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ATFC Newsletter Editor: Jo Wayles



MAY 2021

Hours of  
Operation  
Monday - Friday  
7:00am- 9pm  
Saturday - Sunday  
8:00am-5pm

### A Well-deserved Honor for Lexi

The National Women's Tennis Organization (NWTTO) is a non-profit organization of tennis advocates who strive to raise the standards of age-level match play, fitness, and sportsmanship in both individual and team competition. They are a growing network of more than 1000 competitive women, and men, who actively interact with the United States Tennis Association (USTA), sponsor national tennis tournaments, and provide local support to tennis communities in the United States.



Upon hearing about our club's rejuvenation from one of their lifetime members, NWTTO wanted to include a story about it in their newsletter. The following article highlighting ATFC's owner will appear in the NWTTO May newsletter in the "Member Spotlight" section. How nice to have Lexi's efforts recognized beyond our community.

**Alexis Packer**

For so many of our NWTTO members, tennis is an integral part of our lives. Tennis provides us with a network of friends, it helps us stay healthy as we age, it gives us a way to burn off excess energy or frustration in other aspects of our lives. So, what would we do if we thought that the access to year-round tennis would no longer be part of our lives.

For one answer, meet NWTTO life member, Alexis Packer, from Ashland, Oregon. Alexis grew up in New York, earning degrees from University of Hartford and NYU before beginning her career in the Health Education field. Looking for a change, at age 31, Alexis took the LSATs and earned her law degree in Los Angeles. She then took a break year in New Zealand and studied the art of weaving. After returning she became and remains an estate planning attorney in Ashland, Oregon.

Through all these changes in life and career, Alexis played tennis on and off, becoming an avid player and fan. Fast forward to 2016 when the local tennis and fitness club where Alexis played announced it was closing because it could not run profitable. Alexis, along with many others in her area, kept hoping a buyer would be found soon as much of the club fell into disrepair. Finally, Alexis stepped up and purchased the club to "save it for the community."



If you haven't seen Alexis at a tournament very often, she says she really has two full time jobs - as an attorney and now the owner and rejuvenator of a tennis club. She totally replaced the four tennis courts, as well as swimming and fitness areas inside and landscaping outside. When Alexis reopened the club about 315 members rejoined and that number grew to 450.



This past year has been very difficult with forced closures for COVID-19 restrictions - closed for two months last spring, open June to November with smaller numbers, closed until early February - so Alexis moved to a "Pay per Play" model so members would not be charged when play was unavailable.

NWTO salutes Alexis for her contributions of time and money to keep the option to play tennis alive in her community. We hope that the COVID vaccine will make it possible for Alexis' Ashland Tennis & Fitness Club to once again return to full capacity and to free up time for her to enjoy the camaraderie of fellow NWTO members at an upcoming tournament.

### Oh, It's Crying Time Again...She's Going to Leave Us...



Sadly, we will soon be saying good-bye to Shannon Armour, ATFC's Front Desk Manager, who has been the face of the club for the last four years. With her warm and outgoing personality, Shannon has succeeded in making members feel welcome and **known**. What a wonderful feeling it is to walk in the front door and have Shannon greet us by name and ask how we are doing!

Have you enjoyed the seasonal decorations - the doxie with a leprechaun outfit, the whimsical rabbits perched on the front desk, the cheerful holiday décor? How about the offerings of banana bread (pre-COVID, of course) and other treats from her kitchen? Shannon has done an amazing job of creating a truly comfortable and friendly environment for our community.

In addition, she has been a solid teammate with other staff members and an admired of other Front Desk workers.

Shannon, it is such an understatement to say this: We will miss you and wish you and the very best as you head on to a new life and adventure in Florida. We hope you will in touch with your ATFC family.



leader

Dave  
stay

### A Few Words from Shannon

**Dear Members,**

I can't believe it has been four years. When I started working at ATFC, I felt warmly welcomed by everyone. I have very much enjoyed my time here and have loved getting to know each and every one of you!

COVID....what a nightmare! But, we came together and made things work!

Then...the disastrous Alameda fire happened and my home was lost. Your warm thoughts, comforting talks, and your overwhelming generosity were mind boggling and so appreciated...

As many of you know, I have been staying with family and looking for a house to buy here in the Rogue Valley. Unfortunately, everyone else is looking for a new home, too! With no upcoming prospects of finding a home, we have decided to relocate. We have thought long and hard about this big decision and this seems like the right time - partly because my personal belongings are minimal at this point... We will soon be moving to Florida (where my parents are now living).



Not to worry - I am leaving you all in the capable hands of Tracie Daley. I know she is excited to be taking over my position and is looking forward to meeting you all.

As for me, I can only hope to be lucky enough to find another work family as great as ATFC has been.

Miss you already.

Warmly, Shannon

## And the Baton is Passed to...Tracie!



Hello ATFC Members and Staff!

I'm so excited to be a part of the family here at Ashland Tennis & Fitness Club.

For sixteen years I was a dental technician and manager at Applegate Dental Ceramics; with the competition of larger lab developments, it became hard to compete - the end result was to close. That left me not knowing what I was going to do next??

I was blessed that while watering my yard one morning my lovely neighbor, Shannon Armour, came over to talk with me. Knowing my situation, she had the idea that I would be a good fit to fill the position she is leaving in order to be closer to her family. I was instantly excited! And...I was, of course, delighted that Lexi was happy to have me on board! I have some roots her at ATFC: my wonderful husband and his family belonged to ATFC for many years. I spent a good amount of time watching exciting matches and also took an aerobics class a time or two. 😊



We have three children, two of whom are married; they've blessed us with two grandchildren. Our youngest son (who played tennis a few times with Vika) is graduating this year with a degree in Health & Fitness Promotion.

I will do what it takes to keep ATFC running smoothly and growing!

Sincerely, Tracie Daley



P.S. Please be patient with me as remembering names has never been my forte. It would really help if you tell me your name as you walk in! Thank you...😊

## A Cinco de Mayo Send-off for Shannon



While we are sad to see Shannon head off to Florida, we are excited for her, as well. Please mark your calendar for a farewell get-together (open-house style) on May 5<sup>th</sup> from 4-5:30. We will provide light snacks, dessert, and beverages. And....we will, of course, be COVID-conscious. We are expecting a beautiful day and will be gathering outside on the patio.



As you may know, Shannon **LOVES** a (COVID-conscious) **party**, so we hope to see you there!

## Ball Recycling Program

Tennis players, you will see that your June 1st statement includes an annual \$5 fee towards tennis ball recycling. Now **THAT** is an inexpensive cost to help save the environment!

Nationwide, approximately 125 MILLION used tennis balls wind up in America's landfills every year. That is 20,000 metric tons of methane-producing, nearly non-decomposable rubber waste. U.S. tennis players recognize this as a significant environmental problem that does not represent their sport well. To date, RecycleBalls has partnered with more than 2,000 individual tennis players and tennis clubs in 48 states, placing 15,000 recycle bins courtside. Thus far, more than 4.5 million tennis balls have been kept out of landfills.



Here's where you and ATFC fit in: In order to continue to provide the recycle bins (outside of Court 1) and have them shipped to RecycleBalls for processing, we need to help cover the costs. Your annual \$5 fee is just the ticket!

## Ronda's Round-up

### UTR Tennis Tournament May 21-23

This tournament is currently scheduled as a Singles-only event. If we are able to use Hunter Park courts (depending on both the City of Ashland and on potential COVID restrictions), we may be able to add Doubles. I will update the registration site by April 29 if we are able to add Doubles - STAY TUNED!

Register at: <https://app.myutr.com/events/42425>



### Big Al's Tennis Tournament: July 16-18



Big Al's will be a USTA non-sanctioned tournament this year. By non-sanctioning this event, we are allowed to format the draws however best suits the number of players. For large draws (more than 16 players), we will run as a regular draw with a back draw (consolation round) - you will play a minimum of 2 matches. For smaller draws, we will either do compass or round-robin draws - you will play a minimum of 3 matches.

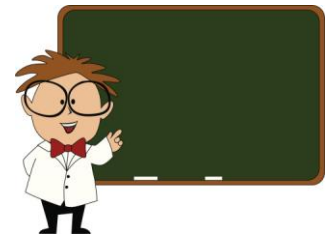
Big Al's is an adult tournament with levels from 3.0-4.5 and Open. Competition will include men's and women's singles and doubles, as well as mixed doubles. You may play in two events. Register:

<https://playtennis.usta.com/Competitions/ashlandtennisfitness/Tournaments/Overview/924768d7-5215-46cb-b8bc-6afa4f6173c1>

## Len's Lesson

### 7 Ways to Improve Your Game Instantly

1. **Stick with one pattern of play.** Stop trying to get creative on court, and start hitting the shots you know will work.
2. **Pull back on your serve speed.** The serve is the most important shot in tennis, but that doesn't mean you should wail on the ball at all cost to the rest of your game. Focus on accuracy during your serves. Considering any extra speed or spin as added bonuses.
3. **Play the momentum of the match.** Losing by a few points to that player in the club you normally kill on the court? Adjust your momentum. Simply slow down. Take the full 20 seconds you have between points to gather yourself. Take a deep breath. On the other hand, if you're racking up points on your serve, you should work to try to keep up that momentum.
4. **Drink on every changeover; snack on every other.** This helps keep your energy up during the duration of the match. You have to stay hydrated and have energy to win.
5. **Don't go for the line on every shot.** It's one thing to be aggressive - it's quite another to be reckless. You don't want to risk your shots. Bring your sights in, and pick a target on the court where you feel confident that you can play a solid offensive shot without incurring much risk. The better you get, the closer and more comfortable you will become to pinpointing your shots.



6. **Identify your opponent's weaknesses and hit there.** Every match has a five-minute warm-up beforehand. Use that time to get ready to play (obviously!), but also to test your opponent by hitting forehands and backhands to determine what they're best or worst at returning. From that point, you can strategize how to play to their strengths and weaknesses.
7. **Stretch.** If you don't typically play well the first 15 minutes of a match, you may want to consider stretching - or stretching more - beforehand. Whether this means taking up static stretching (holding a pose for a short period of time) or dynamic stretching where you loosen up by moving through specific exercises, just do something!



### Curly's Corner

#### Compound Moves



What are compound moves and how can we benefit from them?

A compound move is an exercise that works more than one joint and muscle group at a time. The benefit from doing this type of exercise is that unlike isolation exercises (usually done on machines, a compound exercise focuses on functional fitness: they relate to real life movements. Muscles rarely work in isolation in the real world,

But....the reason I prefer compound exercises over isolation exercises is that I can cut the time I spend in the gym in half!

Here are some examples of compound moves:

**Squat:** Works glutes (butt), quadriceps (top part of your leg), and calves all in one move. Squats also work the muscles around the knee, helping to build strength and prevent injury.

1. Step 1: Stand straight with feet hip-width apart
2. Step 2: Tighten your stomach muscles
3. Step 3: Lower yourself down - as if sitting in an invisible chair
4. Step 4: Straighten your legs to lift back up



**Overhead Press:** Works pectorals (chest), deltoids (shoulders), triceps (back of arm), trapezius (upper back)

1. Step 1: Stand with an Olympic bar (a silver metal bar next to the leg machine) on your front shoulders
2. Step 2: Lift your chest. Raise your chest towards the ceiling by arching your upper back
3. Step 3: **Press.** Take a big breath, hold it, and **press** the bar in a vertical line
4. Step 4: Move forward. Stay close to the bar while you **press** the weight up
5. Step 5: Lock the elbows; then lower the bar to the starting point

**Lunge:** Works quadriceps, abdominals, hamstrings, calves, glutes

1. Step 1: Start by standing up tall
2. Step 2: Step forward with one foot until your leg reaches a 90-degree angle



3. Step 3: Lift your front **lunging** leg to return to the starting position
4. Step 4: Repeat 10-12 reps on one leg; or alternate legs until you've totaled 10-12 reps/leg

**Bench press:** Works pectoralis major, anterior deltoids, and triceps

1. Step 1: Lie flat on your back on a bench
2. Step 2: Grip the bar with hands just wider than shoulder-width apart, so when you're at the bottom of your move your hands are directly above your elbows
3. Step 3: Bring the bar slowly down to your chest as you breathe in
4. Step 4: As you exhale, extend your arms back into the starting position

**Still unsure about these exercises? Come see me and let's get going!**

### Pilates Cancelled on May 22

Due to the UTR tournament, Pilates will NOT be held on Saturday, May 22. Thanks for taking note of this.

### Ms. Martina Mannerstilova

**Dearest MMM:** I feel super sorry for the staff folks who empty the trash, recycling, and used rag bins on the tennis courts. Every time I put something in the appropriate bin, I am stunned (and more than a little grossed out) to see so many items placed in the incorrect receptacle. Oh, clever one, might you come up with a handy ditty to remind tennis players about what goes where?? Thank you. **Sincerely, Help, I Need Somebody; Help, Not Just Anybody**

**My Dear HINSHNJA:** Alas, I am ditted out at the moment. Currently I am working on my first country/western album (it has a Wimbledon theme!) and the creative channels are dry... But, I can give you a chart:

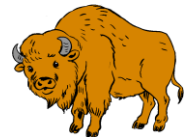
**Gray bucket: ONLY used rags**

**Purple bucket: ONLY trash (e.g. used tissues; plastic tops of tennis cans)**

**Green bucket: anything that can be recycled (empty plastic water bottles, empty tennis ball cans, used tennis balls, aluminum tennis ball can lids)**

Fellow tennis lovers, please remind those in your group of these simple rules! Thanks so much.

**Sincerely, MMM**



### Riddle Me This

**This month's riddle:** What did the buffalo say to his male offspring as he headed off to college?

**Last month's riddle:** What was left after a French factory explosion?

**Answer: De Brie**

