



PETANQUE PULSE

Official FPUSA Newsletter

Spring 2025



Southeast Regional Counselors: (L to R) Mitzi Gimenez, Jerry Miller, and Heidi Davison

Welcome to the Spring 2025 Edition of *Petanque Pulse!*

As we head into another exciting season of pétanque, this issue celebrates the spirit that makes our community special. From fierce competitions to community outreach and youth development, we're proud to highlight the achievements, dedication, and camaraderie of our members across the country.

In these pages, you'll find updates on recent tournaments and the tireless efforts of those who keep our clubs thriving. We also honor the legacy of members who helped build FPUSA, such as Louis Toulon and Christine Cragg—individuals who generously gave their time, energy, and heart to grow the pétanque community we cherish today. Here's to the players, volunteers, organizers, and visionaries who continue to shape FPUSA—one boule at a time.

Warm regards,
Michelle Dang & Heidi Davison
Newsletter Editors, Communications Committee

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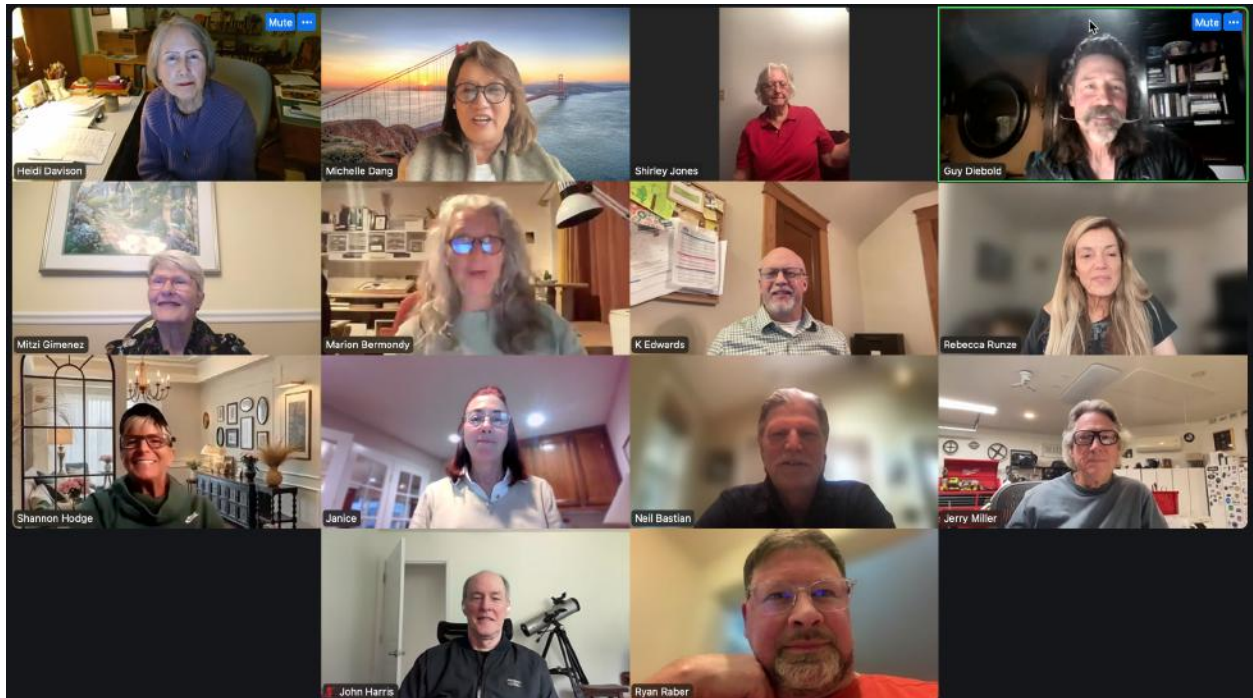
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Southeast Regional Mixed Triples, Classic City Petanque Club, Athens, GA

FPUSA Board in Action: Driving Progress and Growth



FPUSA is excited to share that we now have a full and active [Board of Directors](#), and they have hit the ground running! Our board members bring diverse professional experience and a shared passion for growing pétanque in the U.S. Meeting regularly via video conferencing, the board has been actively updating policies, addressing club and member needs, and promoting the sport through grants and outreach. We're also thrilled to welcome **Bainbridge Island Boules** in the Northwest Region as our newest affiliated club!

Clear communication remains a top priority. We're strengthening connections with clubs and members by sharing timely updates from the Board and Regional Counselors, and posting board meeting minutes in the "Documents" section of [JustGo](#) for easy access. Whether through newsletters, online, or direct outreach, we're committed to keeping our community informed.

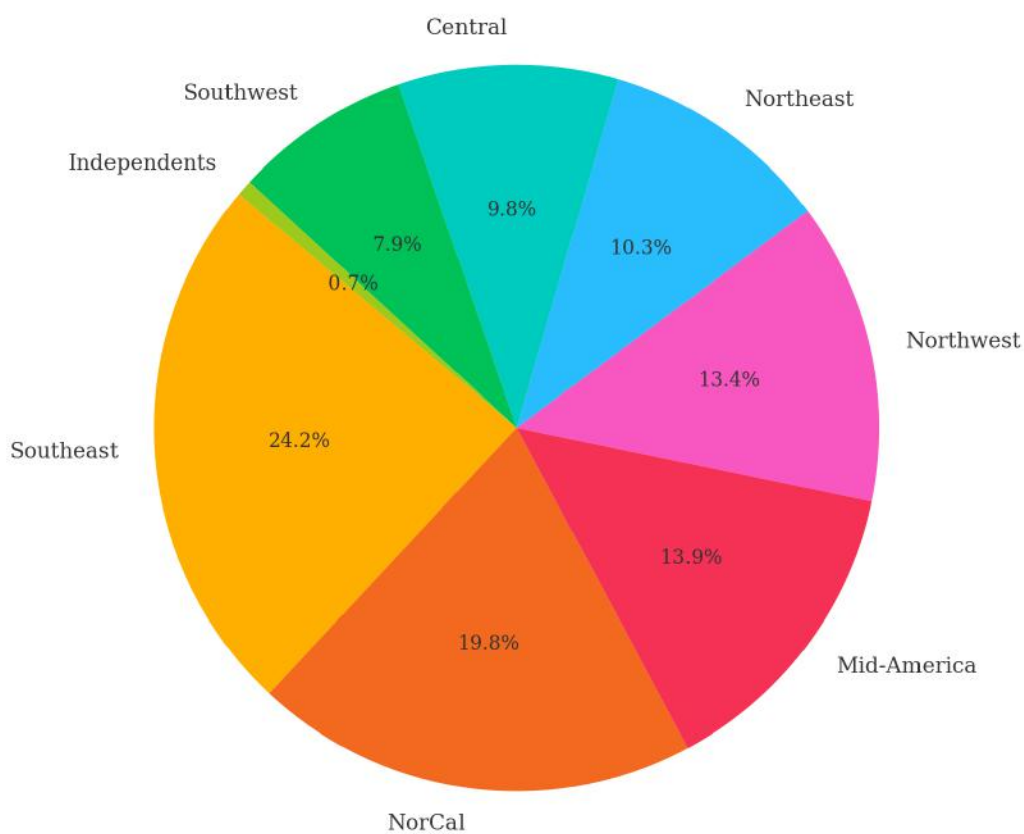
Additionally, several board members and members-at-large are now serving on key committees - Communications, Sport, Discipline, and Grant - to help support FPUSA's continued growth and daily operations.

Membership Data

As of April 2025

Adult Members = 1,792	Average Age: 63 years
Junior Members = 33	Median Age: 67 years
Total Members = 1,825	Age Range: 7 years - 98 years
Percentage of Male Members: 64%	Percentage of Female Members: 36%

Membership Distribution by Region



[CLUB DIRECTORY](#)

Upcoming World Championship Qualifier and Nationals

[FPUSA 2025 Calendar](#)

Dates	Event	Host Club
May 17-18	Men's Triples World Championship Qualifier	Ohlala Petanque Sanford, Florida
June 14-15	National Men's Doubles, Women's Doubles, & Mixed Doubles	Portland Petanque Portland, Oregon
Sept 27-28	National Men's Triples & Women's Triples	Valley of the Moon Petanque Sonoma, California
Oct 18-19	National Men's Singles, Women's Singles, & Mixed Triples	Fresno Petanque, Fresno, California

Some clubs are now using [JustGo](#) for tournament registrations. Log into Justgo and click on the “**Events & Courses**” tab.

Michelle Dang (FPUSA Secretary) has created a series of [Justgo Tutorial Videos](#) to help members and clubs learn how to use the platform. She will continue to add content to this webpage so check back often!

To log into JustGo:

1. For Current Members:

- Go to fpusa.justgo.com.
- Do **not** click "Sign Up".
- If you don't remember your username, email the FPUSA Secretary at secretary@usapetanque.org. In most cases, your username is the same email address you used when you joined FPUSA.
- If you forgot your password, click "Forgot Password?" A password reset will be sent to your email.

2. For New Members:

- Go to fpusa.justgo.com.
- Click the "**Sign Up**" button to create a new account and join a club.
- Questions? Email the FPUSA Secretary at secretary@usapetanque.org.

NOTE: All members (and non-members) must sign the [FPUSA Waiver](#) before participating in any FPUSA and club sanctioned events. Please submit the signed waiver to your club and the FPUSA Secretary, secretary@usapetanque.org.

Umpire Updates

Roster of Current Umpires

Congratulations to the following new umpires and umpire promotions!



New Club Umpires:

Ron Ragsdale, Nelson Ranch Petanque Club
Elijah Mullican, Amelia Island Petanque Club
(left photo)

Promotion to Regional Umpires:

Kaye Norris, Amelia Island Petanque club
Bill Norris, Amelia Island Petanque club

Promotion to Umpire Emeritus:

Louis Toulon, La Pétanque Marinière
Pascal Gravier, Lamorinda Petanque Club

Check our [Umpire webpage](#) for valuable umpire resources such as application, guides, rules, and regulations.

Interested in becoming an umpire? Please reach out to **Heidi Davison**, Leader of the Umpire Working Group, heidi@heididavison.com



News from the Central Region

Thibodaux Pétanque Club

Spring is here, bringing exciting developments for the Thibodaux Pétanque Club! We've had a fantastic start to the year, despite some challenging weather.

Back in January, the **Thibodaux Parks and Recreation Department** began expanding our terrain—a much-anticipated improvement. However, Mother Nature had other plans, surprising us with an unprecedented snowstorm that blanketed the area with eight inches of snow, bringing bitterly cold temperatures and disrupting transportation and city services. Despite these setbacks and needed construction, we hosted a successful **Mardi Gras Open!**



As the biggest event on our calendar, we were thrilled to welcome **40 select doubles teams** to our Open from across the country, along with two notable players from France: **Damien Hureau** and **Dylan Rocher**. Hureau and Rocher hosted a half-day pétanque clinic before the tournament—an incredible opportunity for our local club and visiting players, alike. We were excited to reunite with old friends, and meet new ones, as we passed a good time on the bayou!

The festivities kicked-off Friday, February 28, with social play and games continuing throughout the weekend. Players and guests enjoyed local culinary favorites such as jambalaya, gumbo, bread pudding, and pralines, ensuring no one goes hungry while competing!



The **Krewe of Pétanque** (as we like to call this group) started things off with the selection and coronation of “**King Carreau**” and “**Queen Fanny**” from among the participants - adding an extra layer of fun and excitement. This year’s King and Queen were **Bill Norris** and **Argentina Lamas** [pictured above with Guy Diebold (L) and Cathy Diebold (R)].

For those with energy left after the tournament, the spirit of Mardi Gras awaited them!

Two local Mardi Gras parades rolled through Thibodaux on Sunday afternoon, and some players headed to New Orleans for the grand festivities of Lundi Gras and Mardi Gras Day—ensuring an unforgettable conclusion to an already spectacular weekend. Congratulations to the Open Champions - **Jerry Miller** and **Ziggy Kessouagni**! (right photo)



Join Us on the Courts!

The Thibodaux Pétanque Club is thriving, and we look forward to continued growth in the coming year. Whether you’re a seasoned competitor or brand new to the game, we invite all pétanque enthusiasts to join us at **Peltier Park**—for a casual game, a tournament, or simply to soak in the camaraderie of our pétanque community. See you on the courts, and laissez les bons temps rouler!



News from the Northeast La Boule New Yorkaise

LBNY's membership started out the year by electing a new board of directors: **Esat Alijaj** (president), **Kasia Sliz** (vice president), **Patrick Hayes** (treasurer), **Kate Brideau** (secretary), **Emile Boujeke**, **Evan Dawson**, **Steve Ginsberg**, **Dawan Sangasri**, and **Philippe Trang**.

We're setting out plans for the 2025 season, hosting tournaments from April-October, including the **NE Regional Mixed Triples (June 21)**, the **African Open (August 24)**, and the **US Open in Hoboken (October 11-12)**. LBNY played a club challenge against our friends at **Local 718** in Brooklyn, and won handily yet congenially, and are looking forward to a year of collaboration with our neighbors. We've been hiring new instructors to join the staff for our free lessons in **Bryant Park** and **Washington Square Park**, starting this spring. Even as we prepare for our own tournament and lessons season, our members have been out playing—both at Local 718 tournaments, and nationally. Most recently, our members **Dawan Sangasri** and **Emile Boujeke** came in second place in the SE Regional Mixed Doubles.





News from the Southeast

South Florida Pétanque Club in Lake Worth hosted three fine **Southeast (SE) Regional Tournaments** on March 8-9 at **John Prince Park**. On Saturday, using all twenty courts, the Men's and Women's Singles competitions were challenging and exciting for spectators. The SE Regional Mixed Doubles on Sunday matched up these players and others to create 28 teams vying for the medals. Superb weather and a convivial atmosphere added to our pleasure viewing high level pétanque performances through to the final on Sunday. Details, photos and videos of all three finals may be found on the SFPC website: [South Florida Pétanque Club](https://www.southfloridapetanqueclub.com). **Ohlala Petanque** hosted the **SE Regional Men's Doubles** in February. Congratulations to all the medalists! Way to start the new season!

Here are the SE Regional Winners!

Southeast Regional Women's Singles Winner

Gold: Kelly Brownlee (Bell Buckle)

Silver: Sophie Debono (SFPC)

Bronze: Stacey Linh (Tampa)

Southeast Regional Men's Singles Winner

Gold: Christian Cazenave (Miami)

Silver: Laurent Magri (SFPC)

Bronze: Fouad Lahnoune (Amelia Island)



Southeast Regional Mixed Doubles Winners

**Gold: Jo Ella Manalan &
Laurent Magri** (SFPC; with
SFPC President, Alain Gimenez)
Silver: Dawan Sangasri & Emile
Boujeke (LBNY)
Bronze: Songmi Keating &
Fouad Lahnoune (Amelia
Island)



Southeast Regional Men's Doubles Winners

Gold: Christian Cazenave
(Miami) & **Michel Boisvert**
(SFPC) (1st & 2nd from right,
with Ohlala President, Frederic
Penaranda)
Silver: Hassan Lakhdar &
Fouad Lahnoune (Amelia
Island)
Bronze: Alex Canesse (Tampa)
& Stefan Nicolas (SFPC)

Southeast Regional Select Doubles Winners



Gold: Stefan Nicolas & Fabian Nicolas (SFPC) (3rd and 4th from left)

Silver: Fouad Lahnoune (Amelia Island) & Frank Guzman (Ohlala) (3rd & 4th from right)

Bronze: Jerry Miller & Hassan Lakdar (Amelia Island) (1st & 2nd from right)



Southeast Regional Mixed Triples Winners

Gold: Stephane DeFrance, Cathy Philippe, & Nicolas Philippe (Atlanta)

Silver: Honor Woodard (Classic City), Frosty Sabo (Amelia Island), and Jerry Miller (Amelia Island)

Bronze: Marilyn Appleby (Classic City), Doug Boes (Amelia Island), and Ed McIver (Amelia Island)

South Florida Pétanque Club in the Spotlight!

The South Florida Pétanque Club (SFPC) has been making headlines this season, with exciting features in both **Le Courrier des Amériques** (March 2025) and the **Sun Sentinel** (February 9, 2025). These articles shine a light on the club's vibrant atmosphere, its growing community of over 145 players, and its beautiful 20-court facility at John Prince Park in Lake Worth, Florida.

Club President **Alain Gimenez** spoke to both outlets about SFPC's welcoming culture, which attracts snowbirds from Canada, expats from France, and locals of all ages. The club is known for integrating beginners by pairing them with experienced players during weekly social tournaments, fostering skill development and camaraderie.

The *Sun Sentinel* emphasized the club's cross-generational appeal, with players from diverse backgrounds gathering three mornings a week for casual and competitive play. *Le Courrier des Amériques* highlighted the club's regional and national reach, including its role in hosting FPUSA-sanctioned tournaments, such as the regional championships in March.

SFPC continues to be a model for how pétanque can thrive in the U.S.—bringing people together, building community, and showcasing the best of our sport to the public.

Découvrez le club de pétanque de Lake Worth (près de Palm Beach) !



Il s'appelle « South Florida Pétanque Club » et il compte actuellement 130 membres jouant sur 20 magnifiques terrains de pétanque au John Prince Park de Lake Worth, juste au sud de West Palm Beach. Vous y retrouvez des Français, et beaucoup de Snowbirds canadiens durant la saison.

C'est Alain Gimenez qui en est le président : « La pétanque est un excellent moyen de profiter du plein air tout en pratiquant une activité saine. Si vous n'avez jamais joué à la pétanque auparavant ; aucun problème. Venez l'essayer ! Nous pouvons vous prêter des boules et vous donner les instructions nécessaires.

Des cours gratuits pour les membres et non-membres sont organisés tous les mardis après-midi de 13h00 à 15h00. Vous êtes curieux, venez nous voir !

Nous organisons des tournois sociaux de 3 parties tous les dimanches, mardis et jeudis de 9h15 à 12h30. Tout le monde s'inscrit individuellement et les équipes sont formées au hasard par l'ordinateur. Les joueurs plus expérimentés sont automatique-



ment mis en équipe avec des joueurs moins expérimentés. Cela permet de jouer avec tout le monde et de profiter de l'expérience de chacun. Une fois par mois, le tournoi dure toute la journée avec un format différent à chaque compétition.

De nombreux événements sociaux ont lieu tout au long de l'année, notamment le dîner de remerciement des membres en décembre, les anniversaires mensuels et les apéritifs à différentes occasions.

Notre club dispose de 20 terrains à John Prince Park, 4759 S. Congress Av., Lake Worth

Beach. Pour les joueurs plus compétitifs, nous accueillons une ou deux fois par an, des tournois régionaux et nationaux de la FPUSA (Fédération de Pétanque Américaine).

Nous avons un tournoi fédéral régional, tête à tête et doublettes mixte le week-end du 8 et 9 mars 2025. Des joueurs venant de Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Denver, Austin et de toute la Floride vont disputer le Championnat Régional.

Les parties de pétanque se dérouleront de 9h00 à 17h00 en Tête à Tête hommes et femmes séparés, le samedi et en Doublettes Mixtes le dimanche.

Les pétanqueurs à ce niveau de compétition pointent et tirent leurs boules avec une précision étonnante.

Le calendrier, des photos et des vidéos sont disponibles sur notre site internet. En espérant vous voir bientôt sur les terrains de pétanque ! »

Plus de renseignements sur : www.SouthFloridaPetanque-Club.com

Alain Gimenez : 512-705-1245

The Art of Pétanque

By Rob Trevena, Classic City Petanque

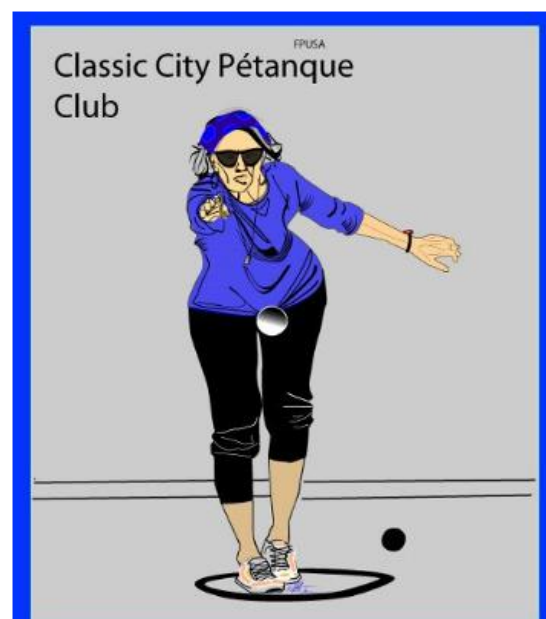


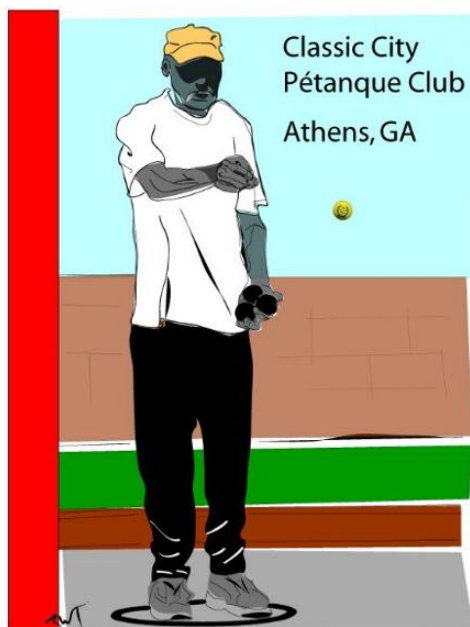
Drawing and creating art are akin to playing pétanque — both involve a blend of skill, spontaneity, and an appreciation for the unexpected. In my nearly decade-long journey as a pétanque player, the thrill of fortuitous outcomes has always been a highlight. These "happy accidents"—those moments when we score a point in an entirely unplanned manner—are what make the game exhilarating. They remind us that not everything can be controlled or predicted, and often, it's the unpredictability that brings the most joy.

Similarly, in the realm of art, the creative process is filled with moments of serendipity often growing out of efforts to resolve problems of perspective forcing us to broaden our scope and focus on the solution, not the problem.

Though never a professional artist, I've always sought ways to infuse a touch of creativity into my work, whether through drawing, graphic design, or photography and video production. If I have a pen and paper in front of me it's a challenge not to start drawing something, but I create most of my art using a smartphone and a personal computer (PC) for photography, videos, and graphic arts. When an image intrigues or inspires me, I'll try to do something more with it.

Pétanque offered me an unexpected source of artistic opportunities and pleasure beyond the actual play, and I'm thankful my friends and teammates graciously allow me to use them as subjects for my art. I actually introduced the game of pétanque to one of our club's FPUSA certified umpires in an art class several years ago, **Allen Cassady** – an accomplished artist himself.





I'm the administrator of our club's social media page and our club web page which gives me a great outlet for my creative efforts while also promoting the game and our club, the Classic City Pétanque Club.

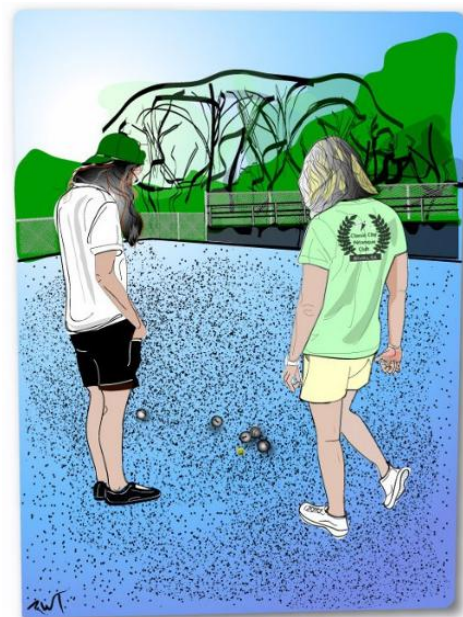
I drew these pétanque pictures on my PC using Adobe Illustrator 10, a vector-based design software used for creating drawings, illustrations, and artwork. It's a complex graphic illustration program and is quite different from traditional pen and ink but just as versatile with a pallet of pens, pencils, and brushes and Pantone Matching System Colors.

The app allows work in several layers. Some of the pétanque illustrations have as many as a dozen separate layers when I finish, and may take hours to draw while a simple cartoon may take only a few minutes. I often start out with a photo I took while

playing and then do my best to interpret it, line by line and every shadow and shape I need to capture the feel of the moment.

And I make lots of revisions. Making corrections and alterations to lines and shapes is the artists' secret and for me, that's often when the 'happy accidents' happen. I'll spend hours working on a single element within a larger drawing trying to resolve a problem regarding perspective or artistic interpretation. Then, I'll try a different angle, color, or technique, sometimes quite accidentally, and voila!

The act of creating is not just about meticulously planning every stroke; it's about embracing the unexpected and letting the process and subject guide you.



Just like in petanque, where a throw can go awry but still land perfectly, art thrives on the beautiful mishaps that occur along the way. Both pétanque and art teach us to cherish the journey, celebrate the unplanned victories, and find beauty in the unexpected. They remind us that creativity and skill are important, but so is the willingness to embrace and enjoy the surprises the game throws our way.

Follow the Classic City Pétanque Club at athenspetanque.org, [facebook.com>boulesathens](https://facebook.com/boulesathens), and youtube.com/@robtrevena.



Damien Hureau: A Pétanque Stop at Classic City

While traveling from New York City to Thibodaux, LA, **Damien Hureau** stopped along the way to help members of the pétanque community improve their games with both skills and strategy training.

Classic City PC was one of the clubs lucky enough to be a stop on his journey and we loved it! The night before our training we enjoyed a fun dinner. During the training, ten players received a personalized session with direct feedback from Damien after pointing and shooting. Nine additional lanes were set up with specific activities. Everyone cycled through each of these activities while waiting for their private session. At the end of the day, games were played during which Damien provided strategy advice.



Everyone had a great time and had positive comments for Damien and the training overall. By the end of the day, players were noticing improvement in their game! We want to thank Damien for his excellent teaching and being an enjoyable person to spend the day with. Also, thank you to CCPC member **Dominique Carton**, for her helpful interpretations.



Classic City Shares the Game with New Audiences

Dacula High School students visited Classic City Petanque for a morning of boule flinging. Thirty students and fifteen club members enjoyed a round robin of doubles games. When the teachers called to end their games to get on the bus one student said, "The bus can wait!" Our club president, who coordinated the visit, said he heard from the lead teacher of the field trip that she overheard the kids saying they thought pétanque would be lame, but it was lit! So, get lit with pétanque!

Indoor boules rock (and roll and stick)! At the **Athens-Clarke County Wellness Fair**, CCPC was able to do more than just talk pétanque, we and the attendees were able to play pétanque thanks to our indoor boules. Scores of employees enjoyed the opportunity to enjoy what throwing a boule is really like and feel the satisfaction of hitting their target. We were pleased to be invited back to this event; it's a great way to promote pétanque to a large group of people. What a pleasure to be able to 'throw the talk.' Hopefully, with spring around the corner and warmer weather we'll have some new players joining us.





Amelia Island Petanque Club Unites the Community for Charitable Tournaments

The **Fernandina Beach** marina pétanque courts buzzed on February 23 during a charity tournament sponsored by the Amelia Island Petanque Club, marking a fantastic start to 2025. The event united the community for an exciting afternoon and featured three mini-tournaments benefiting local charities, showcasing our community's generosity and competitive spirit.

Approximately 150 spectators gathered to support their local favorites and witness the power of community spirit in action. The atmosphere was vibrant as groups competed in three uniquely themed tournaments. The first group fostered connections between charities and club members; the second group, known as "Bar Wars,"



sparked lively competition among local establishments; and the third group brought together government officials and club members, promoting civic engagement.

Attendees were encouraged to contribute to the cause by bringing high-quality, gently used clothing donations for **Chandler's Hope**, pet food and supplies for the **Nassau County Humane Society**, or non-perishable food items for **Barnabas**. The collective effort was evident as donations increased, reflecting the community's commitment to supporting families, pets, and neighbors in need.

The event not only offered an afternoon of friendly competition but also reinforced the deep bonds within our community. It was a true showcase of our town's heart, demonstrating that together, we can make a significant impact. Whether participants contributed a donation or simply their cheers, their support was a testament to the community's spirit and generosity.



New Signs Point the Way at Amelia Island Petanque Club





News from NorCal

Northern California Clubs Spring into Action

Spring in NorCal brings a mix of rain, sun—and plenty of boules in the air. Clubs across the region have been buzzing with activity, both socially and competitively, as members prepare for another exciting season of pétanque.

Sactown Petanque hosted three FPUSA Regional Championships this spring: Women's Doubles, Men's Doubles, and Mixed Doubles. These tournaments drew top-tier players, including teams from **Tampa, Portland, Port Townsend, Las Vegas, Sonoma, Lamorinda, San Rafael, Fresno, Los Angeles, and Oakhurst**. The level of competition was fierce, rivaling national events in both talent and intensity. Congratulations to all the medalists!

Meanwhile, **Valley of the Moon PC** (Sonoma) is gearing up for the sold-out **Wine Country Open**, with 64 teams registered from across the U.S. as well as France and Mexico. With such a deep and diverse field, this promises to be one of the most exciting tournaments of the year.

From local playdays to major tournaments, the season is off to a strong start—and there's plenty more pétanque to come.



NorCal Regional Doubles Winners

Women's Doubles:

Gold: Alexandra Tisseur & Gerda Jorgenson
(Portland)

Silver: Stacey Linh (Tampa) & Michelle Dang
(Sactown)

Bronze: Megan Henzel (Portland) & Suzie Lee
(Sactown)

Men's Doubles:

Gold: Jer Thao (Fresno) & **Christophe Sarafian**
(Sactown)

Silver: Manu Le Bihan (Fresno) & Phominik Lee
(Sactown)

Bronze: Hamid El Qarei & Chandler Lee
(Sactown)

Mixed Doubles:

Gold: Gerda Jorgenson (Portland) & **Chan Xiong**
(Sactown)

Silver: Manu Le Bihan (Fresno) & Barbara Kongsbak (Portland)

Bronze: Wolfgang Kurz & Maggie Lane (VOMPC)



Built to Play: Richard Bell's Ring Box Keeps Games Rolling

The way it works is someone opens the door, takes out some rings and hangs them on a hook on the front of the box. When a group is done playing they drop the ring in the slot on top. Some of us have keys for the padlock, and another one is hung on the leg of a picnic table. Last group to play makes sure all rings are back in the box. What a smart solution!



Louis Toulon's Odyssey

By Alain Efron, La Pétanque Marinière



In the world of pétanque, everyone knows **Louis Toulon**. A founding member of **La Pétanque Marinière**, he served as President of the Marin club for 10 years and as National President of the FPUSA for three.

But how well do you really know him? For many—especially newcomers—Louis is simply a colorful Provençal who enjoys sharing amusing stories ("galéjades") while playing. However, there's much more to him than that.

To uncover the full story, I met Louis at his retreat in Petaluma, where we discussed his remarkable life and achievements.

Born in 1938 in Aix-en-Provence—just 20 miles north of Marseille—Louis grew up in a region where pétanque is deeply ingrained in the culture. Many, including myself, assumed he was practically born with "boules" in his hands and a "cochonnet" in his mouth. But that wasn't the case.



Surprisingly, Louis only began playing pétanque in 1968, at the age of 30, after moving to California. Why so late? He explained that during his youth, a large factory dominated the local economy and promoted various sports—except pétanque. Like his peers, he followed the trend and played other sports instead.

In his twenties, Louis met **Jan**, a young American student studying in Aix-en-Provence, and he fell in love with her. Before long, they were married. The couple moved back and forth between the U.S. and France before eventually settling in America.

They had three children: **David** (born in 1963), **Martine** (1966), and **Dominique** (1970). Of the three, only David followed in his father's footsteps and took up pétanque. Jan, too, played and even earned a few trophies of her own.

When Louis first arrived in America, he had little more than a set of boules, \$100 gifted by his family, and some traditional **Santons**. He didn't speak English and, like many immigrants, attended night school to learn the language. There, he met fellow French expatriates, and together they eventually formed a pétanque club.

La Pétanque Marinière officially came to life in 1972 during a spirited discussion among friends. The name was the brainchild of **René Di Maio, Charlie Davantes, Marcel Parnell, Jean-Louis Bontemps**, and **Louis Toulon** (the youngest of the group and its only surviving member). Initially, they considered calling it "La Boule Marinière," but it sounded too much like *moules marinières*, so they settled on La Pétanque Marinière instead.



By the late 1970s, the club was thriving. In 1976, during America's Bicentennial, members planted trees around the court—shade that players still enjoy today. That same year, **René Di Maio, Marcel Parnell, and Louis Toulon**, coached by **Jean Leveau**, represented the club at the Pétanque World Cup in Luxembourg. Though they didn't bring home any medals, the experience was unforgettable.



During his storied career, Louis played in many tournaments across the U.S., including eight international events. He was constantly on the road and loving it. To keep sharp, he practiced for at least an hour every day.

Leadership in the FPUSA

How did you get involved with the FPUSA?

In 1975, we heard through the press about the existence of the FPUSA in New York. At that time, there were three pétanque clubs in the Bay Area: **La Boule Joyeuse, La Boule d'Or, and La Pétanque Marinière**. We called a meeting and unanimously decided to join the organization.

When did you become president of LPM?

From 1970 to 1980.

How many years did you serve as national VP?

Six years—three under Alfred Levitt (1980-1983) and three under Robert Morrison (1992-1995).

National President of FPUSA:

1996-1999

Sports Committee Chairman:

2005

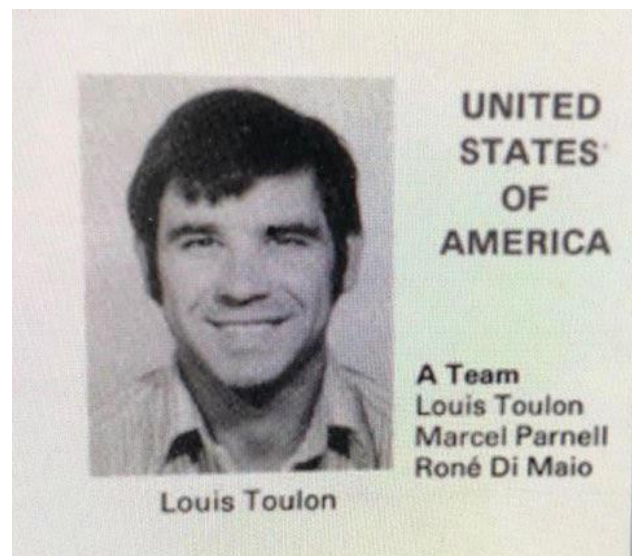
Over 50 years, I held nearly every position in the federation except secretary and treasurer, with invaluable help from **Frank Pippal** and especially my wife **Jan**.

Were you ever an umpire in an international concours?

No, but I was a national umpire for 10 years. I resigned from this position just a few months ago. (Louis was granted Umpire Emeritus by the FPUSA Board of Directors)

Memorable event:

Louis won the singles title at the first international games in Martinique in early 1979. (They even wrote a song about him!) His affiliation with FPUSA is one of the longest with **50 years of membership** from 1975 to 2025.



A standout moment was Monaco in 2001. We took one of the first flights out of SFO in early September after the World Trade Center disaster. When Louis walked out as the flag bearer, leading the U.S. delegation, **Prince Albert** and the audience honored him with applause—a truly unforgettable moment.

Reflections on Alfred Levitt and the FPUSA

Did you know or meet Alfred Levitt, the founder of the FPUSA?

Yes, I served as his VP for three years.

What kind of person was he?

He was very self-centered. A celebrity in New York, well known to everyone, he used his fame to get things done.

According to *La Peinture et la Pétanque*, a book penned by **Valérie Feschet**, a prolific scientist and writer:

"Alfred Levitt (1894-2000), a New York painter of Jewish-Ukrainian origin, spent time in the south of France during the 1950s and 60s, where he discovered pétanque. He founded the first New York pétanque club in 1968 (Albany) and was instrumental in institutionalizing pétanque at the national level, chairing the FPUSA for 13 years."

In 1975, France honored Levitt with a knighthood in the Order of Arts and Letters for his photographic work documenting cave paintings in France and Spain. His artwork has been featured in major institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. He lived a long and productive life, passing away in 2000 at the age of 105."

The State of the FPUSA

How do you gauge the work of the FPUSA?

The organization has only 2,000 members nationwide, but it ought to be much larger. The main issue has been a lack of sponsors and a tendency to focus on elite players while paying less attention to journeymen.

Louis, now a spry 86-year-old, still loves to play. Like a true Southerner, he was born with the gift of gab and enjoys talking before, during, and after games. To him, pétanque is a blend of skill and entertainment—a lively occasion filled with teasing, curses, and playful indignation. Without this *joie de vivre*, he believes, the game loses its charm and becomes unworthy of **Marcel Pagnol's** legendary pétanque spirit.



Profile: Christine Cragg, President, La Pétanque Marinière

By Don McPherson, Valley of the Moon Pétanque Club

When several members of La Pétanque Marinière were asked what they would like to know about Christine Cragg, Club president since 2002, Board Member Sara Danielson wondered: *“Which came first, her love of pétanque or her love of France?”*

Spoiler alert: it’s complicated. But when the tale is completely unraveled, the answer is “France.”

Austin Texas native Christine Dietrich Cragg treasures her not-so-obvious Cajun heritage from her mother, who was from Grand Isle, LA. She fondly remembers occasional smoke-filled, loud, raucous visits to Cajun French-speaking aunts, uncles, and cousins in Louisiana during her childhood. “My mother was a Cajun so I have a little bit of that in me and the French side may be part of what attracted me to the Club or at least what allows me to enjoy the idiosyncrasies of the French personality.” But her Cajun heritage is not what drew Christine to pétanque. That’s a longer story that requires first getting her from Texas to Northern California.

Christine fell in love with Northern California on a 1967 family vacation road trip when her father attended an academic conference at the University of California Santa Cruz. After spending a week in the mountains and beaches around Santa Cruz, she recalls: “We drove to San Francisco – we drove across the Golden Gate Bridge; we ate in Chinatown; I helped a guy sell [the underground counter-cultural newspaper] *Berkeley Barb* on the corner . . . and I heard Jimmy Hendrix for the first time.” That did it.

She left for Southern California a month after graduating from high school. A few months later, she returned to then-home Houston for a semester at junior college but, in short order, decided it was the Pacific Ocean, not Houston refineries, for her. She moved back with the objective of returning to NorCal. Early on, Christine and her then-boyfriend visited with his friends in Mill Valley. As they were walking among the majestic redwoods of Muir Woods, she recounts, “the thought came to me, ‘oh, that’s right, I’m meant to be living



here!" So I told my boyfriend, 'I love you, and if you want to join me I would love that, but I'm moving to Northern California.'" They were soon living in Mill Valley. She also lived in Nevada City and in Lake Tahoe for short periods and worked as a retail clerk in grocery stores and as a bank teller in savings and loans, but the North Bay has been home since 1973.

Fortunately, a new love in the North awaited.

Enter Larry – and France



Larry Cragg is a professional musician, guitar repairman, and stage tech. "Larry has been a professional guitar repairman since 1969," Christine explains. "He happened to be in the right place at the right time with the right skill and a music store in Mill Valley when all the Rock 'n Roll musicians moved to Marin and he found himself working for all those people" including Neil Young, Carlos Santana, Jefferson Airplane, Grateful Dead, and others. Larry played baritone sax with *Neil Young and the Blue Notes* as well as banjo and pedal steel with Young. He began working on Young's guitars in 1972 and

toured with Young as his personal guitar and stage tech from 1976 to 2010. Over Labor Day weekend in 1979, Larry was on the faculty as a pedal steel player of a Family Light Music Camp in Nevada City where Christine was a camp participant preparing to sing "Crazy" by Patsy Cline as her required performance. She asked Larry to accompany her and he agreed. They soon discovered that they had 20 or more close friends and acquaintances in common and that Christine had lived only a few blocks away from where Larry had his guitar repair shop. They married in 1982. In 2019 Larry "retired" from touring to running his guitar repair shop and a vintage instrument and amplifiers rental business and playing with area bands. "He made the money, and I did all the behind-the-scenes of the business" Christine explains, "handling the books, the scheduling, directing music camps, and managing the home base."

"Larry toured all over the world and during breaks between tours for vacations he wanted good weather and great food. For him that meant the South of France," Christine recounts. "What got us started was that a tour would end, there was a break, and instead of flying home Larry would say 'fly over to meet me here' and we'd spend a month or whatever time we had. The first time I went over after a tour was 1993 to Cannes, and it became our first French vacation home base for over a decade." Christine's greatest regret is that her own French still is not fluent. "I can get us by in French," she says, "but really I should be much better. What I really want is to be able to walk over to that grandmother who's sitting on a

crate selling her lavender and ask her how many grandkids she has. I want to be able to talk with her and thank her as I buy her lavender. But I'm not there yet."

Enter Pétanque

In Cannes, Christine and Larry watched "the old guys" play pétanque at the harbor and, taking their cue from Peter Mayle's 1989 best-selling memoir, *A Year in Provence*, and the 1993 BBC/PBS TV mini-series of the same name, they drove around in the hills watching play in Luberon villages. Every village had a piste. In 1995 they bought their first set of boules in Cannes – at a gun and knife shop. "We had no clue about size, weight, hardness, etc.," Christine recalls, "and being a shop that was really about guns and knives, there was no advice on boules, so we just went with how they felt in our hands." Their first three boules – a set of Boule Bleue R Inox Rofritsch 690s – they brought home, and they played pétanque together on a nearby baseball diamond.



Quickly enough they knew they needed to get another set so each would have three boules, but they had no idea where or how to buy boules in the States. So Christine called the French Embassy and asked for help. The response, to her surprise, was, "oh, there are pétanque clubs in California." She was given contact information for Pascal Gravier of the Lamorinda Club in Lafayette. When Gravier learned where she lived, he told Christine that she "absolutely must get in touch with Louis Toulon." She did, and Louis, one of the founders of La Pétanque Marinière, invited them to his garage. Christine remembers it as being chock full of boules sets as well as giant cooking pots for the pétanque picnics of LPM in San Rafael. They bought their second set of boules from Louis, who enthusiastically invited them to come play at LPM.

But they demurred, continuing to play by themselves on the baseball diamond. "Larry said, 'we're not good enough to play with the French – we've watched them play in France and we're not good enough.' I agreed, so out of that shyness we continued on the baseball diamond for maybe another year." One day Christine was recounting this tale to her hairdresser and noticed that the last name on her business card was Toulon. She asked if the hairdresser knew Louis. The immediate reply: "He's my Pop! And there's a picnic at the club next month, and you're going to it." Christine says she and Larry resolved "to be brave" and try it out. She recalls: "So we drive up, Larry bringing a cooler of beer. There are these little tables with tablecloths scattered about everywhere, and bottles of red wine everywhere. There's not a single word of English being spoken. And you hear 'clack, clack,

clack' all around. And we looked at each other and said, 'Oh my God, we've gone to France,' and it's just minutes from our house, and free!" They joined LPM that day. Christine got her first FPUSA license in 1996.

Except for Covid years, Christine and Larry have returned to France annually, first to Cannes and, more recently, to the Provençal Vaucluse village of Bonnieux in the Luberon. They always took their boules with them to France, "but we still didn't try to play with other French people in the villages," she says, "because we were still very, very shy." However, they began intentionally to play on village pistes before locals would show up to play and they were then sometimes invited to join in. From that experience they have gradually developed three customs. The first is always carrying a club coin or pin or business card or something else to leave as a personal thank you. The second is taking photos of each of the village pistes where they've played. The third is buying a postcard at the beginning of the trip and recording their scores on it when they played, tallying up to see who "won" at the end of the vacation. "Larry almost always won," she reports.

Christine enjoys playing the game immensely. "I love playing but I am a completely non-competitive person. That's why I like singles best because when I'm playing singles, I'm the most relaxed – playing as well as I'm going to play that day and if I win, I'm happy and if I lose, I had fun playing, and in that way I'm completed. When I have partners and I'm on a team, I have to up my competitiveness and then I don't play quite as well because I'm tense because I don't want to let my partner down. So I have quite a few silvers and bronze. I'm still waiting for gold."

LPM: The French Connection

At its founding in 1972, La Pétanque Marinière was an all-French club. More than 20 years later when Christine joined in 1995, "there were maybe five or maybe less than five not married to or not French in the Club. But sadly now there are very few remaining French," she observes, "and it breaks my heart that we are losing them." Besides being very French, the 'culture' of the Club when she joined "was way more laid back and easy going" she recalls. "They got there whenever they got there for a tournament, and they would just make it work."

Christine, well known as a self-described "crier," is genuinely and deeply emotional, especially regarding the French connection and the challenges of maintaining it. Board member Mike O'Leary notes that "Christine is a lovely person who cares about all the members. She can get very emotional at times; that's because she really cares



about pétanque.” O’Leary adds that “she also has a feisty side to her that comes out when needed.”

Christine explains: “The other half of my genetics is German, and I am a rule follower.”

Since Larry was touring, she was able to spend time at the Club. Her first contact, Louis Toulon, encouraged her to become involved. In 2000, she was asked to be vice president. In 2002, she was elected president and has served in that position to this day. She is also treasurer. Her 30-year relationship with Toulon, the sole surviving founder of the Club and its first president for many years, has come full-circle: he agreed to serve as the current LPM vice president, with the understanding that he did not wish to succeed her as president.



On February 10, 2002, Christine directed her first *mêlée* tournament as president and was ‘shell-shocked.’ The persons who had the sign-up sheets and the chips used to randomize teams had both not arrived during the registration period. When they finally came, she found herself surrounded at the registration table by understandably impatient players who wanted to sign up, pay their fees, and start playing. The confusion worked itself out and the games went on. But immediately upon returning home she wrote her reflections on the experience. “It was a long day but I feel most folks thought of it as a good day,” she wrote. “I learned many things about running a tournament and I will have a long checklist

to work from before our next event.” She began to develop an organizational manual that remains a work in progress as new situations arise.

“I think the biggest challenge of my becoming president was that I was a woman, and I wasn’t French, and I didn’t speak French,” Christine reflects. In the 2002 memoir of her first tournament as president, Christine identified the personal challenge that would engage her attention throughout her presidency: how to maintain the close-knit “Frenchness” of the Club while also spreading the popularity of pétanque and promoting its growth through new members.

A Leadership Paradox

Christine is candid about her strengths and weaknesses as a club president. “What I’ve done as my career is I’ve managed, and I’m a good manager. I’m a peacemaker, a great ambassador for sharing the sport, and I’m very hard to offend.” Bart Zachofsky is a current Board member and was LPM President when Christine first joined the Club. Of Christine, he says, “she is fiercely dedicated to the Club, to the game, and its promotion” and calls her “one of the most devoted advocates for pétanque that I have ever met.” Sara Danielson, another current Board member, characterizes Christine as “indefatigable” in her work for the Club. Both note that at events she is dependably the first to arrive and the last to leave. “Christine is the person who holds the club together,” adds Facilities Director Mike O’Leary, “without her I am not sure we would have a club.”



Her weaknesses as a club president, Christine says, are that “I am a ‘worker bee’ and not a delegator, and that I have no clear line of succession.” Nevertheless, she readily cites many examples of club successes in recent years – major renovations to the club’s terrain, maintaining the facility, providing public training, organizing picnics and social events,

promoting a women's pétanque day, securing and hosting the first American training workshop by the International Center for pétanque Training (CIEP) in France among them – where others have stepped forward voluntarily to assume the significant leadership or organizing responsibility and where she has gratefully given credit and full personal and organization support.

Christine recalls that “every year at the annual business meeting, Larry would stand up and say, ‘Please, someone, take my wife’s job.’” She admits that some have advised her not to worry about succession – to just step back when the time comes, and the organization will figure it out. “But I’ve seen what has happened in other clubs when a long-time leader has walked away with no willing and acceptable successor, and I care too much for the Club to do that. So we’ll just keep going forward until someone who really has the heart to do it comes along.”

Some Highlights of a Long Presidency

As one LPM Board member notes, Christine seems to know and be known by nearly everyone in the pétanque community, both in the region and nationally. She is a certified *arbitre*. From 2009-2012, she served two terms as a Northwest Regional Counselor and then from 2013-2019 she served three terms as FPUSA national Vice President. Former FPUSA President Ed Porto, with whom Christine served three years as Vice President, says that “she was instrumental in gaining support for numerous initiatives to improve and promote the sport and the organization” and was “always open-minded and fair, and gave the best interests of all members top priority.”



“FPUSA is an organization that’s scattered across a giant country, with the demographics of each region different. The needs of the regions are as varied as the regions themselves,” Christine observes, “I learned a lot about pétanque in the United States.” Nationally she witnessed and experienced the same sometimes difficult transition from the older French club founders and officers and their interests and ways of doing things, to younger American officers. Also, leaders of the national organization must successfully navigate the

sometimes divergent interests of a membership segment who are very competition-oriented and a membership segment whose main interests are recreational

and social. “Serving in leadership positions in such an organization is not easy,” she concludes, “and I respect everyone who volunteers to serve in national office and who tries to make decisions that they believe are in the best interests of the organization.”

In 2013, while she was FPUSA Vice President and on one of her vacations in France, she had the opportunity of serving as the chief of delegation for the American team at the Women’s World Championships in Montauban, France. “It was my great honor and a supreme pleasure,” she recalls. “I attended the international business meeting and had the opportunity to observe and appreciate the sometimes heated politics of pétanque on an international level – issues like trying to get pétanque into the Olympics, drug testing, and all sorts of other matters.” But what was most personally moving to her of the experience she captured with the concluding stanzas of her poem, “Montauban, France:” “Amazing! Women from forty-two countries, together under one roof, playing what was once a men-only sport, to see who will be – the 2013 Women’s Pétanque Champion of the World.”



LPM’s beautiful sycamore tree-lined terrain reminiscent of a French village square sits on Marin County land in a County park at the Marin Civic Center in San Rafael. Immediately adjacent is a dog park. Christine considers that among the biggest challenges and successes of the Club during her time as president was securing and safeguarding the terrain from encroachment. Led by substantial individual volunteer efforts by several members, the Club undertook a major, multi-year fundraising effort to surround the terrain with a permanent, attractive, functional but decorative fence. That created a visual impression of permanence for the facility and took care of the occasional dog problem.

More challenging and threatening, the Club had to contend with the publicly announced proposal by one of the County Supervisors to build a new public safety building on the land occupied by the Club and the dog park. As President and representative of LPM, Christine had to attend and speak at private and public meetings of the supervisors and County officials. “I cried my way through more than one,” she says. She knew she had to figure out a way to build County allegiance to the Club’s facility.

The key turned out to be convincing the County to name the LPM facility in honor of the late Pierre Joske, who served for many years as the first Marin County Open Space District Manager. This was a political masterstroke because the terrain then became an impressive visual tribute to one of the County’s own. Fortuitously, Joske also was a pétanque

enthusiast and member of the Club. With appropriate signage the Club and the County dedicated the “Pierre Joske Pétanque Park” in a 2018 public ceremony. As a bonus, the increased level of interaction and cooperation with the County led to the negotiation of the first LPM-County written agreement about use of the facility and, ultimately, to an agreement that continues without the need for regular renewal unless either party moves to nullify it.

In 2022, LPM celebrated its 50th anniversary, the second oldest Club in Northern California. Christine led the effort to organize a public celebration involving Club members and players from throughout the NorCal region complete with food, play, and a program. She secured from members hundreds of photos of earlier days in the history of the Club, dating back to the ground-breaking and tree-planting, and organized them on display boards for



everyone to see and enjoy. The celebration rekindled great pride in the Club's history and brought a new burst of energy. “We just got 12 new members!” she declares with genuine excitement and pride.

For Christine, the satisfactions are immeasurable.

“Sometimes when I'm really tired and we're

already cranking up for another one I think, why? – why am I doing this? And then at the end of a really long day everyone is smiling, and everybody had a good time, and I know that's why I'm doing it. It always feels good at the end of the day and it's worth it to spend time with people who are having fun.” As LPM Secretary Noël Marcovecchio puts it, “The most important thing Christine has taught me is that you don't have to win to have a good time.”

Speaking from the heart about what the Club presidency has meant to her, with a cracking voice and a tear in her eye Christine says: “I get great pleasure from doing it, and I feel very honored to do it.”

Photos courtesy of Alain Efron



News from the Northwest

Walla Walla Pétanque Club

After a winter of snow and freezing fog, pétanque is back in action in Walla Walla! The Walla Walla Pétanque Club kicked off its season on March 16th with the annual Panache Club Tournament and resumed regular Sunday play at 11:00 a.m.

Games take place at the scenic Patterson Winery terrains, located at 1564 Whitely Road in Walla Walla, WA. Nestled between the vineyards and the winery, and framed by the beautiful Blue Mountains, it's a truly picturesque setting for a day of boules.

Walla Walla will also be hosting their annual **Wine Country Open** Select Doubles on May 17 & 18, 2025. [Link to registration form.](#)

If you're ever in the area, stop by, say hello, and join the club for a friendly game!



Portland Petanque Club

Portland Petanque Club is gearing up for a full season of tournaments, while continuing court improvements by adding a variety of terrain and lighting to extend the hours of play into the evening.

We are honored to host the **National Doubles Women's, Men's and Mixed** (June 14-15) and are in full swing of preparing for another fun-filled and highly competitive **Rose City Open** September 13-14. Several strong contenders have already signed up and are looking to be challenged by past champions! Sign up now and take advantage of the Early Bird Special. Register at <https://www.pdxpetanque.org/rose-city-open> before it fills up. First place is guaranteed a \$2000 prize, and as usual, we will have lots of additional fun ways to win.

Neil Bastian will be hosting a valuable class on injury prevention and our veterans **Pierre Agnesse** and **Pierre Brun** will teach us how to throw a curveball and more clinics for our many newer members are in the works.

PPC is also extremely grateful for the generous donation received from a club member, allowing us to proceed with the purchase of a defibrillator.

Indoor Boules & Brews: Keeping the Game Alive during Cold Months in Portland

By Jen Sliker, Portland Petanque Club



If you are not lucky enough to live in a region where you can play pétanque year-round in the warm, sunny weather, you will understand the feeling of distress as winter approaches and temperatures plummet. Here in Portland, the courts throughout the winter months are often flooded, making it difficult to play even if you're willing to bundle up and brave the 30 to 40 degree weather. And for those of us that rely on pétanque to sustain our well-being, well...

If you have joined us for the **Rose City Open** in the past few years, you will be familiar with our sponsors at **Gigantic Brewing**. They have generously sponsored a Saturday evening party every year for the past three years that is well attended and thoroughly enjoyed. This year I had

a bigger ask: could we come in once a week, clear out tables in their large pub room, ask customers to move, and throw soft, indoor boules for a few? "Sure!" Said **Ben**, Gigantic's bighearted and highly pétanque-friendly owner.

Now, two Monday evenings a month (better attendance than every week), a group of us go to Gigantic and play pétanque with indoor boules (available from our partners at Pétanque America). In exchange, we purchase their delicious libations, brewed on premises. Their ceiling is high, allowing for a lofty plombée, a technique that is extremely useful for playing on the uneven, concrete floor that keeps your boule rolling and rolling. It's been a great way to keep playing throughout the winter months while staying warm, dry, and well-supplied with beer and local cider. It's also been a great way to expose our beloved game to the public, as well as drag some friends along to try it. I highly recommend fostering a partnership with a local business that can be mutually beneficial and good for club spirit.

THE PUMPKIN PATCH

A family farm established in 1967. Growing 55+ different crops annually. Food and fun!



Have You Heard?

The Sauvie Island Open Challenge is open for registrations!

Date: July 18–20, 2025

Location: The Pumpkin Patch on Sauvie Island (just 10 miles from downtown Portland)

🌐 **Website:** www.petanquesport.com

🔗 **Register Here:** [Sauvie Island Open Challenge Registration](#)

The event is organized by **PetanqueSport** - a new initiative led by **Pascal Tisseur, Neil Bastian, and Alexandra Tisseur**, members of the Portland Petanque Club and passionate players dedicated to elevating pétanque in the U.S. You're invited to join them for their premier event, a pétanque-filled festival on beautiful Sauvie Island.

The **Sauvie Island Open Challenge** will feature **five exciting tournaments**, along with a vibrant lineup of social and community events. Highlights include:

- A community tart-baking contest (yes, with professionals!)
- Local wine tasting
- Live music and great food
- And a chance to take a pétanque class with special guest **Tanguy Penin**, the infamous pétanque influencer and master showman.

The venue, **The Pumpkin Patch**, is a beloved farm destination with vast open terrain—perfect for pétanque and full of future potential as the West Coast's answer to Amelia Island. Make plans to be part of something big—join us this July for an unforgettable weekend of boules, fun, and celebration!

Training with a Purpose: Learning from Bekah Howe

By Michelle Dang, Sactown Petanque

As I prepare to compete in the 2025 World Championships in Rome, I feel incredibly lucky to team up with **Bekah Howe** (Port Townsend Petanque Alliance), one of the most accomplished, humble, and encouraging players I've met in the sport. Bekah has an impressive résumé—she earned a silver medal in precision shooting at the World Games in Alabama, has won multiple national titles, and this year, in addition to competing in the doubles in Rome, Bekah will also represent the U.S. in the Women's Triples World Championship in Sin Le Noble, France with teammates **Juanita Celix**, **Kasia Sliz**, and **Alexandra Tisseur**.

What's even more impressive, though, is how she carries herself. Despite her achievements, she's a deeply kind and supportive teammate. Her positivity and encouragement on the terrain create an environment where you feel like you can both compete and grow. Naturally, I was curious—how does someone this talented prepare for the highest levels of competition?

Bekah shared that she trains as consistently as possible—ideally an hour a day. With a demanding schedule (she works three 10-hour shifts each week), she manages to practice about four days weekly. On holiday weeks or lighter workdays, she'll add extra time. And even when life gets busy, she finds ways to fit in 20 to 30 minutes whenever she can. Her commitment and discipline are unwavering.



Her training is thoughtful and structured. She runs shooting drills at 6 to 10 meters, targeting boules behind boules, shooting between them, and finishing with shots at the jack. She doesn't move on until she's nailed her target at each distance. Sometimes, she'll even play a full game against herself with two sets of boules, thinking strategically for each "team."

A big part of her development also comes from the support of her husband, **Silas Holm**, who plays an active role in her preparation. Silas helps run precision shooting competitions and offers valuable feedback on pointing techniques and in-game decisions. Bekah often mentions how his insights have been a huge help in sharpening her skills.

Beyond physical training, Bekah spends time watching pétanque competitions online. She studies how top players manage pressure, how they plan their throws, and how they interact with coaches. She recently watched footage from the World Games qualifiers in Chengdu, paying close attention to player behavior between throws—how they respond to misses, whether they walk out to check targets, and how they regroup. For Bekah, it's just as much about mental preparation as it is physical—and that holistic approach makes her an exceptional competitor.

Living far apart makes it challenging for us to train together, but we were fortunate to spend 10 days training together in January. Training with Bekah has been both motivating and eye-opening. I feel honored to learn from her, and I'm excited to represent the U.S. with her by my side. Together, we're putting in the work—and we can't wait to bring our best to the world stage.





News from the Southwest Los Angeles Pétanque Club

The Los Angeles Pétanque Club is supporting a city project in **Santa Monica**, California, where the small airport will be [closed in 2028](#). The Club's objective is to preserve one of the airport hangars to create an indoor pétanque space for the winter, an idea from its secretary **Tristan Convert**. The Club joined the [Great Park Coalition](#) in collecting support from citizens and communities to help City officials make informed decisions on the future of the airport.

Pétanque players and clubs can help by adding their name to the GPC mailing list for updates and calls to action and by signing up [here](#). We need to continue speaking with family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, as well as leaders and members of community organizations. The more people involved, the more the Santa Monica City council will hear our request.

You can email Tristan at losangelespetanqueclub@gmail.com for more information.

Club de Pétanque San Diego

International Triples Select Tournament

A Day of Unity and Competition

On March 29th, the San Diego Club held its **International Triples Select Tournament**, and it was an event to remember! Under the clear blue skies and the perfect San Diego breeze, the pétanque community came together for a day filled with good vibes, great games, and even better company.

The event took place at the picturesque **Balboa Park** in San Diego. From the first game to the great final match, the courts were alive with laughter, concentration, and plenty of cheering. The atmosphere was electric, as players and spectators alike reveled in the camaraderie and the spirit of friendly competition.

The tournament hosted 15 teams, including participants from **Mexico** and the **US**, providing a fantastic opportunity for players to meet new pétanque friends and enjoy the sport they love. The teams played a series of three games in the morning, followed by a single elimination tournament after lunch. The structured format ensured that each team had an ample opportunity to showcase their skills and strategize for the win.

A huge congratulations to our champions of the day!



1st: Tom, Tinh, & Sean

2nd: Abraham, Alex, & Manu

3rd: Pierre, Momo, & George

(Pictured with Arturo, Club President)



News from Mid-America Clubs Invest in Youth Development

Across Mid-America, FPUSA clubs are creating exciting opportunities for young people to discover and enjoy pétanque. In North Carolina, under the leadership of **Shirley Jones** and with the support of several **Carolina Pétanque** members, a spring break juniors training session was held at the Winston Salem Parks and Recreation Center. Parks staffer **Jacob Justice**, along with CP members **Fred Marchant** and **Johnnie Rosato**, helped teach the basics of pétanque using indoor boules. Carolina Pétanque will continue these efforts through the summer, with more junior-friendly events planned—including a special session on **June 10, 2025**.



Recently, seven young adult Boy Scouts also joined Carolina Pétanque regulars at Miller Park for a lively day of play, reinforcing the club's commitment to welcoming players of all ages across many locations in the Carolinas.

Zanesfield Pétanque Club partnered with the local Trail Life boys group for a unique weekend at the end of March. After helping clean up Hall-Fawcett Park in preparation for the spring and summer season, the boys were introduced to pétanque and competed in friendly matches with their peers. The Zanesfield club looks forward to welcoming even more Trail Life groups later this month.

Together, these stories show how clubs are investing in youth not only to teach pétanque, but to foster community, sportsmanship, and fun—laying the groundwork for the next generation of players.



Mid-America Regional Men's Triples Winners



Gold: Mark Quilici, Juan Hernandez, & Dwayne Jonas
(Carolina)
Silver: John Wilson, Abdel Mourhite, Goyo Martinez (Carolina)
Bronze: Preston Myers, Rick Sweeny, Chris Paccione (Carolina)

Carolina Open May 24 & 25

CAROLINA OPEN

Saturday
May 24th
2025



Sunday
May 25th
2025

48 Doubles Teams

\$120 Registration fee per team

**Open to all
pétanque players!**



Located between Winston-Salem
& Greensboro off I-40

**Ivey M. Redmon
Sports Complex**

788 Beeson Rd Kernersville, NC 27284

Check in starts at 8:00 AM
Play begins at 9:00 AM

Registration form available at:
www.CarolinaPetanque.com











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Mid-America: Shannon Hodge (Zanesfield Petanque Club)

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Southeast: Jerry Miller (Amelia Island Petanque Club)

Southeast: Heidi Davison (Classic City Petanque Club)

Central: Marion Bermondy (Nelson Ranch Petanque Club)

Southwest: Rebecca Runze (Los Angeles Petanque Club)

Southwest: Ben Bull (Fresno Petanque Club)

NorCal: Bleys Rose (Petaluma Valley Petanque Club)

NorCal: Richard Bell (Petanque La Rose)

Northwest: Ryan Raber (Walla Walla Petanque Club)

Northwest: Neil Bastian (Portland Petanque Club)