take care of your tennis game, and it will take care of you.**

## RON DANEKAS (64)

By the time you're reading this article, Ron Danekas will probably either be on a tennis court or looking at the outstanding view from his cabin on Grand Mesa, elevation 10,000 feet and packed with so much snow this year they finally just got the roads cleared. "For the reservoirs and the farmers, the snow's pure gold," he explained of the unusually heavy snowfall.

Retired since 2006, Ron and his wife, Marlene, take in the breathtaking scenery with even more awareness of what beauty surrounds them since he underwent a quadruple bypass in 2005. He's a

bit bewildered by the "event that happens to other people," but talking about that isn't what makes Ron tick. It's all about the good things in life, such as his wonderful wife, his unbelievable friendships and the great sport of tennis that brings him so much joy.

Ron, who just turned 64, grew up in Washington state and dallied with tennis. "It

wasn't so cool to play tennis in my class of 43 kids. You were supposed to play football, baseball or basketball." But he said he always had "the feel for tennis." When he found some other boys with the courage to be seen on the courts, that's where his passion started. Four years in the Air Force and time in Vietnam put tennis on the back burner, but he started up again after he and Marlene moved to Grand Junction. And of course, if you love tennis and you live in Grand Junction, you're going to not only run into the Elliott Family, you're going to be incorporated into the tennis world of the Elliots, and that's exactly what's happened to Ron. "I've played doubles with many of the Elliots. It's been a ball."

Ron says his friendships are the most important thing that tennis has brought to his life. "The people I play with, the interaction that we have, I can't even tell you what it means to me. We've gone through heartaches together. But their support and encouragement has been so important." His favorite is doubles, but he'll play singles to help his doubles play. He loves the competition, saying that their USTA 4.5 team runs up against really stiff competition in Denver, but it's all good. He says he has "his head on straight" and never takes the game too seriously. And he loves that the vast majority of netters he runs into also want to have fun in tennis.

Ron also loves to snowmobile, backpack, and golf. He says that Marlene has been a great support to him, encouraging him to do the things he loves. Of course, he said he'll run the vacuum, or do the dishes to keep on her good side. On or off the court he's got a beautiful perspective. – KN

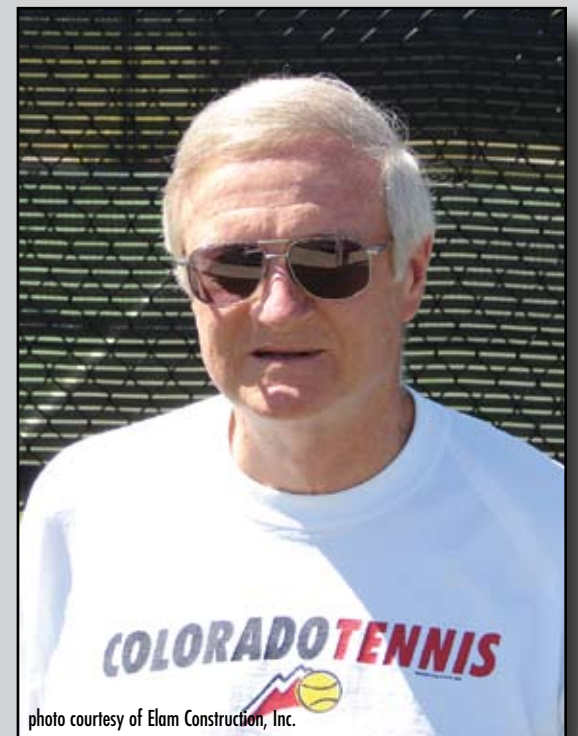


photo courtesy of Elam Construction, Inc.

## FLO PRITZ (82)

If you like to sleep in, you may not want to hang out with Flo Pritz, 82 years young and an avid recreational player. She's up by 5:30 seven days a week fitting in as much cooking, entertaining, and court time at The Broadmoor as she possibly can. Nothing really slows this active woman down, not even the bypass surgery she endured last year (although she did have to give up jumping on trampolines!) with the support of her family, and her beloved circle of tennis friends.

Flo found tennis on the Cheyenne Mountain High School courts after she moved from Minneapolis to Colorado over 40 years ago. Able to find daycare when she was on the courts, she immediately loved the combination of friendship and exercise that tennis offered her. "I've am so blessed to have my friends who I can play with both on and off the court!" she said, adding that it keeps her young both mentally and physically staying so active.

"Tennis is great for women. You use muscles that you don't use anywhere else," Flo emphasizes. Due to a shoulder injury, husband Eldon supports Flo from the sidelines, which may be a sort of dangerous place as her self-described best shot is "a return into the alley from the deuce court." She has spread her love of the sport down to her son Peter, who played No. 1 singles for the University of Denver, as well as her daughters Kristan and Andrea.

Flo likes the play style of Federer, but is currently disappointed with the American women. "You would think in a country as big as ours that we could produce more strong women players," she says. And what does she think of the growth of tennis in Colorado? "That's fantastic," she agrees, hoping the trend translates into new American champions in generations to come.

What's next for Flo? Well, if she finds more time, she thinks adding tap dancing to her busy day would help her with balance. And since her and Eldon are no strangers to dancing, it would be a natural fit. For now, she's as happy as ever, hitting tennis balls with her buddies, staying politically active and entertaining her lifelong friends. – KN



photo courtesy of The Broadmoor

## RICK RUSCIO, 60

Rick Ruscio, who just hit the big 6-0, does some diverse recreational activities, like playing the guitar and writing songs, tennis, softball and mono-skiing at his favorite resort, Vail. But it's the influence he's having in the lives of so many others that make Rick who he is today. In a wheelchair since a 30-foot fall at work thirty years ago broke his back, Rick moved himself forward into a life that inspires people both locally and around the world.

Exposed to wheelchair tennis at the University of Maryland, Rick realized almost immediately that he'd found a sport he could excel at. "I can do this!" was his initial reaction and he's become quite an accomplished player. "Tennis is a great source of recreation, mobility, and gives me the grounds to complete with able-bodied athletes," Rick says.

The only difference in wheelchair tennis is that the ball can bounce twice, but otherwise the rules are the same. He watches his nutritional intake – limited red meat, eating foods high in antioxidants – and he does resistance training to keep his body strong. His backhand is his favorite shot, but I'm told he's dangerous from anywhere. If you've never had the opportunity to see wheelchair tennis, Rick gives demonstrations around the state.

But it's his passion for bringing hope, dignity, and independence to people with disabilities that defines Rick, who works with The Mobility Project to get wheelchairs to third world countries. Whether the cause of the disability was disease, war, accidents or land mines, often times there would be no way for a family in these areas to give their loved one the gift of mobility. Rick and others in The Mobility Project step in and provide mobility aids, such as wheelchairs, crutches, walkers and other medical devices to help them give their unique gifts to the communities in which they live.

In addition to his passion for third world countries, Rick is making our country a more beautiful place to live with his custom home designs, providing home builders with quality custom home plans at affordable prices. Rick has diplomas in architectural drafting and design and technical illustration, and has been working with architectural design firms for years.



photo courtesy of Rick Ruscio

### Tennis & Breakfast: A smart way to start your day

Congratulations goes out to the winners of the 3.0/3.5 Senior Breakfast League (Winter 2008 session) at Meadow Creek Tennis & Fitness: Spike Frisbie, captain Joanne Wilkes, Denise Desbarats, Tom Briner, and Pat Lopez (not pictured is team member Pat Williams).

The USTA Colorado Senior Breakfast League is open to all USTA members ages 55 and up. Throughout the year, various divisions play at several tennis facilities around the metro area. The league emphasizes the fun and social over the serious tennis game. New 16-week sessions run every few months: January-April, May-August, September-December. Registration begins 60 days and closes 30 days prior to the beginning of each session. For details call the USTA Colorado office at 303.695.4116.



Rick's goals are to be able to impact the lives of teens, young adults and adults around the world and here at home, bring them mobility and hope. He's been able to travel around the world, meet great people and make a difference in the world. He's definitely a man you want in your court.

The Mobility Project exists to serve disabled people living in poverty in many ways. You can find out more at [MOBILITYPROJECT.org](http://MOBILITYPROJECT.org). – KN

# buzzbuzz

## NOUNS IN THE NEWS

PEOPLE, PLACES & THINGS DOING THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER.

### Sanders, Anundsen garner Sportswomen of Colorado honors

Erin Sanders and Sara Anundsen were honored by Sportswomen of Colorado at its 34th Annual Awards Banquet on Sunday, March 9, 2008 at the Marriott Tech Center. The annual awards go to Colorado's top female athletes and contributors to women's athletics, as selected by a panel of sportswriters and sportscasters from around the state. Sanders captured the Colorado 5A High School Championship her sophomore year at Ponderosa, earning Player of the Year accolades from the Rocky Mountain News.

Anundsen, a 2007 graduate from the University of North Carolina, captured the NCAA Division I Doubles Championship. A multiple award winner, Anundsen was also inducted into the Sportswomen of Colorado Hall of Fame, joining other tennis greats Carol Baily, Karen Gallagher, Stephanie Hagan, Miko Hemi, Jeanette Paddock, Nicole Leimbach, Alicia Salas, Becky Varnum and Kathleen Winegardner.

### Englewood's Jim Tucker earns national recognition

He just finished his 30th year of coaching at Englewood High School, and Jim Tucker will find out later this month whether he's been recognized as the nation's top tennis coach by the National High School Athletic Coaches Association. Tucker was the recipient of Colorado Tennis Coach of the Year honors back in 2001, and earned his 400th career victory as a coach last year. The winner of the award will be announced at an awards banquet in Colorado Springs on June 25 at the NHSACA National Annual Meeting.

### Damico earns ITA All America honors

Kellen Damico (Parker) has been named to the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's All America Doubles Team. The University of Texas freshman partnered with fellow Texas freshman Ed Corrie to finish the year with a 25-10 doubles record, and the No. 8 ranking.

At the NCAA Division 1 National Championships, Damico and Corrie fell to the eventual champions and No. 1 ranked squad from USC 6-4, 6-4. Damico went 29-16 in singles, earning a slot in the NCAA Singles Championships as well.

### South High senior Fajda earns educational scholarship from USTA

Roksolana Fajda, a senior at Denver's South High School, has been selected as one of 37 winners nationwide of a \$6,000 College Educational Scholarship by the United States Tennis Association (USTA) Tennis & Education Foundation (T&EF). The Foundation has granted 54 high school students a variety of college scholarships this spring, totaling \$287,000.



**Roksolana Fajda**

An avid tennis player while growing up in the Ukraine, Fajda used her love of the game to help her fit in when she immigrated to the United States. Her USTA Junior Team went on to win the Colorado State Championship. Fajda has overcome her initial difficulties with the English language and become a strong student involved with several groups, including student council and the South High School Yearbook, where she is co-editor.

The 37 honorees were selected from applicants throughout the country on the basis of their commitment to academic success, their local community and the game of tennis. An objective of the USTA T&EF is to encourage America's youth to pursue their goals and highest dreams

by succeeding in school and becoming responsible citizens.

"By supporting young people we are investing in America's future," said Karen Martin Eliezer, Executive Director of the USTA Tennis and Education Foundation. "With the help of these scholarships, it is our hope that the students will continue to pursue their goals and act as stewards of their communities as they move on to higher education and throughout their lives."

Established in 1994, the USTA Tennis & Education Foundation promotes – through tennis – educational excellence, good citizenship and self-improvement to at-risk and other special needs youth.

### Memorial Park welcomes new concessionaires

Brian and Kellie Ford are the new concessionaires at Memorial Park Tennis Center in



### Braun inducted into Buffalo (NY) Tennis Hall of Fame

Boulder's Peter Braun has been inducted into the Buffalo (NY) Tennis Hall of Fame. After spending some time on the pro circuit in the mid-1980s where he reached a career high ranking of No. 730 in singles and 620 in doubles, Braun became the Director of Tennis at Vail Racquet Club. He was the No. 1 ranked player in the Intermountain Section (30s, 35s, Open Mixed) in the early 90s. Since 2004, Braun has taught on the Barilla Pasta Court at Arthur Ashe Kids Day during the US Open. He is now the First Vice President-Investments at UBS Financial Services in Boulder.

Colorado Springs, a 15-court public facility located just south of the US Olympic Complex. The Fords are former collegiate-level players and are still avid competitors.

Brian played intercollegiately for Sacramento State in the late 1980s. A USPTA certified pro, he currently competes at the 5.0 level and in the 35 & 40 age divisions. Kellie played for the University of Colorado–Colorado Springs, earning MVP honors. A USPTA pro, she competes at the Open level.

The pair are dedicated to help grow the sport in their community, offering lesson packages to players of all ages and abilities. "We are both tremendously excited about the opportunity to grow the game of tennis in Colorado Springs. We have a true passion for the game as players and we look forward to sharing our love for it with everyone both young and old."

The Fords are looking to make an impact by helping to form an advocacy council to assist the Springs in facility improvements and also to introduce more opportunities for kids to experience our game through programs like QuickStart during their afternoon activities.

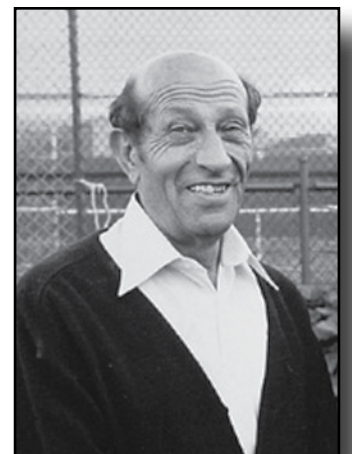
"We are hopeful that a city initiative will culminate in covering two of our courts at Memorial Park. We are very close. Obviously that would enable us to touch more kids throughout the year."

### Hall of Famer, pioneer Milstein dead at 99

Sam Milstein, a pioneer in the sport of tennis and owner of The Aspen Leaf, has died at the age of 99. Sam and his brother Sid not only helped to grow tennis locally, but also helped to advance the sport on a world-wide level, by developing yellow tennis balls in the 1930s and helping to introduce the high altitude ball in the 1950s.

In the 1930s, Sam and Sid owned the Denver Tennis Shop at 15th Avenue and Tremont, where they strung and sold racquets and balls. They added ski equipment in 1937, and changed the name of the store to the Denver Tennis and Ski Shop (after moving the shop to Cherry Creek years later, they changed the name once again to the Aspen Leaf). In their spare time they made, repaired, stained and painted tennis courts, all while working with city government for more courts. Together, they built tennis courts at the Denver Country Club, Green Gables Country Club and Bowmar. They also coached tennis and offered lessons while Sam taught at the University of Colorado from 1942-45.

For five years, Sam was the Intermountain Sectional Delegate to the United States Lawn Tennis Association, the predecessor to the United States Tennis Association. He was also in charge of junior tennis development for the Intermountain region throughout the 1940s, thereby responsible for sending juniors to nationals.



**Colorado Tennis Hall of Famer Sam Milstein**



In 1981, Sam and Sid Milstein received the Bud Robineau Award from the Colorado Tennis Association for their outstanding services to the sport of tennis. They were members of the first class inducted to the Colorado Tennis Hall of Fame in 2001.

### Former CTA Executive Director Betsy Carey passes away

Betsy Carey, Colorado Tennis Association Executive Director from 1991-1994, passed away in early May in Denver as a result of a heart attack. Carey was born January 13, 1938 and grew up in Boulder. For the last decade, she had been an active member of the Taos art scene and a contributing columnist to the Taos (New Mexico) News.

### Colorado to host two collegiate summer circuit events

This summer, Colorado will play host to a pair of Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) Summer Circuit events, at the University of Denver (July 12-14) and at the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs (July 19-21). This is the first time Colorado has hosted the Summer Circuit, which offers college and junior players the opportunity to compete in organized events throughout the summer.

The Circuit is made up of seven regional circuits (East, Southeast, Midwest, Central, Mountain, Southwest and West) with open tournaments played during the month of July, leading up to the August 11-15 ITA National Summer Championships in Bloomington, Indiana. Over 22,000 men and women have competed in circuit events since it began in 1993. College-age players and juniors seeking collegiate-level competition can find more information at [ITATennis.com](http://ITATennis.com) or they can register online at [Active.com](http://Active.com) for the University of Denver Circuit or Air Force Academy Circuit.

### The Taco Bell Western Slope Open turns 50

For the last 49 years, players from across the west have swarmed to Colorado's Western Slope to play in the region's largest tennis tournament.

The first Western Slope Open was held in 1958. Organized by Lena and Carter Elliott with the help of their 11 children, it began as a junior tournament for players under 20. Parents and adults were spectators until one father prevailed on Lena to "let the adults play, too."

Since then many categories have been added at the request of tennis players. In the early 1980s, the open was renamed the Taco Bell Western Slope Open when the corporation became the major sponsor. With the tournament growing to more than 700 players who compete annually, the open is a yearly event for many generations.

But the event is far from just another tournament. Proceeds from the event are donated back to the Grand Junction community, and each year dozens of dedicated volunteers showcase the best in Western Slope hospitality.

The 50th Annual Taco Bell Western Slope Open will be held in Grand Junction, July 22-27. Registration deadline is July 8. A new website has been constructed to commemorate this year's event. For more information or to register, please visit [MESACOUNTYTENNIS.com](http://MESACOUNTYTENNIS.com).

### Inverness to play host to Colorado's biggest money tournament

Colorado Athletic Club Inverness is set to host the inaugural Safeway Foundation Men's Open Tournament, July 22-27, 2008. The total purse for the first year of this event is \$25,000, more than twice that of any current Colorado tournament. The Men's Singles winner will claim \$8,000, making this the highest prize money tournament in Colorado. Qualifying for Men's Singles begins Tuesday, July 22 and final matches will be held Sunday, July 27. See the ad on page 25.

### Voters approve capital improvements to Lone Tree courts

In the Spring 2008 issue of COLORADO TENNIS, we reported on the proposed renovation of the tennis facility located at the Lone Tree Golf Club and Hotel. Voters approved a bond measure in May that would fund the new six-court facility with improved amenities.

According to Michelle Kivela, Deputy City Manager for the City of Lone Tree, the path ahead includes developing a Master Plan for the site, which will receive several rounds of public input before being put through the bid process in the fall. Lone Tree's goal is to have construction on the new project begin the early part of 2009, with a completion date toward the end of June next year.

"The City and South Suburban Parks and Recreation (SSPR) hope to minimize the impact to the tennis season, but we are looking at approximately an eight week delay of tennis play at the Golf Course," says Kivela, who notes that Lone Tree will own the facility and has made an agreement with SSPR to be the project manager and consultant on the design and construction. SSPR will also operate, maintain and program the facility.

The project will include six new post-tension courts, covered benches, bleachers, office space along with inside storage and restrooms, a large picnic pavilion, playground, open space area for special events, and additional landscaping.

### Littleton Golf & Tennis, Meadow Creek nab Top 50 TWC honors

The Tennis Industry Association, USTA and Racquet Sports Industry are honoring the Top



### Windsor's Tennis Center spared tornado's wrath

The EF3 tornado that roared through Windsor on May 22 missed hitting the Colorado Tennis Center's bubble that houses two indoor courts. The CTC, a three-year-old facility with five total courts located in southwest Windsor, only had its power go out causing the bubble to deflate.

"We were really fortunate. When the bubble came down some lights broke," said CTC employee Joyce Bloch. "As soon as someone turned the generators on manually, that took care of everything. It could have been so much worse."

50 Tennis Welcome Centers of 2007 for leading the charge in growing the sport by providing well-rounded programs to new and current players of all ages and abilities. Two metro Denver facilities have landed on the Top 50 list – Littleton Golf and Tennis and Meadow Creek Tennis and Fitness.

### Tennis benefit raises \$10,000 for local charter school

The Ricardo Flores Magon Academy received a \$10,000 donation from CARE (Children's Academic Racquet Event), a metro Denver organization dedicated to benefiting children in the local community. CARE organized a fundraising event in May, featuring a silent auction, clinic and exhibition with Ranch Country Club pros. More than 100 participants took part in what event organizers called a huge success.

"We were hoping to raise \$5,000, but obviously this was a bigger success than we anticipated," says Tamra Obenauer.

The idea for the fundraiser came from a COLORADO TENNIS newspaper story last year on RFMA, which teaches tennis and chess as a means to supplement its classroom offerings. The money raised at the event will help RFMA to expand its educational opportunities and pay for much needed supplies. The school hopes to continue to grow, with third through eighth grade coming online over the next few years. RFMA currently offers K-2nd education.

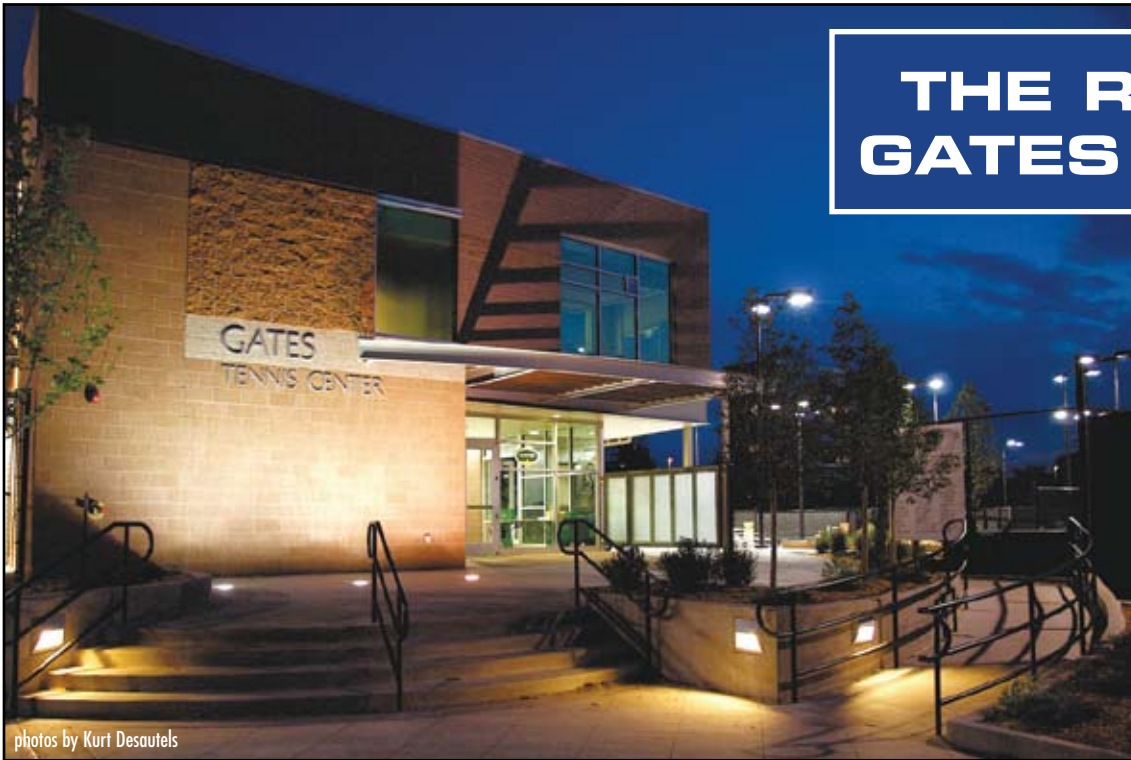
### Colorado Youth Tennis Foundation seeking volunteers

Are you passionate about kids and tennis? Are you fun and energetic and interested in making a difference in the lives of children? If so, the Colorado Youth Tennis Foundation is looking for you. The CYTF is a fundraising arm of USTA Colorado. Its mission is simple – to provide tennis opportunities to kids in need across the state. The CYTF is currently seeking volunteers in the following areas:

- Development Committee – This group raises money through corporate, foundation and individual asking.
- Punk Relic Charity Tournament – The 2008 adult/junior combined tournament will be held on August 24. Volunteers are needed in the areas of event promotion and marketing, sponsorship acquisition, fundraising and logistics.
- Colorado Tennis Hall of Fame Committee – The 2009 Colorado Tennis Hall of Fame Gala will be held on January 31, 2009. Volunteers are needed in the areas of promotions and marketing, sponsorship acquisition, fundraising, logistics and auction management.

If you have an interest, contact Lisa Schaefer at 303.695.4116 x201 or email [lisa@coloradotennis.com](mailto:lisa@coloradotennis.com).

# THE RE-CREATION OF GATES TENNIS CENTER



photos by Kurt Desautels

to be managed by The Park People. Since then, The Park People has overseen the operation of the Center through the use of a concessionaire.

Throughout its history, the Gates Tennis Center has fulfilled its important mission of providing diverse and inclusive programming while remaining financially sustainable with virtually no reliance on public funds.

## The Project

Few people are aware that the Center and neighboring Pulaski Park were developed atop an old landfill. While much of the subsurface had been remediated at the Center, remaining unstable soil underneath the four western courts caused severe cracking.

In 2004, The Park People and the Gates Family Foundation began working together to develop plans to repair and update the Center to serve the next generation of tennis players. Adhering to the spirit of Mr. Gates' original intent, plans were created to repair the failing courts, upgrade the dated facility and develop programmatic synergy to make way for a renaissance of public tennis in Denver.

Together with the City of Denver, The Park People and the Gates Family Foundation were able to commit \$3.65 million of the \$4.7 million project cost. The remaining \$1.05 million was raised through donations of all sizes from a long list of individuals, families, foundations and corporations.

## The Scope

The new Joan Birkland Pavilion honors one of Colorado's greatest female athletes. With improved wheelchair access, expanded pro shop, enhanced players' amenities, and new tournament staging and viewing areas, the Pavilion is the highlight of this important project. The second floor is home to USTA Colorado (Colorado Tennis Association).

Renner Sports Surfaces was tapped to complete the following projects:

- four new post-tension courts with upgraded lighting and tournament viewing area;
- replace the asphalt on courts 12-15;
- coated court 16 with an experimental crack sealing procedure and then resurfaced;
- crack repairs and resurfacing on the old stadium court, including repainting the wall;
- resurface court 11 with RSS Reflex-500, a cushioned surface developed by Renner which is growing in popularity (it is installed on six courts at the Steamboat Tennis Center, as well as multiple private residences in Colorado).

## The History

In the late 1960s, a group of citizens concerned about the state of Denver's public parks created The Park People, a private non-profit, to raise private support for park projects.

In 1975, the Gates Family Foundation gifted the Gates Tennis Center to the citizens of Denver to provide the best public facility for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. The late Charles C. Gates and Homer Reed, Gates Trustees, provided key leadership for the project. Wanting to ensure its long-term sustainability, the Foundation arranged for the Center



## The Opening ▲

At the May 14th Dedication Ceremony, Joan Birkland and Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper (center) paired up with hometown Gates Tennis Center prodigies Jonathan (left) and Marianne Evangelista (right) to christen the new courts.

In his opening remarks, The Park People's executive director Patrick Hayes spoke of the revitalization of the Center. "The word *recreation* can be read two ways. On paper, it can read *re-creation*, a very suitable concept given this beautiful new facility."

Hickenlooper presented the formal dedication of the Gates Tennis Center. Hizzoner then doffed his suit to reveal tennis whites and a fine forehand. 🎾

# spotlight

## A TENNIS RIDDLE

WHAT STARTS IN THE RED, THEN GOES INTO THE BLACK WHEN IT HEADS BACK INTO THE RED (BY GOING GREEN)?

BY KURT DESAUTELS, COLORADO TENNIS EDITOR

**I**t was my first story for COLORADO TENNIS, date-line April 2000. I was digging a little deeper on a story that came across my desk – a tennis center was in trouble.

### Into the Red

Nearly a decade ago, the tennis program at the Jewish Community Center – JCC or J as the appellation goes today – was slated for termination. The outdoor courts were in disrepair, and membership was down. In its place, the JCC president and board hoped to build a Judaic Museum.

The outcry came from far and near, and it came loud. A temporary solution allowed the tennis facility to keep operating, but swirling rumors, lack of confidence from prospective members and a tired, run-down facility kept the J membership wondering when the final blow would be struck.

### Back in Black

Despite the prognosis, a new management team led by tennis director Sam Hitman was hired to run tennis programming. Thanks to tremendous member support, a bevy of new programs and a cadre of energized tennis pros, the J showed not just proof of life, but a zest for it. Year after year, tennis grew at the J. Five years after members were told tennis was dead, membership was completely full at 400.

But filling up the members lists doesn't make the ball bounce any straighter on cracked and deteriorating courts. As a part of its 10-year contract with the J, Colorado Tennis Management, Inc. agreed to renovate the outdoor tennis courts. CTM Inc. is owned and operated by Hitman and Eric Rose, and is the same concessionaire that runs the Gates Tennis Center just down the road from the J. After extensive research, CTM Inc. moved forward with a \$250,000 renovation of the J's outdoor facility, highlighted by a pair of red clay courts that stand out in stark contrast to the two new post-tension courts that sit next to them.

### Red is Green

The two clay courts are built with a synthetic clay product called Classic Clay, and are the first of their kind in Colorado.

Now an average clay court in a dry climate like Colorado needs roughly 250,000 gallons of water/per court/per year for maintenance. Manufactured in Australia, Classic Clay courts require zero watering, an extremely green solution for facilities who want to provide players with the experience of playing red clay but don't want the watering bill.

"We are excited about keeping the clay courts open year round," says Hitman. "Because there is no watering, we are not required to shut them down in winter. We can play outside whenever the weather permits, which in Colorado could be the middle of December or the end of February."

Beyond the eco-friendly nature of the Classic Court, Rose is



### Scarlet Fever

Feeling a bit French? You can give red clay a try thanks to a recently completed renovation at the JCC that includes a new four court post-tension facility, two of which are topped with an eco-friendly red clay surface that requires no watering.



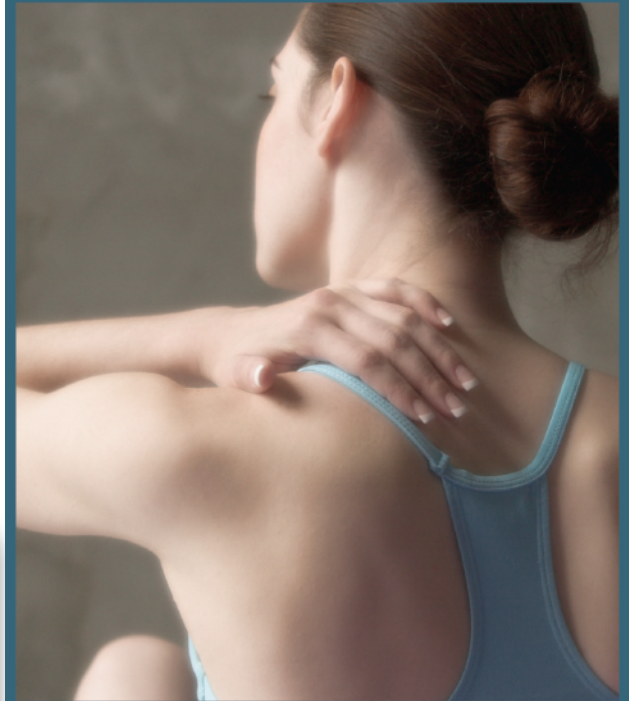
photos provided by Colorado Tennis Management

also quick to tout the benefits of playing clay.

"The beauty of the clay is that they are soft and easy on the body. The clay provides a slower game and its fun to have the variety of surfaces – it's like you're stepping onto the court at Roland Garros," he quips.

Summer memberships at the J are now available. You can call the JCC at 303.316.6380 for a free two-week trial membership to try out the clay courts, where you can imagine yourself playing at the French Open. Just hope you don't draw Nadal in the first round. 🎾

## Tennis elbow or shoulder pain limiting your ability to play?



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Eric Rose  
Tennis Director Gates Tennis Center

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# spotlight

## PROPOSED BOULDER TENNIS CLUB BUILDING BROAD APPEAL FACILITY DESIGNED TO DELIVER SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

BY KURT DESAUTELS, COLORADO TENNIS EDITOR

**B**oulder tennis enthusiasts are likely to know the names Duke Paluch, Kendall Chitambar and Donna Chitambar. And Duke, Kendall and Donna know tennis and they know Boulder.

That's why the longtime Boulder teaching pros and founders of Rocky Mountain Tennis Center realize they can't just build a few courts, put out of hopper of balls and call it a club.

"Boulder is an ideal location for us because of the high level of tennis interest in the community and the lack of facilities, especially indoor courts" says Paluch, General Manager of Rocky Mountain Tennis Center, and Manager/Director of Tennis at Boulder's Millennium Harvest House since 1987. "But, Boulder is also a sophisticated market so we want to make sure we meet all of their needs, provide something for every member of the family."

To meet those needs, Rocky Mountain Tennis Center will feature 24 courts (5 clay), a complete fitness center, day



### Your First Look at: Rocky Mountain Tennis Center

Many Boulder tennis players are anxiously awaiting news on the Rocky Mountain Tennis Center, a proposed 24-court indoor/outdoor facility located on Arapahoe Road, east of Flatirons Golf Course.

In addition to providing quality instruction to recreational players, RMTTC hopes to become a staging area for the development of elite talent from across the state and even the nation.

#### At A Glance:

24 Courts: 10 indoor, 9 outdoor hard courts (one stadium court), 5 clay

Day Spa, Fitness center, 25-meter outdoor pool, Pro Shop, Bistro, Day Care Center

spa, 25-meter outdoor pool, day care, bistro and full-service pro shop. It is planned that 10 of the courts will be enclosed for winter play.

According to Paluch the goal is to provide a "world class tennis facility where members will want to spend their day playing tennis, working out in the fitness center, getting a facial in the spa or lounging by the pool."

Ah, but it's not all about facials and hanging by the pool at this club.

Kendall Chitambar, Director of Tennis, is developing the tennis academy at Rocky Mountain Tennis Center. The academy will provide world-class instruction and coaching to all levels of players, as well as the top junior players in the region.

Quoted in the Boulder County Business Report, Chitambar says, "Boulder will have a facility that not only delivers everything the recreational player could want, but a world-class academy dedicated to the development of elite players locally and, eventually, from around the nation."

The BCBR quoted Paluch, "We're excited about this project. Like any startup, there's still some work to be done. The response from everyone has been overwhelmingly positive, but right now we're focused on obtaining additional funding for the project and site development."

With the backing of business strategists, lawyers, architects, brand managers and marketing specialists, the project seems to be on the fast track.

"We're excited that we already have national and international interest from coaches and players who want to come to Boulder to take advantage of our high altitude training facilities," said Chitambar. "But, we're just as excited to grow the sport by turning-on a whole new generation of players to the sport."

While there are numerous public and private outdoor courts scattered around Boulder, there's only a smattering of indoor courts (three at Boulder Country Club and five at the Millennium Harvest House during the winter months).

"It would be premature to give any grand opening dates, yet," Chitambar said. "But when Rocky Mountain Tennis Center opens it will be a great source of pride for the city of Boulder and a huge step forward for tennis in Colorado."

Rocky Mountain Tennis Center will be located at 6400 E. Arapahoe Road in Boulder, but is still in the planning stages. The goal is to be in operation by the second half of 2009. For more information contact Duke Paluch at 303.828.8676 or [duke@rockymountaintenniscenter.com](mailto:duke@rockymountaintenniscenter.com).

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## PUNKS, RELICS SERVE IT UP FOR KIDS

9TH ANNUAL CHARITY DOUBLES EVENT TO BENEFIT YOUTH TENNIS

### USTA COLORADO STAFF REPORT

**T**he 9th annual Punk Relic Charity Doubles Tournament will be held on Sunday, August 24 from 10-6pm at Gates Tennis Center. The event pairs juniors (punks) and relics (adults) in an all day fun round robin tournament. Join us for a full day of fun adult/junior combined doubles competition among teams of similar skill levels.

The event raises money for the Colorado Youth Tennis Foundation's memorial funds. These funds were established to benefit Colorado's youth and to honor those who have contributed so much to the sport of tennis. The funds remember and recognize individuals whose lives were shaped in large part by the sport.

Divisions offered include: Man/Boy doubles, Women/Girl doubles and Mixed doubles in both the intermediate and advanced divisions.

The tournament fee includes loads of tennis, a delicious lunch, winner prizes courtesy of Prince, a couple of Punk Relic t-shirts...and the CYTF's undying gratitude. Players will also get a chance to demo the latest in racquet technology and win fun prizes on the games court sponsored by Prince. Space is limited, so sign up early. You can learn more about the memorial funds or download an application by visiting [COLORADOTENNIS.com](http://COLORADOTENNIS.com).



### AT A GLANCE: THE CYTF MEMORIAL FUNDS

**The Andy Anderson Memorial Fund** provides scholarships for tennis lessons for under-served boys and girls in Colorado.

**The Debbie Boose Memorial Fund** provides tennis opportunities for under-served juniors and junior programs in Colorado.

**The Jon Cox Memorial Scholarship Fund** provides tennis opportunities to juniors and junior programs in Colorado.

**The Harry Drummond Memorial Fund** provides assistance for juniors involved in USPTA programs.

**The Roger B. Elton, Jr. Memorial Tennis Scholarship Fund** benefits juniors who might not otherwise have the opportunity to be involved in tennis.

**The Herzog Family Tennis Fund** provides tennis opportunities for junior players in southern Colorado who, without financial assistance, might not have these opportunities.

**The Floyd Harberts & Dong Ngo Memorial Fund** provides tennis opportunities for junior players who, without financial assistance, might not have these opportunities.

**The Maude Miller Knudsen/Jody Riser Knudsen/John Knudsen Scholarship Fund** benefits juniors in parks and recreation programs.

**The Joe Ryan Fund** provides juniors with the opportunity to learn and play the great game of tennis.

**The Devin S. Shaffer Memorial Fund** provides opportunities for at-risk kids who might not otherwise have the chance to experience the benefits of tennis.

**The Tom van Fleet Memorial Fund** provides juniors with the opportunity to learn and play tennis.

## THE OFFICIAL KEYS OF MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE



Make a child's dream come true and get \$75 in free gas.

2008 marks Subaru's fourth year as official vehicle of USTA Colorado. Over the years, the automaker's support has played a big part in our efforts to promote and grow tennis throughout the state.

This year Subaru will also donate \$200 to the Colorado Youth Tennis Foundation for each car purchased by a USTA Colorado member. The CYTF is a fundraising arm of USTA Colorado that provides tennis opportunities to kids in need across Colorado.

"Subaru's support has meant so much to our association over the years, and their added dollars donated to the CYTF will go a long way in helping kids in need," said Fritz Garger, USTA Colorado and CYTF Executive Director. "This is an amazing opportunity for us. The Foundation receives so many requests from youngsters who need our help, and each Subaru donation will have a direct impact on these kids."

The first 20 car buyers will also receive a \$75 gas card as a token of appreciation which should help with a few trips to the pump.

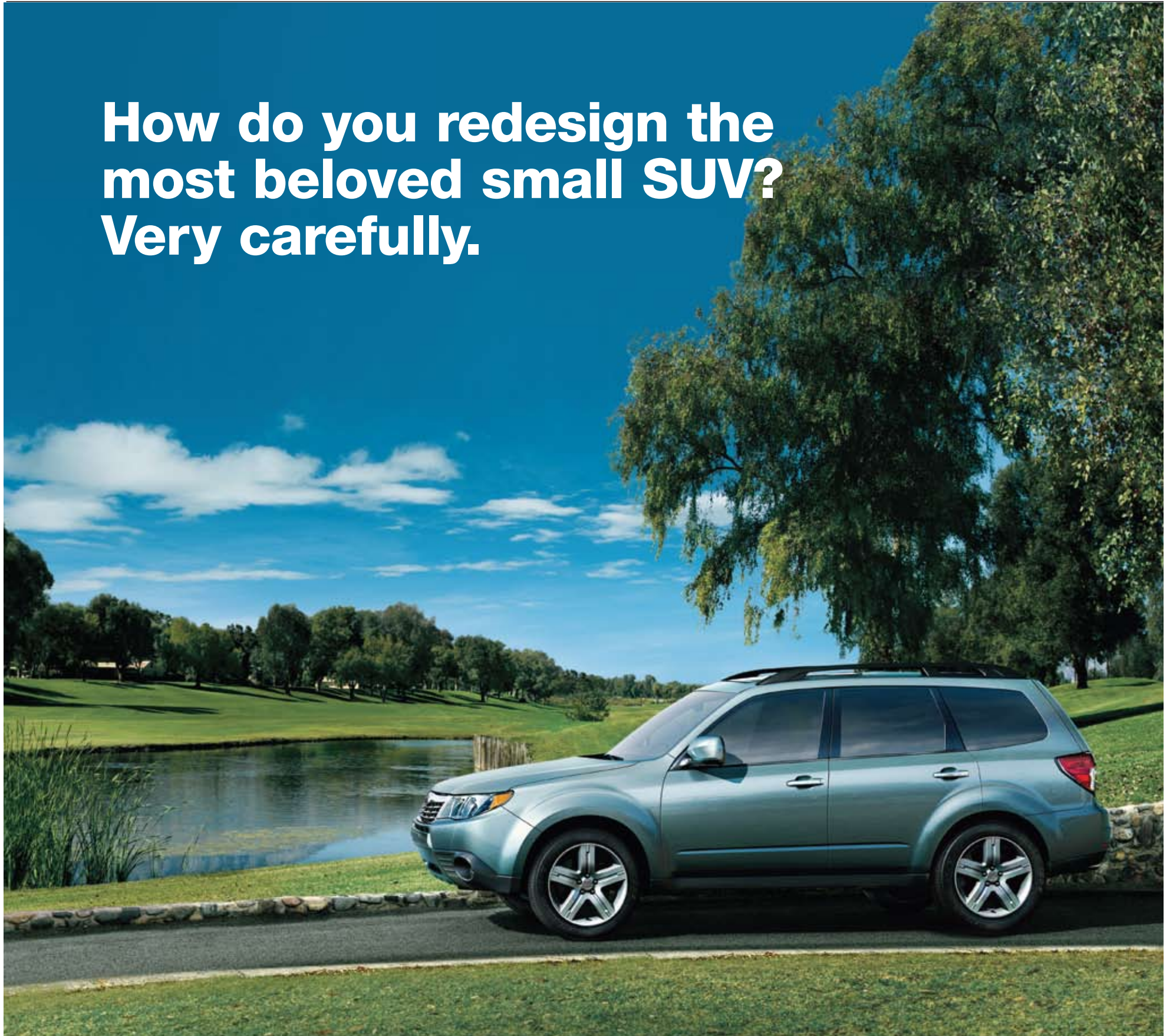
To participate, buyers should contact Lisa at 303.695.4116 x201 or email [lisa@coloradotennis.com](mailto:lisa@coloradotennis.com) to receive a redemption form.

Purchases made through the first quarter 2008 VIP Offer do not qualify for the gas card, however \$200 will be donated to the CYTF by Subaru in the purchaser's honor.



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# atplay

## Middle School League finishes third season

Teams from Highline Academy (pictured below) and Presentation of Our Lady (bottom right) competed in the USTA Colorado middle school championship at KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy. The dual match event was the culmination of the middle school season, now in its third year. The league is an effort to get more kids from diverse backgrounds involved in tennis, and is a combined offering between USTA Colorado's Community Development and Junior League departments. These top teams from the two leagues participated in the May 21st dual match championship at KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy.

Five Catholic middle schools took part in the SUN (Schools in Urban Neighborhoods) League – Annunciation, St. Catherine's, Guardian Angels, Presentation of Our Lady and St. Rose. Matches were played at Cole Middle School. Five Denver-area public schools were involved in the



Denver League – Charter schools KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy, Highline Academy, Odyssey School, Wyatt Edison and Hill Middle School (Denver Public Schools). Matches were played at KIPP.

USTA Colorado extends its sincere thanks to the two middle school league coordinators – Floyd Ellis (Denver League) and Kathy Temple (SUN League). Also thanks to all the players, coaches and volunteers who helped make this a great season.

## INAUGURAL USTA COLORADO CELEBRATING DIVERSITY TENNIS FEST

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DENVER BLACK ARTS FESTIVAL

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*Goodie Bags for  
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Must pre-register and pay by July 7 on TennisLink #257232508 or contact Kristy Harris for mail-in registration (303/695-4116 ext. 300)



**Niwot, Cherry Creek earn Girls High School Team Championships**

Congratulations to Niwot and Cherry Creek, who respectively wrapped up the 4A and 5A Girls High School Colorado State Championships. For Niwot, it was its first ever state tennis title, while Cherry Creek won its 12th consecutive and 26th overall state championship. Congratulations also goes out to the ladies from Arapahoe High School who earned the 5A Team Sportsmanship Award, sponsored by USTA Colorado and the USPTA Colorado District.

For complete coverage of the girls state tennis championships, including individual state titles and a team wrap-up, please visit our friends at the *Rocky Mountain News*, who have named their All-Colorado Girls Tennis Team:

- No. 1 singles: Caroline Schnell, Cherry Creek, So. (Player of the Year); Carolyn Warren, Fairview, Sr.
- No. 2 singles: Adriana Wojakowska, Palmer, Fr.; Claire Runge, Niwot, Sr.
- No. 3 singles: Brittney Ricci, Ponderosa, Fr.
- No. 1 doubles: Melissa LeMar, Sr. and Kelley Pickens, Chatfield Sr.; Kaley Carmichael, So. and Melissa Skovira, Ponderosa, Jr.
- No. 2 doubles: Sarah Layman, Jr. and Dani Lutes, Chatfield, Sr.
- No. 3 doubles: Sam Henry, Fr. and Nikki Oetter, Cherry Creek, Sr.
- No. 4 doubles: Lexi Pollet, Sr. and Jana Valchova, Cherry Creek, Jr.



photo by Kurt Desautels



photo by Chris McLean/Pueblo Chieftain



photo by Chris McLean/Pueblo Chieftain

**Hail to the Champs**

*Top:* 5A singles champ Caroline Schnell (Cherry Creek) led the Bruins to the team championship.  
*Right:* Niwot's Claire Runge was a perfect 20-0 at No. 2 singles, helping the 4A Cougars capture their first state tennis title.  
*Left:* Perennial 4A contender Kent Denver was paced by freshman star Sammie Watson (No. 1 singles) who won state.

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# INTERMOUNTAIN 08 SUMMER SECTIONALS DENVER, COLORADO

## COLORADO PHOTO GALLERY

SECTIONAL



Krista Damico  
G18 Singles Champion

Lew Kosich  
Tournament Director

Alexandra Leatu  
G18 Singles Finalist



Alexa Brandt, Rebecca Weissman (left)  
G12 Doubles Champions



Zach Pendleton (left)  
2008 Sportsmanship Award  
poses with Fritz Garger,  
USTA CO Executive Director

### IN APPRECIATION

**Tournament Director:**

Lew Kosich

**Facilities:**

Gates Tennis Center, Colorado Athletic Clubs Inverness & Monaco, Redstone Park, Highlands Ranch Northridge, Holly Tennis Center

**Site Directors:**

Bobbe Bennett, Steve Campbell, Vicki Holthus, Marie Macey, Mike Shellman, Ryan Walker

**Volunteer Coordinator:**

Cindy MacMaster

**Site Coordinators:**

Karen LaCouture, Marty Lassen, Valerie Lewis, Ceci Lowinger, Barb Monaghan, Nancy Sayre

**USTA Intermountain Liaison:**

Bethany Schott

**Sponsors:**

Subaru, Noodles & Company, FUZE Beverages, Advantage Tennis Academy, Weil Tennis Academy

Thank you to the numerous volunteers who helped out at the various sites and provided snacks and refreshments to the players.



INTERMOUNTAIN  
COLORADO

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# RESULTS

Colorado Player in **BOLD**

## BOYS 12 SINGLES

- 1st Matthew Pearce (UT)
- 2nd Brendon Kempin (UT)
- 3rd **Jesse Ruder-Hook**

## BOYS 14 SINGLES

- 1st Brendan Aguilar (NV)
- 2nd Brian Foley (NV)
- 6th **Hayden Sabatka**

## BOYS 16 SINGLES

- 1st **Casey MacMaster**
- 2nd Evan Song (NV)

## BOYS 18 SINGLES

- 1st Spencer Smith (UT)
- 2nd Brandon Parker (UT)
- 3rd **Will Vasos**
- 5th **Jordan Bridge**
- 6th **Ashton Kalthorn**

## GIRLS 12 SINGLES

- 2nd **Mira Ruder-Hook**
- 3rd **Rebecca Weissman**
- 4th **Alexa Brandt**

## GIRLS 14 SINGLES

- 1st Gabrielle Smith (NV)
- 2nd Mariana Gould (ID)
- 3rd **Erin Gebes**
- 6th **Jennifer Weissman**

## GIRLS 16 SINGLES

- 1st Tiffany Tavares (NV)
- 2nd Callie Craig (UT)
- 6th **Sammie Watson**

## GIRLS 18 SINGLES

- 1st **Krista Damico**
- 2nd **Alexandra Leatu**
- 4th **Caroline Warren**

## BOYS 18 DOUBLES

- 1st Stan Breland (NV)/Parker (UT)
- 2nd **Bridge/Smith (UT)**

## BOYS 16 DOUBLES

- 1st **MacMaster/Devin Lane (NV)**
- 2nd Patrick Kawka (NV)/Jeff Vongman (NV)

## BOYS 14 DOUBLES

- 1st N. Mahlangu (NV)/Y. Mahlangu (NV)
- 2nd K. Gladd-Brown (NV)/M. Oddonetto (ID)

## BOYS 12 DOUBLES

- 1st Brendon Kempin (UT)/Samuel Tullis (UT)
- 2nd Ryan Kempin (UT)/Jacob Tullis (UT)

## GIRLS 18 DOUBLES

- 1st Paige Miles (UT)/**Erin Sanders**
- 2nd Alana McMahon (UT)/Aubrey Paul (UT)

## GIRLS 16 DOUBLES

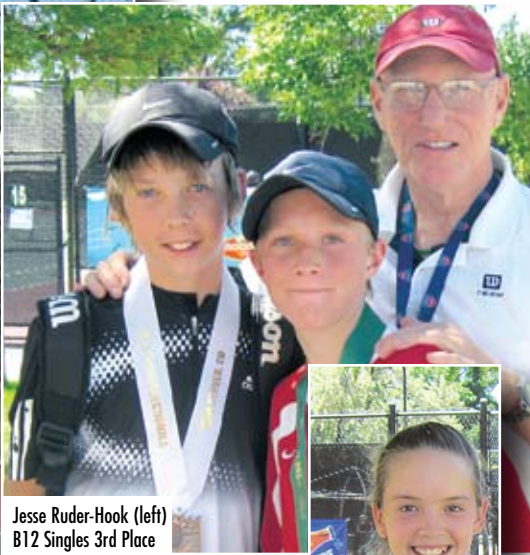
- 1st M. MacFarlane (UT)/**Caroline Schnell**
- 2nd Sarah Toti (NV)/Chrissy Uriarte (NV)

## GIRLS 14 DOUBLES

- 1st **Gebes/Gould (ID)**
- 2nd Victoire Saperstein (NV)/Smith (NV)

## GIRLS 12 DOUBLES

- 1st **Brandt/Weissman**
- 2nd Brianna Turley (UT)/Whitney Turley (UT)



Jesse Ruder-Hook (left)  
B12 Singles 3rd Place



Casey MacMaster  
B16 Singles/Doubles Champion



Ashton Kalthorn  
B18 Singles 6th Place

Mira Ruder-Hook  
G12 Singles 2nd Place



Will Vasos  
B18 Singles 3rd Place



Hayden Sabatka (left)  
B14 Singles 6th Place



Erin Gebes  
G14 Singles 3rd Place/Doubles Champion



Caroline Schnell  
G16 Doubles Champion

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#### About T2Tennis.com

T2Tennis was created by tennis players to promote fun, friendly, and competitive match play using a "flexible" scheduling format. Developed and refined in Atlanta, Georgia, membership in T2Tennis has grown from a mere 50 players to more than 40,000 across the U.S.

So come on. Why not get out and enjoy some great summer tennis?

### How Does It Work?

#### Everything you need to enjoy your season is online:

- ✓ You choose your partner, your level of play, and home court.
- ✓ Play a 5-match season over six weeks.
- ✓ Obtain your schedule and opponent's contact information.
- ✓ Schedule your own matches at convenient times and dates.
- ✓ Play, record your scores, and track the standings ... all online.

#### What leagues are offered?

- ✓ **Women's Doubles Leagues**  
For Women's Doubles, it only takes two to form a team.
  - Business Women's Doubles League  
For women who prefer to play in the evenings or on weekends.
  - Weekday Women's Doubles League  
For women who prefer to play weekdays — usually morning or early afternoon play.
- ✓ **Men's Singles League**  
You are a team of one.

#### What levels are offered?

- ✓ We offer adult levels from 2.5 to 5.0 (open).

#### Share with a friend:

- ✓ Call your teammates — let them know about T2 and that you are playing!

### What Members are Saying...

*"We had a wonderful time and are looking forward to the next season. Thanks for coordinating such a great league."*

— Anne

*"You guys do an AWESOME job with the T2 stuff! It's extremely well organized."*

— Bill

*"Very enjoyable! Playing T2 is like planning a social match but playing competitive match."*

— Debbie

*"I just wanted to say how wonderful I think playing T2 is."*

— Susan

*"We are delighted to sponsor T2Tennis. Their flexible league concept is a welcome addition to our Denver tennis scene."*

— Adam Burbary, Game-Set-Match, Inc.

Get all the details and register at [www.T2Tennis.com](http://www.T2Tennis.com)



Summer Registration Deadline: June 26, 2008 Season Starts: June 30, 2008

Everyone who registers for this summer season will receive a FREE \$20 Gift Card to Game-Set-Match, Inc.

# thebigchair

## NEWS FROM USTA COLORADO HEADQUARTERS

STATE OF THE DISTRICT

BY FRITZ GARGER, USTA COLORADO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**T**ennis Pioneer and Colorado Tennis Hall of Famer, **Sam Milstein** passed away last month. Between he and his brother Sid, the two changed not only the landscape of tennis here in the Colorado and outside our state, but also the flight and color of the tennis ball as well (please read the announcement in our Buzz section). Without question Sam was a real icon for our sport and we are most grateful for all he brought to tennis and to those who had the pleasure of knowing him.

In regard to the **Colorado Tennis Hall of Fame**, the next publication of COLORADO TENNIS (Fall issue) will not be in time to provide much, if any notice, to the nomination process and the solicitation of nominations themselves. The Selection Committee welcomes nominations for the Hall of Fame and forms are available via the website on our Hall of Fame page (see CT HOF Nomination Form on the left side of the template). The deadline is September 15 each year. Previously submitted nomination forms for candidates who have not been selected are carried over each year, so, there is no need to re-submit a nomination form for the same candidate every year. Our USTA Colorado Annual Awards Committee utilizes the same September 15 deadline and welcomes nominations for any or all of our Annual Awards that we present in conjunction with the Hall of Fame Gala.

There is so much going on statewide with tennis this time of year. I would like to take just a moment to say "thanks" to some folks in a few of our program areas – particularly those areas that have concluded for the year and for events that have recently taken place. Thanks to everyone who attended our **Diversity Reception**. We had representatives from numerous Chambers of Commerce as well as long-standing tennis contributors who have been so instrumental in the development of the sport in typically under-served communities in attendance

at our second annual event. Thank you to all our **USTA Schools Program** clinicians and personnel who have been extremely busy with teacher training clinics and school assemblies during the school year. Your work is so valuable to the health and fitness of our young people and the long-term growth and development of players statewide. Thanks to all those involved in the **Middle School leagues** – those directly connected to our office as well as those across Colorado who have been active for years. Middle School leagues act as a key transitional component for youngsters coming out of elementary school to keep them involved in the sport before they move on to high school – where high school tennis programs provide such wonderful opportunities. And lastly, thanks to all those involved in the just completed **Intermountain Junior Summer Sectional Championships**. Our association hosted the event this year and it takes many people and entities to pull off an event like that in such a professional manner. From our staff and tournament administration to our sponsors and amazing volunteers, thank you for everything! It was a wonderful week and an incredibly well-run event.

I hope all of you involved with the sport take the time to realize how great it is and the fact that we are all fortunate to be able to participate. Enjoy yourself, your partners (when playing doubles) and your opponent(s). Every match is an opportunity to develop friendships and acquaintances that may last for years and years to come.



## Meanwhile, back at The Ranch...



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Director of Tennis, Miikka Keronen

Junior Coordinator, Ryan Walker

Adult Coordinator, Angie McMahan

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Thanks to all the 2008 Ranch Country Club Shootout, Roundup and Memorial Day Circuit participants.



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**THE RANCHCC.com**

# thelastword

## AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS

WE WILL REJOIN THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED FLUFF IN SEPTEMBER

BY KURT DESAUTELS, COLORADO TENNIS EDITOR

I will dispense with my normal ramblings for this column. Applause. For now. Groans.

I want to personally thank all of the wonderful individuals who we profiled in this issue. Too often, we acknowledge the winners, but fail to recognize the efforts of the beaten. The players we have featured throughout this publication are not being honored for their victories on the court, but for their passion for the sport that transcends the final score. Make no mistake, some of them have had tremendous success, but never at the expense of the sheer joy they gain from tracking down a groundstroke, swinging a racquet, and making contact.

Since 2000 when I first came to USTA Colorado, I have taken immense pleasure in watching young players reach toward their potential. I have watched in awe as our state's best netters pound forehands, crush backhands and stab at volleys with incredibly controlled precision.

And for nearly a decade, I have been using the same tag line for tennis that was taught to me during my first week on the job: *the sport of a lifetime*.

But in reading the numerous profiles that you see on these pages before you, I came to a more profound understanding of what tennis can mean to a life. For John Fetcher and Alfred Kahn, Lee Kaley, Katie Koontz, the indomitable Rita Price, or any of the other players we were given the opportunity to get to know a bit better, tennis is special. It has not only afforded them a longer life, it has given them a better life.

Chances are that if you're reading this, you're already a tennis player. But imagine what your life would be like without tennis – without the friends you've made, the lessons you've learned and the fitness you've gained.

There are 20,000+ USTA members in this state, and nearly 100,000 avid players. And every one of them has a personal story to tell about how tennis affects their lives.

Thanks to Bonnie and Marvin Champion, Ron Danekas, Jon Fetcher, Jim Gleason, Kitty Gwathmey, Alfred Kahn, Lee Kaley, Jody Knudsen, Katie Koontz, Peter and Nelle Olson, Rita Price, Flo Pritz, Rick Ruscio, Stan Whittemore and Dave Zabel. Also, I'd like to acknowledge the amazing Marion Downs, who we profiled back in 2006, and who, at 94, continues to live up to the title of her book, *Shut Up and Live*.

Remember, if you wait until next summer to get back out on the court, you'll just be one year older when you get there. ☺

## HELP WANTED

USTA COLORADO WILL SOON BE ANNOUNCING AN OPEN POSITION IN ITS DENVER OFFICE.

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INTERMOUNTAIN  
COLORADO

Continued from page 7

he moved to Steamboat Springs 25 years ago.

"When I'm in town, I play probably three times a week," Zabel said. "It's a pickup group. There are probably six, seven, eight, nine of us that Alfred mixes and matches. We used to have a league in our group, but it just kind of fell apart as people got older. I don't play in any leagues. At 8 o'clock in the morning if the phone rings I know it's Alfred."

Zabel (pictured below) said the older guys started playing a lot younger than he did.

"I can imagine in Alfred's younger days he was one heck of a player," Zabel said.

Jim Swiggart, the manager and director of The Tennis Center at Steamboat Springs since it opened in 1991, said it's special having the older players playing at his facility.

"Most of our older players have been in town most of their lives. John Fetcher was one of the founding fathers of the modern ski hill, and he is widely known around Colorado as the expert on all things water related," Swiggart said. "Most of them, like Zabel and Whittemore, have been in Steamboat for 30 or 40-plus years. They are active and involved."

At 58, Swiggart is just a kid. He said the older players are making the motto work that tennis is a

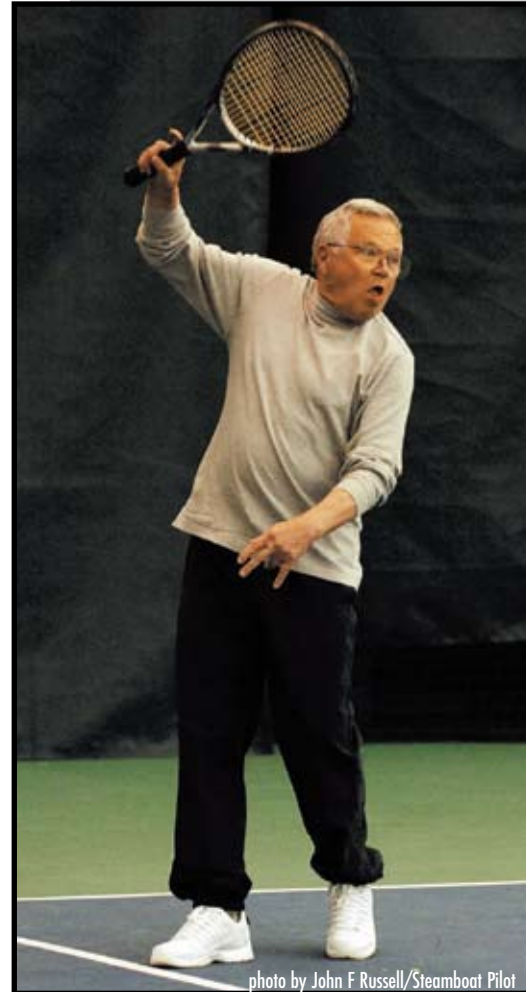


photo by John F Russell/Steamboat Pilot

lifetime sport.

"They're avid tennis players. They have been all their lives," said Swiggart, who has 16 total courts at his tennis center. "We've got a wonderful environment to do it in Steamboat. We have cushioned hard courts that make it easier on their legs to continue to play."

Swiggart said having the older players at the tennis center is great for the sport.

"It absolutely amazes me. It just makes me more proud of the sport that we can have a 4 year-old and a 96 year-old both enjoying the game as much as they do," Swiggart said. "They truly enjoy it. They're as much fun to watch as the QuickStart little kids. It's just a wonderful environment to see them in. We're all proud to have them around. Not only are they great athletes to be out there, but they're great ambassadors for the sport." – TF





## INTERMOUNTAIN COLORADO

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IT'S YOUR GAME™

### ABOUT USTA COLORADO

A District of the United States Tennis Association, USTA Colorado is the governing body of tennis in our state. We are one of six districts in the Intermountain Section, which includes Idaho, Montana, Utah, Wyoming and Nevada.

Founded in 1955, USTA Colorado's mission is to grow tennis in our state. We do this in a number of ways. We provide grants to public and private groups who want to introduce tennis to their communities. We offer scholarships to players who seek to take their game to the next level. We coordinate adult league play for 25,000 participants across Colorado, and offer many recreational programs for junior players of all ages and abilities. We reach out to players of diverse cultural backgrounds, to mentally and physically challenged athletes, and to under-privileged communities across the state. Our sanctioned tournament schedule offers more than 130 events in 2008 for players of all ages and abilities, including opportunities for wheelchair athletes.

We are in the parks. We are in recreation centers and in private clubs. We are in schools helping physical education teachers introduce our kids to a game that they can play for a lifetime, keeping them fit and healthy.

We are 22,000 members strong, but our scope is not confined to those players alone. We represent the nearly 500,000 tennis players in our state, providing information and opportunities to play for each and every one of them. Our publications reach out to players around Colorado and in neighboring states. We strive to make tennis available to anyone who is interested in our sport – all ages, all abilities, all backgrounds.

We invite you to find out more about the lifetime sport of tennis. We will help you find a court, find a program, find a league or find a team. We will help you put the FUN back in FITNESS. So whether you want to learn to play tennis, get back into the sport, or just find more opportunities to play the game, we're here to help.

**GRASSROOTS TENNIS IS OUR GAME.  
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 IT'S TIME TO PLAY.**



Anna Chakvetadze - WTA #8

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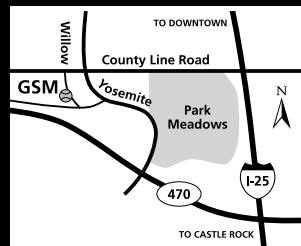
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