

2023 PPPA Year End Report

Summary

As Pickleball continues to grow in the Colorado Springs area, PPPA has worked diligently to continue to promote the Sport. As we continue to advance Pickleball in our community, we will maintain our strong partnerships with the Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services (PRCS) Department as well as with the El Paso County Parks Department. Our goal of making Colorado Springs the place that attracts players from around the country to our City, while serving our own membership, continues to be upper most in our planning efforts. THANK YOU to all our volunteers over the last twelve months who contributed their time and talent toward attaining that goal. Together our efforts will ensure that there are plenty of courts and opportunities to play and grow our Sport.

City and County Government Relations

PPPA 2024 Lodgers and Automobile Rental Tax (LART) Award

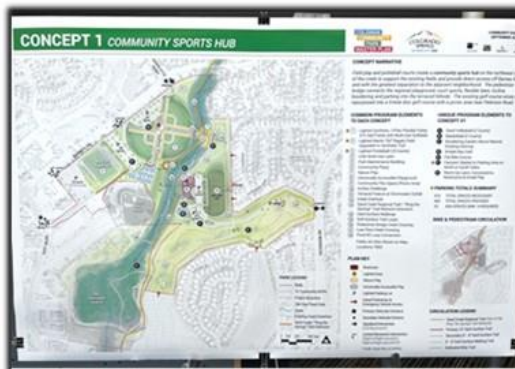
In 2023, PPPA applied for a [LART](#) award from the City of Colorado Springs to help offset our expenses for the *Colorado Pickleball Open—Pikes Peak or Bust* tournament, August 2-5, 2024. The LART fund administered by the City collects a small tax percentage from local hotel and car rentals during the year that is used to help fund events that promote local tourism for the upcoming season. The City receives award requests from numerous (~100) nonprofit organizations each year. Based on a set of published criteria, they evaluate them based on how they provide tourism-related economic benefit to the local area and recommend to City Council for funding those that best justify and meet that purpose. Such economic benefit includes events that promote airline travel to Colorado Springs, as well as car rentals, gasoline, hotel stays, restaurants, visits to our 55+ local attractions, etc.

Using the economic benefit model PPPA partnered with [VisitCOS](#) (formerly the COS Visitors Bureau) fed by survey data from our visiting tournament players, PPPA submitted a 41-page application justifying the expected Economic Benefit to the City from our upcoming 2024 tournament. It demonstrated significant local economic return on investment from the requested LART funds and, as a result, the LART Committee awarded \$23,000 to PPPA to help offset tournament expenses in 2024. This will not only provide additional tournament player benefits but also help provide significant tournament net proceeds back to PPPA that will be reinvested locally in Pickleball court development and maintenance.



[Coleman Community Park](#)

Getting 18-20 Pickleball Courts into Colorado Springs' Next Community Park



Given the current and expected future demand for pickleball courts far exceeds the Colorado Springs capacity, PPPA continued to work closely throughout 2023 with the Colorado Springs City Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Department to help develop and design concepts that include pickleball courts in the future Coleman Community Park -- a 70-acre mostly undeveloped park asset located in eastern Colorado Springs near the intersection of Tutt Avenue and Barnes Road. For those not familiar with the area, the future park will be close to UHealth Park (home of the Rocky Mountain Vibes baseball team) and Ragain Field (former Switchbacks soccer stadium). The park is envisioned to function similarly to Memorial or John Venezia parks with sports fields and a universally accessible playground.

GREAT NEWS! Building upon a year of collaboration with the City Parks & Rec planning team and strong PPPA presence throughout 2022 at community engagement events, PPPA was successful in getting 18-20 pickleball courts (and associated parking and a restroom facility) into the final draft of the Master Plan for the future park. On January 31, 2023, the Draft Plan was presented to the public at a Community Forum with many PPPA members present.

Also in January, Mick Tingstrom (our PPPA Project Lead), Jeff Norton, Joe Johnson, and Dan Lovelace conducted a physical onsite walkthrough of the Parks & Rec's proposed location for the courts. They provided detailed recommended adjustments to the draft plan.

In March, Connie Schmeisser, the City Project Manager for the future park, presented the Final Draft Plan to the City Parks & Rec Advisory Board. Joe Johnson, Jeff Norton, Dan Lovelace, and Mick Tingstrom attended the Advisory Board meeting. During the open public forum, Mick Tingstrom spoke

about the importance of keeping the 18-20 pickleball courts in the final Master Plan and asked for the Board's commitment in prioritizing the courts at the same priority level as the three baseball fields and the multipurpose field. Should the plan become cost-prohibitive due to soil mitigation or any other reason, he asked that they contact the public for additional feedback/comments and adjust the plan accordingly while retaining the pickleball courts.

In August, at the *Colorado Pickleball Open—Pikes Peak or Bust* tournament, Mick Tingstrom had the opportunity to talk to the new Colorado Springs Mayor, Yemi Mobolade, and the new City Parks & Rec Cultural Services Director, Britt Haley, about the importance of their support in keeping the 18-20 pickleball courts in the final Master Plan for Coleman Community Park.

During the latter half of 2023, geotechnical investigations of the park grounds were completed, and the Parks & Rec planning team brainstormed potential future funding opportunities, strategies, and action plans.

PPPA's work is far from finished. In the near-term, it is expected that the Mayor's City Strategic Planning process will be complete by June, and the Parks & Rec planning team will be sharing the next steps for Coleman Community Park as they begin the 2025 budget process. For certain, PPPA will stay abreast of the park planning progress and reach out to our PPPA members as needed for any future community forums/events. After the Master Plan is finalized, PPPA will continue its engagement and help inform the final design and construction drawings that are expected to run into 2025. Construction of the park, pending available funding, is scheduled to occur in 2025-2026. This is still a marathon, not a sprint – but a race well worth running!

Communications and Public Relations

Community Outreach

Community outreach beyond Colorado Springs continues to be another significant element in our PPPA Mission of promoting the Sport of pickleball. During this last year PPPA continued to mentor other start-up pickleball organizations—both regionally and nationally. Based on our PPPA website and word-of-mouth, the Board of Directors routinely gets requests from those trying to form their own pickleball clubs asking the same basic question: “How were you able to make this happen?”

Over the last several years, we have mentored 37 start-ups from across Colorado and the US, including Alaska, sharing with them key elements of our PPPA 13-year history. This interaction typically starts with an inquiry to our website followed up by a phone call from one of our Board members. That leads to an hour or more discussion covering our ‘lessons learned’ including specific examples of how our great volunteers, organizational structure, communications, education and training programs, fundraising, and outstanding local government relations have helped us succeed in building one of the largest pickleball associations in the country. This includes successful PPPA Public-Private Partnerships with the City and El Paso County that through co-funding have produced some of the most outstanding public pickleball venues in the State at Monument Valley, Bear Creek, Venezia, and in 2025, another 18-20 courts at Coleman Park.

One of our most recent community outreach efforts involved the “[Awake the Lake](#)” project where, on behalf of their Palmer Lake pickleball club, the PPPA Board of Directors provided a detailed letter of endorsement to the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments and the Pikes Peak Area Agency on Aging Regional Advisory Committee advocating for their grant request. Their request was approved and Palmer Lake’s six new pickleball courts (including a public bathroom) will be officially dedicated over Labor Day weekend in 2024.



PPPA promotes PB to Liberty Heights

In conjunction with Oak Street Health, several volunteers, including Board member Jeff Jensen, taught Liberty Heights residents how to play pickleball in September. A portable net was set up to demonstrate dinking and simple pickleball skills to the residents. Approximately 10 residents participated. They tried out various paddles and hitting the ball for the first time.

Education and Training Activities

Round Robins: Approximately 220 members per week attended our very popular round robins at levels 2.0-4.0. These games are played at both MVP and BCP courts. We are fortunate to have 15-20 great volunteers and coordinators who help each week with our Round Robin program.

Beginning Lessons: Beginning Lessons were offered in 2023 on Saturday mornings from May to October at Wasson Academy tennis courts. Two tennis courts are dual striped for pickleball plus 4 additional marked pickleball courts that are used for training. Prior to the start of the beginning lesson season, we host Beginner Instructor Training. In 2023 we had over 423 members who took lessons. We also hosted a few lessons at Banning Lewis and two separate sessions with individuals from AARP.

Guided Play: Led by George Gorman and a group of instructors, Guided Play begins about a week or so following the first Beginner Lesson. 70 new members were given 2-3 weeks of advanced beginning lessons in 2023 at Guided Play.

Ladder Play: There are now two ladder play programs – doubles and singles. Double is run by Meg Duncan while Teresa Heckel runs the singles programs. We saw anywhere between 30-50 players in our Ladders in the summer of 2023.

Finances

Improvements Completed

In 2023, PPPA's financial records were converted to QuickBooks. This helps us stay on top of our finances and produce reports and projections more quickly. We revamped our credit card processing system. The new system bypasses PayPal, which was a source of many member complaints. As interest rates increased in 2023, we took advantage of better CD and money market rates and increased our interest income dramatically.

We are committed to continuing to be good stewards of PPPA's finances. The annual internal audit with volunteer members found the Association in a good position financially with all the books in order. The audit results will be published in the very near future.

This Year's Budget

	2024 Budget
Income	
Membership Dues	33,000
Income From Tournaments	28,735
Sponsorships	9,000
Donations	3,100
Merchandise Sales	2,000
Interest Earned	<u>3,000</u>
Total Income	78,835
Operating Expenses	
Member Services	10,000
Training & Education Expenses	4,150
Merchandise Purchases	2,000
Court Maintenance	750
Signs & Banners	500
Rental Expense	2,600
Insurance	15,000
Credit Card Fees	2,250
Software & IT	2,668
Administrative Expenses	<u>470</u>
Total Expenses	40,388
Net Income	<u>38,447</u>

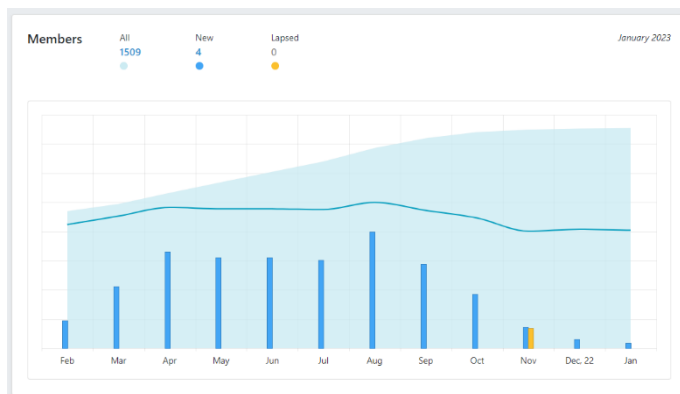
Membership

Membership Stats

PPPA saw a decline in membership in 2023, even with the addition of 362 new members.

Jan 12, 2024

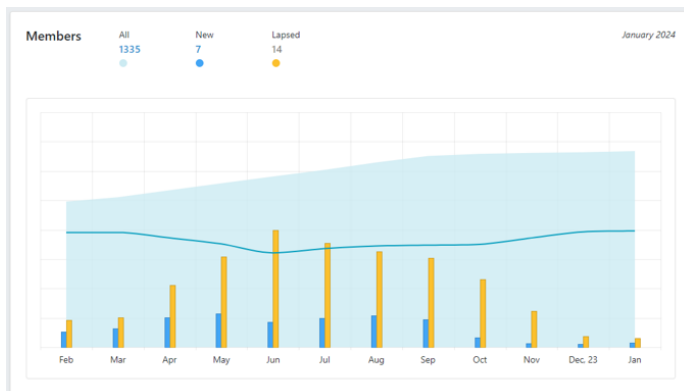
Total Members	1335
Active Members	1287
Renewal Overdue	19
Lapsed	13
Pending	35



Jan 6, 2023

Total Members	1509
Active Members	1440
Renewal Overdue	28
Lapsed	16
Renewal Pending	59

When surveyed, outgoing members indicate that they have chosen to spend their money at higher rate commercial pay-to-play facilities instead of continuing their memberships with PPPA. They are, however, still frequenting outdoor courts as much as if not more than commercial facilities because parks 'are free' and 'it's more fun to be outside'. Unfortunately, this means much more competition and longer wait times for outdoor courts – with less funds to maintain, improve and add new courts in the community.



Over the last few months, we've attempted to inform and encourage members to consider both options to help keep outdoor courts alive and growing with your continued membership in PPPA.

- Sent emails to all expired and archived members.
- Updated Auto Renewal, Lapsed and Expired Auto Messages.

The next most common reason is not being able to participate in Round Robins – either because they didn't make the cut-off or they work days.

Online Store

The call for volunteers to help with the online store remained unanswered so PPPA researched inventory providers both local and out-of-state and online. An outside provider recommendation will be presented to the Board after a meeting and review of the options.

Paddle-Up 2023

To address the paddle-up process/frustration expressed by members/non-members, PPPA:

- Built and installed new paddle-up troughs at MVP.
- Designed and installed paddle-up signage at MVP and JV.
- Sent out a process reminder to members at the end of January.

Ideas for 2024 to Attract, Interest, Retain Members

The PPPA Board will be collecting and reviewing member suggestions.

Social Committee

PPPA ‘Dinks and Dips’ Ice Cream Social was held on Friday, August 4th, with about 150 members and guests in attendance.

- Corey Houger, owner of BJ's Velvet Freez and PPPA sponsor/partner provided all the ice cream, toppings, and paper products.
- Drills were provided by Bill Munro, Joe Frasca, Sandeep Maity, Sarah Brezniak, and George Gorman.
- Ron Graham-Baker @ Digital Skyes Photography LLC, photographed the event.
- Thanks also for the great support of Sally Jensen, Jim Godfrey, Roberta Loughman (RE/MAX) and Erica Roberts (PPPA Store) and the donation of several 'gently used' paddles from members for our community outreach programs.

Sponsor and Donor Relations

This has been another very good year for PPPA Sponsorships with a number of both new and returning supporters. AARP Colorado, Harvey Investments, Roberta Loughman realtor (RE/MAX Properties), Scheels, and Springs Pickleball, were our top Premier Level donors followed by Sarah Stowell (THIRD ACT Insurance), Pickle Prosthodontics, Blue Star Group Restaurants, [VisitCOS](#), and Selkirk Sport at the Platinum Level. BJ's Velvet Freeze, The SignShop, Colonel Mustard's Sandwich Emporium, and Ali Munro (Rocky Peak Homes Real Estate & Gearbox Pickleball) rounded out our outstanding team of sponsors. As our *2023 Colorado Pickleball Open—Pikes Peak or Bust* Tournament Sponsor, Scheels ALSO generously contributed an additional \$5200 toward our event. The combined sponsor donations of cash, goods, and services in support of PPPA for 2023 came to over \$19,000.

We are grateful for the generous support of our PPPA sponsors and encourage all our members to give them your customer patronage in return. Specifically, for all our members who own a business or know someone who does, please check out the “Become a Sponsor” benefits tab on our website [Pikes Peak Pickleball Association - Become a Sponsor](#) and consider joining our team.

Sponsor tax-exempt donations are an essential element of our PPPA nonprofit mission. These funds, along with membership dues, tournament net proceeds, and PPPA grant awards, are used to help fund

new local pickleball court development—including the currently planned 18-20 court pickleball venue at Coleman Park in 2025 (described earlier).

Tournaments

Colorado Pickleball Open—Pikes Peak or Bust Tournament, August 11-13, 2023

PPPA's 2023 regional tournament was once again conducted in partnership with our tournament organizer, US Senior Pickleball (USSP). The *Colorado Pickleball Open—Pikes Peak or Bust* was held at Monument Valley Park (MVP) with Women's Doubles and Singles, Men's Doubles and Singles, and Mixed Doubles with 529 matches over the 3-day event. PPPA hosted 324 registered players (over 100 more than last year), 44% female and 56% male, ages 18-84, including for the first time, a dozen wheelchair athletes. The Round Robin format was used to maximize the number of games played with skill levels 3.0-4.5.

Players and their friends and families attended this tournament from 40 different Colorado cities and 12 other states (AZ, CA, FL, GA, MI, NC, NM, OH, OK, PA, SC, and TX). During the official opening ceremony, players and spectators were welcomed by Mayor Yemi Mobolade and Parks & Rec Director Britt Haley. 35 dedicated PPPA volunteers managed 41 different pre-planning and day-of-operations tasks which earned PPPA nearly \$19,000 in net proceeds which will be used to help fund new court development in Colorado Springs. Your PPPA Treasurer, Jeff Jensen, presented these results to the COS Parks & Rec Advisory Board which included a well-deserved "Thank You!" to the Parks & Rec staff for their great support.

PPPA implemented an electronic player survey this year as part of the post-tournament follow-up. Questions were asked about the food, venue, travel, etc. and for feedback to make improvements for next year. A survey was also created for those attending from outside El Paso County to gain insight into players and their friends and families traveling to the event and contributing to our local tourism economy with hotel stays, restaurants, rental cars, gasoline, and visits our 55+ local attractions.

Our third annual *2024 Colorado Pickleball Open—Pikes Peak or Bust Tournament* is scheduled August 2-5 at MVP. Based on the popularity of the wheelchair athlete competition in 2023, PPPA plans to make this a major part of our 2024 tournament event expecting to double or more the number of wheelchair competitors.

Welcome to the *Colorado Pickleball Open - Pikes Peak or Bust*



Tournament
Host Organization



Tournament
Organizer



Tournament
Corporate Sponsor



Tournament
Host City



Tournament
Venue Provider



PPPA Round Robin Membership Events, July 29-30 and August 5-6, 2023

The First Annual PPPA Round Robin tournament was a new training and education program. It was held in response to several inquiries from our members wondering how they could gain access to and experience in the tournament process. PPPA organized this two-weekend tournament to assist them to do just that. The knowledge and experience gained allowed them to enjoy the *Colorado Pickleball Open—Pikes Peak or Bust* tournament, thereby helping to enrich and populate this premier tournament here in Colorado Springs. The Board conducted a survey for all the participants and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive and rewarding for our members. We hope to duplicate this plan and gain more membership entries into our larger tournament in 2024. This year, approximately 100 of our regular Round Robin players (and some of our members that had not played in our weekly Round Robins) came out and supported the larger tournament. In 2024, PPPA hopes to have between 250-400 members participating in our 4-day (over 2 weekends) 2024 Round Robin Members Tournament the end of July and the second weekend in August. This allows them to enjoy new and more advanced pickleball experiences. And at the same time, this is a secondary fund raiser event to further our Mission Statement of assisting Colorado Springs and El Paso County residents to come enjoy our rapidly growing Pickleball sport.