



# Chickee Chatter

Royal Palm Tennis Club

Founded in 1960

January, 2023

7001 SW 98th Street

Miami, FL 33156

Pro Shop: 305.661.3350

Office: 305.667.4006

www.rptc.org

## OFFICERS

2023

### President

Joan Sanz

### Vice President

Tim Battle

### Secretary

Jeanne Spital

### Treasurer

Doug Orth

## DIRECTORS

(serving through)

Cindy Augustyn '23

David Elkins '23

Bruce Hornik '23

Steve Rigl '23

John Sullivan '23

Tim Battle '24

Janine Burke '24

Corinne Kayal '24

Doug Orth '24

Neil Sosler '24

Jay Bashein '25

Alison McLaughlin '25

Javier Siu '25

Jeanne Spital '25

Ana Thompson '25

What a night! I have been to over 30

President's Parties – at the old rock house, Coral

Reef and Biscayne Bay Yacht Clubs, various

member homes and now, of course, at our new

building. The party this past Saturday blew them

all away. The use of the Macy Court was a stroke

of genius, and made the whole party scene just flow. The decorations were

beautiful (who would have thought of putting filters on the court lights?!?!), the

music was great, the food was fabulous and we had entertainment – Hawaiian

dancers! Sharon J. and Suzanne made desserts that were to die for. I cannot

thank the entertainment committee enough -Marla Ferreira, Sharon Johnnides,

Monique Rosenthal and Suzanne Wallach. Thank you also to all volunteers who

stepped up to help. Stephanie got a baptism of fire with this, her first President's

Party, but pulled it off wonderfully.

Another shout out to our pro shop who handled the reservations and helped out

when needed and maintenance staff who worked non-stop for a few days to get

everything set up.



Thanks to Eric for his nice speech introducing me. I confess to paying him to say nice things.

A few thoughts...My gift was a tennis racquet and tennis lessons. Does this mean that my tennis deficiencies are that noticeable? I was also not happy with the comments from several of the attendees that I should take dancing lessons. I sacrificed my body to hula that night, so perhaps next year the Club can give me two hip replacements as my farewell gift. Also, I am extremely happy that Marla wanted to know what theme I wanted for the party and I said luau because I had watched NCIS Hawaii the night before. It was a fabulous theme, but I can't help but wonder if I had watched 'Magic Mike' the night before. I think a pole in the middle of the Macy Court would have been problematic...

Now for the bad news and the worst news. Bad news – I am going to be president again (the board elected me, I swear. It was not a coup). Worst news – Andy is still Immediate Past President, which means I have to continue working with him. Why am I being punished?!?! My dancing? My tennis? Why????

Welcome to the new board members: Jay Bashein, Allison McLaughlin, Javier Siu, Jeanne Spital and Ana Thompson. A sad farewell to Bruce Koniver, Robert Rubin and Marla Ferreira, who have been outstanding board members who did so much for the Club. You will be sorely missed.

Now starts a very busy period – getting committees organized and working on goals for this year and the future. Fencing will be starting soon and there is a lot of interest in getting more new lights. The Master Plan will be very intense this year, as we deal with the Village of Pinecrets to get it approved. If all goes well, we can hopefully break ground on more improvements. Our future awaits.

See you on the courts (I am the one with the bad hips)

**Joan**



# HISTORY



After this past weekend's party, I thought it would be interesting to talk about past President's parties. The first party (it was actually called the Presidents Ball) was held in 1965, as a black tie event at the old Dupont Plaza. The Dupont Plaza was a very high end and bustling event venue at the time. The Miami Herald covered the event (Miami was a small town back then!). The cost was \$10 per person.

The first parties were a resounding success, so for several years, the black tie events were held either at the Dupont Plaza or the Sheraton Four Ambassadors. By 1969, the price had gone all the way up to \$12.50 per person excluding beverages.

Eventually, the 'ball' morphed into 'party' and for many years, parties were held at member's homes. In those days, quite a few members lived in-what-was-to-become-Pinecrest in sprawling ranch homes on acre lots, so it worked well. As attendance rose, (and the hosts' bathrooms backed up!), the event went off site again – to Coral Reef Yacht Club, Biscayne Bay Yacht Club and other venues – even the old rock house. When the new club house was built, all Presidents Parties could be accommodated for the future, which keeps members happy!



**ROYAL PALM** Tennis Club members trade their racquets for black ties to attend the club's President's Banquet at the Dupont Plaza Hotel. Incoming president Bill Miller, right, nets a laugh from his wife Yolanda, shown with Mary Belle and Ike Macy, the outgoing president.

## **RPTC UPDATE**

Part of the Board's focus over the past couple of years has been to begin modernizing all sorts of operational aspects here at RPTC. Although we had been successfully doing things the same way for many years, some of these practices were down right antiquated. So, for example, we implemented credit cards and are currently bringing club operations software on-line. We are also in the process of modernizing our employment practices and policies which, among other things, keeps RPTC competitive in the market.

As part of that modernization, I am very happy to announce that we have signed tennis director Eric Hechtman to a long term contract. Although Eric did have an existing contract, it was more like jottings on a cocktail napkin compared to the state of the art contract we have negotiated. Huge thanks to Alan Rosenthal and Robert Rubin (and Eric) for getting this accomplished. Eric does a great job managing our terrific staff of pros, and has brought great publicity and business to the Club through his coaching of the Williams sisters. Eric even showed off his master of ceremonies "skills" at the President's Party. And his long running tennis academy and pro services operation not only gives us high level junior tennis to enjoy watching on our courts and great instruction for our members, but it also has allowed us to keep dues relatively low compared to the market. The club continues to make money on every lesson and clinic taught on our courts, which provides a major positive impact on the overall revenues from the club's operations.

As part of the new contract, Eric's academy now has an official name: The Eric Hechtman Tennis Academy at Royal Palm Tennis Club. The Academy will continue to operate as it always has; only the name has changed. To be clear (and to squash a rumor I heard), the Academy is not taking two courts out of circulation for the members. Pro services is staying the same (other than hopefully constantly improving).

Onward!

# 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jay Bashein '25

Alison McLaughlin '25

Javier Siu '25

Jeanne Spital '25

Ana Thompson '25

Tim Battle '24

Janine Burke '24

Corinne Kayal '24

Doug Orth '24

Neil Sosler ' 24

Cindy Augustyn ' 23

David Elkins '23

Bruce Hornik '23

Steve Rigl '23

Joan Sanz '23

John Sullivan '23



## **Officers:**

President - Joan Sanz

Vice President - Tim Battle

Secretary - Jeanne Spital

Treasurer - Doug Orth

Kids Match Day—February 4th & 18

Club Championship—March 11

Day Lights Saving—March 12





With everyone raving about the chocolate dessert from the Presidents party and many members asking for the recipe, Suzanne Wallach was kind enough to share the original recipe from Rita Baker for all to enjoy.

Thank you Suzanne!

## RITA BAKER'S CHOCOLATE MACADAMIA NUT DREAM TORTE

**CRUST:** 2 cups finely crushed Nabisco chocolate wafer cookies or you can substitute whole crushed Oreos for the filling  
6 tablespoons melted butter

Cover bottom and sides of springform with aluminum foil. Combine together and pat ingredients firmly on the bottom of the ungreased 9 inch springform pan. You can use a 10 inch springform, only the torte will not be as high. Preheat oven to 350 and continue with next layer

### **MIDDLE:**

**1st Layer:** 7 oz saltless macadamia nuts halved. If salted wipe off salt with dry paper towel. Place nuts on top of crust.  
{Planters low salt peanuts in a can is a substitute if someone is allergic to nuts (peanuts are legumes) or cost is a factor}

**2nd Layer:** 2 sticks + 5 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1 Cup firmly packed light brown sugar  
Combine butter and brown sugar in a sauce pan over medium heat until boiling ( a minute and a half). Pour this mixture over crust and nuts. Bake for 12-15 minutes until bubbly and light brown. **DO NOT LET EDGES GET TOO BROWN** as it will taste burnt! Watch carefully after 12 minutes. Remove from oven to rack to cool.

**3rd Layer:** 11 oz cream cheese at room temperature  
1/4 cup light brown sugar  
3/4 cup confectioners sugar  
Use electric mixer to combine above ingredients. Spread over cooled layer, spreading the mixture on the top as smooth as possible. Refrigerate until hard, or overnight. Can be made a few days in advanced or frozen at this stage.

**4th Layer:** 1 Cup whipping cream  
8 oz semisweet chocolate chips  
t tsp vanilla  
Chocolate covered Carmel Balls from Fresh Market for garnish  
Scald cream in a sauce pan, add chocolate chips & vanilla. Stir until very smooth. Cool in refrigerator for 20 minutes. Prepare a flat serving plate or cardboard round. Cut four strips of wax paper to place on the round. Remove torte from pan and place on prepared serving plate. Pour glaze over top and down sides. Smooth sides with spatula. Place Chocolate Carmel balls all the way around the top edge of torte. Refrigerate. Keeps for several days. Good if you have a cake carrier to keep torte covered and fresh!

edited by: Suzanne Wallach



## PROS CORNER



February is “peak season” at Royal Palm for competition. We have multiple leagues and the club championships. Competition and especially tournament competition is great for the mind as well as dealing with pressure during time constraints. Myself, I miss playing in tournaments but relish the moments coaching in the big moments.

Typically, when there is a tournament match; we sleep better, eat better, focus better, hydrate better and control our schedule better. Despite the better preparation there is still the fact that most of us perform better in practice than in a tournament. Why is that? Especially since our body and mind in theory are prepared better. “Cramming” in sports simply does not work. You need months or at least weeks of preparation to perform at your highest level. Elite professionals prepare everyday as if they are competing, so when they do compete they can achieve a higher level than practice because they are so ready in every aspect of life.

A poor performance in competition gives us a wakeup call and things to work on. Competition losses inspire us to train harder, change our ways, and compete more. Victories give us a sense of accomplishment for our hard work. All in all, competing teaches us, tames us and brings out passion in sport and in life.

Simply put there is nothing like competing! Enjoy your time out there in this years’ club championships.

– Eric