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| **2016 Year In Review**BY BOB NIBARGER,*USAPA Communications Chair* I even surprised myself with all of the accomplishments that the USAPA achieved during 2016.  A quick review of 2016 statistics illustrates how the USAPA grew in just a single year.* Places to Play: 4,747  (increase of 970 or 80.8 per month)
* Total Courts: 16,549 (increase of 3,760 or 313.3 per month)
* Members: 16,793 (increase of 6,491 or 540.9 per month)
* Ambassadors: 1,454 (increase of 225 or 18.7 per month)
* Officially rated players went from 6,000 on 1/1/2016 to 8,638 on 12/31/16.  That's a 2,638 annual increase in initial ratings for new players which was roughly a 30% increase in one year.  In addition, there were about 800 players who already had a rating, that had a rating change.
* Christine Barksdale named Managing Director of Competition
* St. Jude named as official charity partner of USAPA
* USAPA certified 29 new referees in 2016
* A new contract was issued to Pickleball Central for apparel, and the new [usapastore.com](http://usapa.us4.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=2b4d2f3332&e=8176e806a3) was launched
* A new membership automation system was deployed
* USAPA and Dollard Publishing teamed up and produced 6 pickleball magazines during 2016
* The USAPA Rules Committee met numerous times and completed updates as needed
* Nationals VIII was held in November of 2016 with a record number of attendees
* USAPA endorsed TrackitHub ladder league management software
* Longtime USAPA board members Linda and Lynn Laymon retired from the board as they participated in and guided all USAPA National’s matches refereed by their newly created certified referees
* All medal matches at Nationals VIII had certified referees
* Jack Thomas retired as the Ambassador Chair moving to the role of Vice President (Jack was replaced by CJ Jermstad)
* A highly popular Ambassador retreat was hosted at Club Med in Florida with over 200+ attendees
* A third party contractor was hired to do all ball and paddle testing
* USAPA launched a Juniors program at Nationals in November
* There were 278 rating appeals processed in 2016
* USAPA awarded 128 pickleball grants
* Social media expanded with live coverage of several pickleball tournament medal matches

To view this fantastic magazine click on the following link: [Jan/Feb Magazine](http://usapa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=3e4eaffec9&e=8176e806a3). Those are the highlights of 2016.  Please join us as we begin a new calendar year promising to be both fun and exciting.  |

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|   ALL PROCEEDS AND DONATIONS GO TO BENEFIT THE ST. JUDE CHILDREN’S RESEARCH HOSPITAL**AT ST. JUDE, FAMILIES NEVER RECEIVE A BILL FOR TREATMENT, TRAVEL, HOUSING OR FOOD – BECAUSE ALL A FAMILY SHOULD WORRY ABOUT IS HELPING THEIR CHILD LIVE.*****LAKEPOINT AND THE USAPA ARE PROUD TO BE ABLE TO JOINTLY SPONSOR THIS FIRST ST. JUDE NATIONAL PICKLEBALL CLASSIC*** ***LAKEPOINT*** is conveniently located just off of I-75, Exit 283 in Emerson, GA.40 minutes North of Atlanta, GA and 45 minutes south of Chattanooga, TN[www.lakepointsports.com](http://usapa.us4.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=c0bf13e9de&e=8176e806a3)***We encourage all to not only be part of this history making event for the benefit of a great organization but to also bring family members and friends to be part of the fun filled experience.  Not able to make the tournament? Donations are accepted through PT.com or directly on the St. Jude’s website:*** [*stjude.org*](http://usapa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=1ab9fd27fb&e=8176e806a3)**Events will include** – Men’s, Women’s and Mixed Doubles, Men’s and Women’s Singles plus a special St. Jude challenge team event (one paddle, 2 women and 2 men, singles format)**Age/skill Groups (when possible)** – 19+, 35+, 50+, 65+, 70+, 75+, 80+**Format** – Double Elimination – Round Robin for brackets with 4 or less teams **Registration started 2/17 at** [pickleballtournaments.com](http://usapa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=10001b358d&e=8176e806a3)**Additional information go to** [pickleballtournaments.com](http://usapa.us4.list-manage2.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=1117ecbc3b&e=8176e806a3) **or** [USAPA.org](http://usapa.us4.list-manage2.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=512e66e74e&e=8176e806a3) |

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| **Super Senior International Pickleball Association (SSIPA)**[www.SSIPA-PB.org](http://usapa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=bbb32b043f&e=8176e806a3)**Mission Statement:**The Mission of the Super Senior International Pickleball Association (SSIPA) is to support the growth of Pickleball around the world, through a social, competitive environment for players of all skill levels ages 65 plus.“The USAPA is proud to be working with SSIPA as we strive to achieve a common goal of growing the sport of pickleball.”**About SSIPA:**Super Senior International Pickleball Association was formed in 2016 to promote Pickleball among our very active senior population in this country and internationally.  As we get older our generation continues to strive for participation in friendly competition with our fellow seniors and develop friendships that will last a lifetime.  As we age gracefully and continue to strive for wellness through competition, the SSIPA just might be one more piece of the puzzle of life.The SSIPA supports the Super Senior International Pickleball Tournament Circuit allowing players to compete with other players in their age group – 65-69, 70-74, 75-79, and 80+.  Any event that had 3 or more teams entered would make a bracket.  If groups were combined, players would have the option to play down in age or receive a refund. *More information, membership application, and tournament calendar is available on the webpage.  Use your computer for sign-up – mobile phone application available later.  More tournaments will be added in 2017.*Web page: [www.SSIPA-PB.org](http://usapa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=486fbaaf91&e=8176e806a3)SSIPA email address: SSIPA.PB@gmail.comMembership Questions: ssipa.membership@gmail.comSSIPA is also on “Facebook” – search for Super Senior International Pickleball Association and ask to Join. |

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| **Clay County Florida Grows Pickleball**BY DANNY BLEVINS, Ambassador Clay County Florida2016 was a great year for Clay County Pickleball. Our membership has increased by 20% and we have expanded from a local venue of Fleming Island Pickleball to encompassing the whole county to now being Clay County Pickleball utilizing the outdoor courts that are available. We were involved in demonstrations for the Fall Festival of Orange Park, participating in the "Breast Cancer Awareness Week" showing how important maintaining an exercise program can benefit those after the cancer treatments and other demonstrations in the county. Clay County Pickleball is also proudly announcing their creation of their new web page this month with the web address of [www.claycountypickleball.shutterfly.com](http://usapa.us4.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=9e83373103&e=8176e806a3) .  Check us out as we continue to grow. |

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| **Mortimore Pickleball**BY HUBERT "HORNS"Your club have one or two players sitting out the usual 15 minutes waiting to get on the court for the next game? Why not try the Mortimore game? According to teaching pro Pat Carol of Las Vegas, Mortimore (Mildred if a lady) is that invisible third player that plays doubles while positioned in the middle of the court and he/she is really bad. So hit the ball to Mortimore.  Two Louisiana ambassadors told me of their getting more player time by playing three on a side.   Here in Casper, Wyoming, Mortimore starts out playing behind the baseline and in the middle, moving up a step or two when his team mates get up to the kitchen. And the fun part is, other than not receiving serve, Mortimore can play any ball, usually ones hit down the middle. The kicker is that if one of the non-Mortimore players woofs the ball into the net or out of bounds or fail to return a ball hit to their side  then they trade places with Mortimore. Simple as that. I love the Mortimore game as it forces me to mentally play better so that I don't get stuck in the middle and thereby get more touches. Also, as Mortimore, it gives me a chance to "read" the offense and see if I can get into position to return an otherwise passing shot. Good experience all around and also a bit of a chance to rest if in the Mortimore position. Next time there are one or two people waiting to play, just invite them to play Mortimore and see how much you will love this fun take on our wonderful game.  |

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| **Ambassador Mini Retreats**USAPA NEWSLETTER STAFFIf you haven’t been able to attend one of the USAPA’s national ambassador retreats, perhaps a local ambassador retreat is possible. So what is one to do?  Very simple, host your own regional ambassador retreat.  Please send your comments and ideas on this new trend to newsletter@usapa.org. |

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| **Ambassador Mini Retreats**BY BOB AND ELIZABETH HIGGINBOTTOM,USAPA Ambassadors At Large North Carolina**Beech Mountain North Carolina**My husband and I are USAPA Ambassadors at large. Due to schedule conflicts we have never been able to attend a National Ambassador Retreat so we decided to have a retreat come to us. We spend our summers in cool, beautiful Beech Mountain, NC.  Beech Mountain Club is a country club in the NC mountains with a 5 court Pickleball Center which includes a viewing deck and an open air pavilion.  BMC also has tennis courts, pool, golf course, and many, many other activities. Fishing and hiking opportunities abound!  And wildlife galore - there are so many deer it is like being in a petting zoo. We have worked out details for a 3 night Ambassador Retreat which would include morning meeting sessions and afternoon Pickleball, including a Round Robin and a team tournament. A Demo Day with the Simon ball machine, the Pickleball Pic, various paddles and balls is also in the works.  Spouses/partners welcome and we are working on activities for them. We have worked with local vendors to get the best possible pricing for lodging and meals. Beech Mountain Club will not make a profit on this venture.  We are just looking to make it a fun, affordable experience for all. Our Retreat is June 25-28 and includes meals and 3 nights housing. NC, SC and GA Ambassadors - we hope you can join us! [http://beechmountainclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Retreat-Flyer-opt.pdf](http://usapa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=e10781eb99&e=8176e806a3)  |

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| BY BARBARA WINTROUBHow many times do you simply jump into pickleball play without a single warm up.  Here, Barbara Wintroub leads us through the paces.  [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJ2XCQyA\_jQ](http://usapa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=a7da4c5afc&e=8176e806a3)  |

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| **Ode to Pickleball** BY RANDY BEAUBIEN‘Twas a year ago now When I first got infected With a new game in town And fun was detected Oh how I love to play Pickleball You won’t score too well If you’re slow and lazy And you can’t win a match If you’re wild and crazy Oh how I love to play Pickleball If you hit the ball out Please don’t start bitchin’ Remember when you volley Stay out of the kitchen Oh how I love to play Pickleball Last night I was tired But went to bed thinking That my game would improve If I worked on my dinking Oh how I love to play Pickleball Now I’ve played when it’s 90 And I’ve played in the snow I’ve played 2.5s And I’ve even played Joe Oh how I love to play Pickleball In closing this poem I would just like to say Thank God for our country And the USAPA For, Oh how I love to play Pickleball.  |

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| **USAPA MemberLeap Tips:*** It is easy to log-in to your personal USAPA Membership Information page
	+ Go to the usapa.org home page
	+ The log-in screen can be found under the Membership Tab
	+ Input your user name and password / log-in
* When logged in, to name a few things:
	+ Your member number appears at the top of the first screen
	+ You can self-edit your personal information at any time
	+ You can print your membership card
	+ You can view your membership status (paid thru date)
	+ You can renew & pay your dues
	+ You can print your invoices/receipts
	+ You have access to Member Search to contact members (see bottom of page)

**MEMBERLEAP REMINDERS:** * Unique individual e-mails are required for each member.  No shared e-mail addresses.
* Please always include the invoice payment stub when mailing in a check for payment of dues.
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| **USAPA Player Ratings Update**The USAPA evaluation committee has completed the review and evaluation of the vendor proposals for a new match-based tournament ratings system. Athlete Ratings (AR) has tentatively been selected as the primary vendor. The final vendor selection will be contingent upon AR and USAPA agreeing to terms and signing a Services Agreement. As this selection process moves forward, any significant updates will be announced.**Tournament Points Update**The new match-based rating system to be implemented later this year will bring an end to the USAPA tournament points program. The implementation of the new MemberLeap membership program required a significant upgrade to make it link effectively with the USAPA tournament points program. It was decided by the USAPA board not to implement this fix for a short term, obsolete program. Therefore, USAPA will not be awarding points for 2017 tournaments but the points for previous years will still be visible. |

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| **Pickleball Party Gift**Gene Haas plays pickleball five days a week in Parker Colorado. When asked by his daughter what he wanted for his 90th birthday, he said a family pickleball party would be nice. No one in his family had ever played pickleball but they got together and learned how to play pickleball. (Gene is front row center.) Send your human interest stories to newsletter@usapa.org. |

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| **National Senior Games Association**NATIONAL TOURNAMENTPickleballBIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA*June 2-8, 2017* USA Pickleball Association is proud to announce that pickleball is again part of the NSGA National Tournament and will be run as a USAPA sanctioned tournament.   Early registration is now open at: [https://registration.nsga.com/registration/371/nsgawebsite/](http://usapa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=b32bdd08dd&e=8176e806a3) through February 28, so sign up early and save money.  You must have qualified at one of the state games in 2016 to be eligible.  Additional details are available at the NSGA web site: [nsga.com](http://usapa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=a6c03d30e9&e=8176e806a3)  |

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| **USAPA Mid-South Regional heads to Monroe LA**The University of Louisiana at Monroe, LA, is the setting for the upcoming Mid-South USAPA Regional Pickleball Tournament.  Registration is still open but will close on February 25, 2017. **HISTORY OF MONROE** - The first residents of what is now Monroe were the Ouachita Indians who inhabited the area around 1350 BC. The site later attracted a transitory population of traders, trappers, and hunters, but few permanent inhabitants. The first non-native settlers to Ouachita Parish were likely remnants of LaSalle’s 1680 expedition to Louisiana. By the time these settlers arrived in the 17th century, little was left of the Ouachita Indians who had inhabited the area for generations. In 1782, the Governor of New Orleans sent Don Juan (Jean) Filhiol to establish a post along the Ouachita River. By 1790, this trading post, called Ft. Miro, had evolved into a community of 49 families.In 1803, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France, and for the first time, Ft. Miro was under US authority. Ouachita Parish was established March 31, 1807, with Ft. Miro as the parish seat. In 1819, the town’s name was changed from Ft. Miro to Monroe.http://webmail.wt.net/eonapps/images/grayfiller.gifThe city of Monroe and Ouachita Parish have continued to prosper. The city has recently constructed a new terminal for the Monroe Regional Airport, complete renovations of the sewer and water system is underway, new roads have been built and new industry is moving to and expanding in Monroe. The future looks promising for Monroe and Ouachita Parish. *(Source Monroe Chamber of Commerce)*. Registration is available at [www.pickleballtournaments.com](http://usapa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=55b122122aa28dd9bfdbd8222&id=4cb4d975cf&e=8176e806a3). |

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