

A Brief History of Roadhaven Bocceball

In **2007** a group of residents were gathered to see if it was possible to build Bocce courts in the park. We were informed by the Rec Council and park management that first a club would have to be formed. We also had to find out if there was enough interest to go forward with creating a club and building courts. We had about 55 people when we organized.

The Rec Council asked us to solicit other clubs and organizations for money to help in the cost of the courts. The following groups helped us out: Pickle Ball, Bridge, Bingo, Little Theatre, Woodworkers, Computer Club, Fitness Club, Art Club and the Rec. council with the largest contribution of \$4,600. We were asked to have a fund raiser the next year but since we really did not have the courts yet or a well-organized club, we turned the council down at that time. Unknown to the club, the park manager and realtor felt this would be a good thing for the park, so they helped it all go through.

Wednesday, February 13, **2008**, we had our first official meeting. A club was created, a charter drawn up, and officers were elected for 3 year terms. Pres. Jim Klaseus, V.P. Dave Mickelson, *Secretary Diane Klaseus, and Treasurer Irene Dumka.*

The club voted \$5.00 dues to cover the first two years

In **2009** we had two leagues with 8 teams & 94 members, some of whom were on the roster from 2008, but actually not in the park in 2009. All 8 of our first year teams are still involved in some way in 2012. League 1 was the 6 Pak, Twinkies (now called Gophers), Kiowa Korner (2 members led the Scrappers this year), & the M & M Rollers. League 2 – OBs, Beetlebomb, Mugwumps and Min-Wis (now called MWOK) Our first park champions were the Beetlebomb. Don Butts volunteered to make 2 trophies and the club decided that the cups would remain in the park and new names would be added to the trophies like the Stanley Cup in hockey. We also started open rolling on Tuesday mornings for women and Thursday afternoons for men.

In **2010** we had 3 leagues with 12 teams, again with a few teams still short of players. In our tournament we had 3 divisions of 4 teams in each. We had regular matches on Mon. and Wed. The M & M Rollers came out on top that year. The charter was amended in 2010 so that an orderly change in leadership would take place. It was decided that each year a new V.P. would be elected and then would move to Pres. the next year and then to consultant the third year. Roger Haines was elected to the presidency for 2011 and Carl Thoutt to V.P. Bette Hammond was elected to a 3 yr. Term as secretary. Health reasons forced Irene Dumka to give up the treasurer's position and Joanne Park agreed to accept that position for 3 years.

In **2011** we had 5 leagues with 20 teams. We had about 135 rollers. League play was expanded to Mon., Tue. and Wed. In our tournament we had two, 8-team brackets, and one 4-team bracket. The championship was won by the Holy Rollers. The club created a new position called Statistician (would be in charge of setting up and keeping track of league play and set up the tournament each year). Jim Klaseus agreed to take on this position for an indefinite term. Roger Haines took charge of the court playing surface and acquired a roller near the end of 2010 and put into use for the season, which has really helped in creating a better playing surface. Also, Roger and Chuck Robinson picked up and fixed old benches from the golf course so we have more seating available. The larger rocks were sifted out as well. Ron Kirchner was elected V.P. For 2012.

2012 saw an even larger growth in players. We had 24 teams with most teams having 6 and even 8 players to a team. All in all, we had 165 rollers this year. We played 2 shifts on Mon., Tue. & Wed. The tournament was made up of 3 brackets of 8 teams and the MWOK won the park championship. Larry Moe was elected Vice President for 2013. In the middle of the season, Carl thought we should add water before dragging and rolling. This was another big improvement. After play in late March a group led by Carl Thoutt, Ray Kirchner & Roger Haines, with 6 other able helpers, leveled the courts so the ball would not tail off to low spots. You know, in 2013 we may not have any excuses left as to why we didn't hit the pallino.

2013 saw another large group of new members. We had 203 members and 32 teams which resulted in league play 4 days a week. (8 leagues). We had a 32 team tournament with first round losers moving into a consolation bracket. Midwest Rollers were consolation winners. In the Championship bracket the 6 Pak were second and the M & M Rollers were the park champions. Ron Kirchner was able to get support from the Rec. Council and a new storage shed was built. Ron K. researched various types of courts and their costs. He also researched a new bocce mix for the court and put in place a plan to resurface in the fall. Phil Hall will be V.P. next year with Patty Oblander taking over as club secretary. Joanne Park has agreed to stay on as Treasurer for at least 3 years. During the summer of 2013 the park had a major flood which really ruined the courts so Ron's plan for a new surface came to the rescue. With a donation of \$800.00 from the Square and Compass club and money in the treasury, the new bocce mix surface was added to the courts after all the mud from the flood was removed by a crew headed by Ron Kirchner, Butch Blakstvedt & Don Weese. "The crew" purchased and modified a skreeter, improved the drag, fixed the benches and installed a drain system in the courts.

2014: Larry Moe was our president. During the 2014 season we had 32 teams again with 218 members. A sub system was set up as well. Larry led the club in its first fund raiser. (Kenny Miller) After expenses the club cleared \$2,976. The club also donated \$250 to the chair project. During the tournament the Midwest Rollers were park champions with the Funky Monkeys second and the OBs were consolation champs. Joanne Park was given the President's Award. She has done a great job of getting teams organized so play can begin in Jan. Jim Hansen was elected Vice President for next year. A new committee to take care of the facilities was created with "the crew" of Ron, Butch and Don agreeing to stay on board. The new surface was fantastic and the "crew" worked very hard all year to keep it that way. The new surface led to some very good rolling by members.

2015: Pres. Phil Hall; V.P. Jim Hansen; Sec. Patty Oblander; Treas. Joanne Park; Ex. Pres. Larry Moe. Ginny Hansen was in charge of Subs. (great work Ginny) The club grew again this year to 36 teams and subs. 247 paid and active members. We had 9 leagues and at the end of league play a 32 team tournament and a 4 team round robin contest. The Vigilantes were the park champions, the Funky Monkeys took second with Ralf's Rollers winning the consolation round for third. Jerry's Crew won the round robin. A competition committee was established this year to help with scheduling, refereeing, set up and running the league and tournament games. Dave Carey, Paul Murawski and Dick Yeske worked with Jim Klaseus. Joanne Park was also a major player in all of the scheduling. The maintenance crew was really busy this year. Besides the great job of getting the courts ready to play every day during the season the following projects were completed: A paver walkway and wall were built next to court 1. The work crew headed by Ron Kirchner included Don Weese, Jim Zimmerman, Frank and Vicki Eggelston, Ken Horstman and Paul Murawski. Their 3 days of hard labor saved the club and HOA \$1,225. Two steps are being completed in April at the west end of the courts. The bulletin board was built by Ray and Ron Kirchner with help from Jim Z., Paul M. and Frank E. Umbrellas were purchased and installed by Phil Hall and Jim Klaseus. Ron put out a call for help repainting the courts. Ron K. and Jim Z. led the painting crew of Dick Yeske, Jim and Patty Oblander, Garrett Conover and Jim Klaseus. Courts look brand new! The Margaritas led by Sue Radloff did a great job with our fund raiser this year. It was successful and at the end of the season the club voted to give \$500 to the golf club for awnings over the patio at the Green Room. Rock Bridges will be our new V.P. next year and Larry Moe will retire as Ex. Pres. Patty Oblander is stepping down as Sec. and her place will be taken by Sue Schemper.

2016 Highlights. Membership increased to 271 people on 41 teams playing in 10 leagues. The Midwest Rollers won the park championship. The Nuts and Bolts came in 2nd and the Incredibles won the consolation championship. Ron Kirchner, with help from Bruce Nagle and others, made an outstanding presentation to the HOA to build 2 more courts. Work will begin in April with the cement work, and Ron and his crew will finish them up in the fall. The club voted an increase in dues to \$15 which should help to pay off the courts. Our 3 year presidency had Jim Hanson as lead, Phil Hall as adviser and Rock Bridges V.P. Sue Shemper was Sec. & Joanne Park as Treasurer & team and membership coordinator. Lee Wright was elected to V.P. for next year.

2017 saw some major changes in our program. In the fall, Ron Kirchner with his crew of Jim Zimmerman, Butch Blakstvedt, Paul Murawski and Al Kiecker, with help from others in the park, built two new courts, laid pavers between courts 2 & 3, put up 8 more umbrella stands, built 8 new benches and repaired the old ones. With more courts our membership increased to 369 rollers on 56 teams in 9 leagues. The park tournament was won by Purple Reign with Team Margo a close second. The consolation championship went to Jerry's Crew. Health issues sidelined Joanne Park this year so Walt Schulz came to the rescue, and with help from Joanne via long distance, handled the registrar's and treasurer's jobs very well. Walt has agreed to stay on as registrar in 2018. Marilyn Eekhoff was elected to the Treasurer's position for the next 3 years. Susan Tharp was elected the V.P. with Lee Wright moving to President and Rock Bridges to Pres. Advisor. Well done this year Rock. Jim Hanson will be retiring from the presidency.

A BIG THANK YOU to the Kirchner gang for all their hard work and to Walt S. for a job very well done.

In **2018** the club had 427 rollers in 64 teams and 9 leagues. Jim Zimmerman started a fall session to introduce Bocce to more people. The maintenance crew of Ron K., Jim Z., Butch B., Paul M., Al K. added pavers on the East and North sides of the courts. The club purchased 60 chairs, laser measuring devices and a blower to keep the pine needles off the courts and hill side. Lines were added to the sides of the courts to help with bank shots. The club tournament was well attended with over 150 spectators enjoying the finals. First place Whizz Bangers, 2nd Jerry's Crew, 3rd Funky Monkeys, and 4th Forget Me Nots. Lee Wright was our club Pres., Susan Tharp V.P. and Rock Bridges past pres. and will be leaving the board. Dave Carey was voted V.P. for next year. Ginny Hanson handles the subs and was voted to a board position. All other officers remain in their board positions for next year.

2019 was our 10th year of competition. There were 71 teams with 471 rollers plus 15 subs. There were 9 leagues. League winners: #1 Walleyes; #2 Purple Reign; #3 Incrediballs; #4 Sundogs; #5 Rookies; #6 Spare Parts; #7 Jerry's Crew; #8 Misfits and #9 M & M Rollers. This was the first time we had a rain cancellation during the tournament. The Fun Lovers won the tournament followed by the M & Ms in 2nd, Rookies in 3rd and El Lobos taking 4th. Through all the rain days this year the courts were kept in great playing condition by our outstanding maintenance crew led by Ron Kirchner including Jim Zimmerman, Paul Murawski, Bryce Motley, and Dick Yeske. League Secretaries/refs Paul Murawski, Dick Yeske, Jerry Nelson, Mick Walker, & Jim Klaseus kept the scoring and records plus helping if and when problems arose. We had a successful fund raiser this year led by John & Sharon Stroeing, Jim & Joan Rodberg, Gary Moe & Patty Oblander. This helped pay for the second shed and the tiling of courts 1 & 2. A 12 man crew put in a couple of hot, hard days to accomplish this. Ron Kirchner, Jim Zimmerman, Paul Murawski, Dick Yeske, Chris Orley, Chris Warranty, Fran Hamlin, Neil Ranum, George Wallenberg, Jim Hanson, Doug Beatty, & Mick Walker. Officers this year were: Pres. Susan Tharp; V.P. Brian Zimmerman; Pres. Emeritus Rock Bridges; Sec. Sandy Magnan; Treasurer Marilyn Eekhoff; Registrar Walt Schulz; Ass't registrar & scheduling coordinator Joanne Park; Maintenance Ron Kirchner; Competition & Scheduling Jim Klaseus; Sub Sec. Ginny Hanson; Women's Tuesday mornings Diane Klaseus. We had a very successful year. Lights are coming.

2020: The high and low season. We had 10 leagues with 78 teams & 525 rollers plus 10 subs. League winners: #1 Walleyes; #2 Purple Reign; #3 Just for Fun; #4 Mission: I'm bocce; #5 Motley Crew; #6 Hoppers; #7 Whiz Bangers; #8 Misfits; #9 Six Pak; #10 Crazy Canucks. The season ended abruptly in the middle of the tournament with a major rain delay and then Covid-19. Top seeds were the Whiz Bangers, undefeated in league play, and the Six Pak.

Once again our outstanding maintenance crew of Ron Kirchner, Jim Zimmerman, Paul Murawski, Bryce Motley, Dick Yeske, Ron Emter & Rich Sims kept the courts in great playing condition resulting in outstanding rolling all season. An expanded group of secretaries/refs helped to keep track of league scores and play. Dick Yeske, Jerry Nelson, Paul Murawski, Barry Baumgardner, Rich Sims, Mick Walker, Jim Zimmerman & Jim Klaseus. A successful fund raiser was led by John and Sharon Stroeing, Jim and Joan Rodberg, Gary and Iris Moe and Patty Oblander. This helped pay for the new lights which were installed on courts 3 and 4 by Ron

Kirchner, Jim Zimmerman, Paul Murawski and a group of volunteers before the season began. Lights for courts 1 and 2 will be installed before the 2021 season. (if covid-19 allows) The maintenance crew with more volunteer help also refinished the court walls. Due to health issues for Lee and the unexpected passing of incoming VP Dave Carey many officers agreed to stay on the board from 2019. Thank you to returning Board members President, Susan Tharp; Past President, Rock Bridges; Vice President, Brian Zimmerman; Secretary, Sandy Magnan; Treasurer, Marilyn Eekhoff; Registrar, Walt Schultz; Maintenance, Ron Kirchner; Scheduling & Tournament, Jim Klaseus; Substitute Players, Ginny Hanson; and Advisor, Joanne Park- you were great!!! There will be some major changes coming on the board in 2021. Diane Klaseus will retire from the Women's Tuesday Morning leadership position. Leaving the board at the end of this year were Rock Bridges, Walt Schulz and Jim Klaseus.

2021: The COVID pandemic is still raging. Masks were required along with social distancing for players and spectators during league play along with sanitizing of all equipment after each match.

Because of health concerns associated with the pandemic, many residents were not able to spend their winters here at Roadhaven which greatly impacted the number of people playing Bocce Ball. We had 46 teams participating in 6 Leagues this season for a total of 286 members. The schedule changed to have 2 leagues on Monday and 1 league each day Tuesday thru Friday. The League Winners were: League 1- Oldies, League 2 – Chewbocce, League 3- Havapalinas, League 5- Motley Crew, League 7- Whiz Bangers, League 9- M&M Rollers. The tournament winners were: #1 Motley Crew, #2 Big Lake Hornets, #3 Purple Reign, #4 Team Margo, #5 The Hoppers, #6 O-B's. The winners received gift certificates at the Cantina Restaurant in the Park.

The Board submitted for vote of the membership whether the membership fee for the Bocce Ball Club should be reduced from the current rate of \$15 per person to \$10 per person. This reduction was overwhelmingly approved. The Board will also explore again hosting a fundraiser in the next season. Due to COVID restrictions, no large events were allowed this season.

The maintenance crew, Paul Murawski, Jim Zimmerman, Dick Yeske and Rich Sims did an outstanding job keeping up the courts and successfully had lights on Courts 1 & 2 installed. The refs this season- Jerry Nelson, Paul Murawski, Dick Yeske, Rich Sims and Mick Walker- were rock stars as they fulfilled their normal duties recording scores and providing information during matches while also having to assure players and spectators were following all the COVID protocols. The Officers for the 2021 season were: President, Brian Zimmerman; Past President, Susan Tharp; Vice President, Joe Brinn; Secretary, Claudia Mescher; Treasurer, Marilyn Eekhoff; Registrar, Sandy Magnan; Maintenance, Ron Kirchner; Scheduling, Sandy Magnan; Tournament, Brian Zimmerman; Substitute Players, Ginny Hanson; and Advisor, Joanne Park. Current Board members have initially agreed to serve again in the 2022 season with Jerry Nelson stepping up to take Scheduling and Tournament and also has agreed to be the Bocce Ball Historian. Thank you Jerry and great thanks to all those Board members agreeing to continue!

2022: Bocce had 514 members over 9 Leagues. There weren't enough teams for League 10, so two new teams played unofficially in the League 10 slot each week. The Bocce Club donated \$1,000 to Roadhaven Scholarship. The Club Officers were: President, Brian Zimmerman; Past President, Susan Tharp; Vice President, Rich Sims; Secretary, Claudia Mescher; Treasurer, Marilyn Eekhoff; Registrar, Sandy Magnan; Sub Coordinator, Ginny Hanson. The League winners were: League 1- The X Team, League 2- Chewbocce, League 3- Big Lake Hornets, League 4- Fun Lovers, League 5- Purple Reign, League 6- Hoppers, League 7- Whiz Bangers, League 8- Goof Balls, League 9- Wrecking Balls. The League tournament winners were: #1 Whiz Bangers, #2 Purple Reign, #3 Bocce Bosses, #4 Ralf's Rollers. The winners were celebrated at the banquet held at a new venue this year – Barleen's. A venue organized by Vice President Joe Dorner. The refs this season were Jerry Nelson, Paul Murawski, Rich Sims, Dick Yeske, and Barry Baumgardner. The maintenance crew included Paul Murawski, Jim Zimmerman, Dick Yeske, Rich Sims, Bryce Motley, Barry Baumgardner, and Ron Emter. The fundraiser organizers were John & Sharon Stroeing, Jim & Joan Rodberg, Gary Moe, and Patty Oblander.

2023: Bocce had 542 members and 80 teams over 10 Leagues. This is the first season where laser measures were purchased and put into use for league games. The Officers were: President, David Birchill; Past President, Brian Zimmerman; Vice President, Joe Dorner; Secretary, Claudia Mescher; Treasurer, Marilyn Eekhoff; Registrar, Sandy Magnan; Sub Coordinator, Roberta Dorner. There was \$1,500 donated to Roadhaven Scholarship. The League winners were: League 1- GG Stringers, League 2- Coyotes, League 3- Roly Poly, League 4- Fun Lovers, League 5- Purple Reign, League 6- Northern Lights, League 7- Golden Rollers, League 8- Scramblers, League 9- Geckos, League 10- Avengers. The tournament winners were: #1 Team Margo, #2 Purple Reign, #3 How We Roll, #4 Bone Shakers. The refs this season were Rich Sims, Paul Murawski, Jerry Christians, Gary Korpi, Dick Yeske, and Barry Baumgardner. The maintenance crew included Paul Murawski, Jim Zimmerman. The fundraiser organizers were John & Sharon Stroeing, Jim & Joan Rodberg, and Gary Moe.

2024: What a season of rainouts! The courts were flooded many times and one week's play was removed from the actual scoring schedule with only one day (two leagues) in 2nd week where conditions allowed play. There were 547 members on 80 teams over 10 Leagues. The Bocce Club also purchased new bocce balls and pallinos and painted the baseboards below the benches on the "green side" green to make it easier to send the balls back to the right set of benches. The Bocce Board also determined the bocce league fee would be increased from \$10 per player to \$15 per player for the 2025 season to accumulate needed future funds in our 5 year plan to replace the outdoor lights for night play. A plaque for the names of all winners for Bocce Ball Seasons was purchased in January 2024. Location of this plaque is being researched and will be determined next season. The Officers were: President, David Birchill; Vice President, Joe Dorner; Secretary, Donna Wagner; Treasurer, Marilyn Eekhoff; Registrar, Sandy Magnan; Sub Coordinator, Roberta Dorner; Scheduling and Tournament, Rich Sims. The League winners were: League 1- OB's, League 2- How We Roll, League 3- Big Lake Hornets, League 4- Fun Lovers, League 5- Purple Reign, League 6- Bocce Bears, League 7- Whiz Bangers, League 8- Silver Streak, League 9- Six Shooters, League 10- Roaming Buffaloes. The tournament winners were determined by points scored in the season due to numerous rainouts and no actual tournament: #1 Whiz Bangers, #2 How We Roll, #3 Roaming Buffaloes. The refs this season were Rich Sims, Paul Murawski, Jerry Christians, Gary Korpi, Dick Yeske, and Barry Baumgardner. The maintenance crew include Paul Murawski, Jim Zimmerman, and Ron Kirchner. The fundraiser organizers were John & Sharon Stroeing, Jim & Joan Rodberg, and Gary Moe

2025: Lights for the courts to facilitate night play, were ordered at a cost of \$14,100 and expect to be installed over the summer. The Officers were: President, David Birchill; Vice President, Rich Sims; Secretary, Donna Wagner; Treasurer, Marilyn Eekhoff; Registrar, Sandy Magnan; Sub Coordinator, Roberta Dorner; Scheduling and Tournament, Rich Sims. A Survey was submitted to the membership to find preference for the band that will be used in the 2027 fundraiser dance. A task force was also created to make a recommendation to the Executive Committee as to the tournament format to use in the 2025-26 season.