

Nor-Cal News & Views

Northern California Horseshoe Pitchers Association website address is: <http://www.nchpa.com>

President:

First I'd like to thank everyone for their patience and support during our transition. I also thank Andrew Ryan and George Davis for stepping into our open positions as 2nd VP and 5th VP. They have been very good additions to our board. Thank all of you for welcoming them and giving them your support.

The State tournament went very smoothly this year, Thank you to the SCHPA officers for the beautiful weather, it was a very good tournament and now next year it is our turn. We are looking forward to hosting SCHPA on our home courts for a great competition. We can only hope for that beautiful weather and turnout.

Please make a note on your calendar – we have had to change the Annual meeting back to the **12th of November** due to circumstances beyond our control. Therefore we have made the decision not to force Tri-Valley to cancel their tournament and to have the meeting and dinner held in Pleasanton immediately following pitching. Tri-Valley has said they will pitch 30 shoe games to keep the tournament moving and get finished as early as possible. We are working on dinner arrangements and will announce final decisions and costs in an email to you.

I recently sent the following email to the NHPA council:

The President and Northern CA Officers have approved by unanimous vote, Casey Sluys as the NHPA Regional Director for the NCHPA Charter. Casey has spent many years as a National and Northern officer and makes decision in the best interest of both our Charter and the NHPA. We ask you to approve our choice quickly as we are without an RD at this time and do not want to remain that way.

The following is the reply I received from NHPA President Stu Sipma.

The NHPA approves of having Casey Sluys be appointed the Regional Director for Northern California. Thank You, Stu

Officers up for election this year are as follows: President, 2ND VP 4TH VP and 5th VP. I have decided to run to retain the position of President, Andrew Ryan will run to continue as 2nd VP and George Davis will run to remain as 5th VP. We feel we have a board that will work hard to do what is good for our organization.

Let's pitch shoes. **Joe Summers**

Secretary/Treasurer:

The team tournament entries are set to close on October 14th (postmarked) and the tournament itself is to be held on the 22nd & 23rd of October. Please get your team together 4 members from any club, and send in your completed entry form. The printed schedule only shows the 22nd but depending on the number of teams signed up it could be a two day tournament. We are hoping to have enough teams (24 would be great) to have the two day tournament with the first day being the qualifying to make the final 8 teams to vie for the Championship title. That has always been so much fun. If we don't get enough teams we may have to cancel or make it a regular tournament. Think about this tournament so when we have the annual meeting we can talk about changes, maybe make it a doubles or hear your ideas of what you would like to see happen with it. Thanks, **Gail Sluys**

2nd VP:

I am still learning the ropes so everyone please bear with me! I was brought onto the board as 2nd VP only a few short months ago by our former President Ms. Kauffman. At the time I was not quite sure what exactly I was getting myself into, which is typical for volunteer work! One thing I learned quickly is that the NCHPA Board members put a lot of time, hard work and personal effort into keeping this organization going. It has been a great pleasure getting to know all the current and former Board Members and being able to work with them. I recently submitted my bid for re-election to the new President Joe Summers and hopefully I will be able to stay active in helping out anyway I can. I am hoping in the near future we can begin a strong push on Promoting Junior and Cadet Pitchers, possibly acquiring sponsorships/donations (to help raise prize money of course!), as well as trying to find a way to integrate non-sanctioned Leagues and local tournaments under the umbrella of NCHPA and the NHPA. I really believe Promoting the Sport in a positive manner and getting the word out there about all of our tournaments will greatly increase our membership, quality of play and competition. I would really like to encourage anyone who feels the urge to volunteer to step forward and throw your hat in the ring! New views and ideas are always a great thing, and a helping hand is never a burden! Hope to see everyone at the Norcal Championships and the Annual Dinner! Thanks,
Andrew Ryan .

3rd VP:

Wow, talk about a couple of busy months, July it was the world horseshoe tournament in Montgomery, Alabama. After a successful tournament and attending the general meeting as a delegate, it was a week of touring South Carolina and Georgia. After a couple of weeks of settling in back home, and getting the yard back in shape, it's off to San Diego for the California State Championships. We had an exceptional turnout at state. We took four extra days and toured Warner Brother's studio and spent two days at Universal Studios.

Really enjoy these tournaments, it gives Maddie and I, a chance to vacation in different states.

The results of the voting at the World Tournament went this way; Florence South Carolina won the bid to host the 2017 World Tournament. The election for office was won by Gary Roberts of Ohio. Gary is a life-time member of the NHPA and has 45 years of promotional experience. Gary should be a good person to fill that office.

Now, we have the Northern California championship to prepare for in Santa Rosa this October 1st and 2nd. After that we have our general meeting in Tri-Valley in November. It looks like we still have some busy months ahead.

And lastly a reminder, club contacts; score sheet are still 500 for \$40.00, and RR cards are \$12.00.

Good pitching, **John Barney.**

4th VP:

Delegates, are you ready? The Annual meeting is to be held on November 12th this year. Two issues on the agenda: 2017 SCHEDULE and By-Laws amendments.

2017 SCHEDULE: To date, I have received 2017 dates from: Feather River, Fortuna, Half Moon Bay, Madera, Sacramento, Sonoma County, Tri-Valley, Tuolumne, Ukiah Valley, Vallejo and Shasta/Willows. That's 11 of the 22 clubs in NCHPA. All 2017 tournament dates were due on or before September 1, 2016! Please, send those dates in so I can have the tentative schedule ready for our Annual meeting.

BY-LAWS AMENDMENTS:

The following submissions for by-laws amendments and additions have been received and will be voted on at the annual meeting.

- 1) Article V: Officers, Section 2. Duties of Officers
c. The Secretary Treasurer shall:
7. keep minutes of all regular and special meetings and E.C. Meetings and distribute to all clubs within 15 days of all said meetings
REASON: for this change is to keep the NCHPA members informed. All words underlined are the changes. *Submitted by, Linda Hoelscher, Shasta/Willows*

- 2) Article V: Officers, Section 1, b. A First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Vice-President.
Change to read:
b. A First, Second, Third and Fourth Vice-President.

- 3) Article V: Officers, Section 6. Terms of Office, b. The President, the 2nd, 4th and 5th Vice-Presidents shall be elected in even numbered years.
Change to read:
b. The President, the 2nd, and 4th Vice-Presidents shall be elected in even numbered years.
REASON: Eliminates the 5th VP position as our membership has shrunk over the past 10 years, fewer officers can accomplish the same tasks.

- 4) Article V: Officers, Section 2. Duties of Officers
b. The Vice-Presidents shall:
Change: Add -
3. In the event that a VP needs to assume the office of president he/she does not need to vacate their current position until such a time when the presidency becomes an elected position during the next cycle of elections. In this case the 30-day rule to replace an office will not apply.
REASON: The VP taking the President's position may not want the president's job after their interim term expires. Thereby allowing that VP to slide back into their previous position.

- 5) Article VIII: Special Tournaments,

Section 2: Team Tournament

1. a. This will be a 2-day event with the top 8 teams advancing to the 2nd day finals.
- b. Teams may be mixed and must have 4 players. Each team may register one alternate player to be used in case of injury to an original player.
- c. All players must be NCHPA members and be a member or associate member of the club they represent.
- d. All team members must wear appropriate shirts of the club they represent.
- e. Tournament play will consist of 7 – 30 shoe count-all games at 80% handicap for qualifying rounds. The finals will be 7–40 shoe count-all games at 80% handicap. The finals will have 20 bonus points for each player win plus 40 bonus points to teams winning 3 or more games in a single round.
- f. Prize money will be determined by number of entries.
- g. The E.C. shall determine the entry closing date and other pertinent details of the tournament, which shall be listed in a flyer, the newsletter and/or the website.

ELIMINATE THIS ENTIRE SECTION.

REASON: The team tournament has become difficult to fill. This event could be reconstituted some time in the future when adequate interest is shown.

- 6) Article VI: Charter Clubs, Section 11. A club shall be entitled to voting delegates at the annual meeting based upon the current year's NHPA/NCHPA adult membership as of October 1st, as follows:
 - 6 - 20 members 1 delegate
 - 21 - 40 members 2 delegates
 - 41 - 60 members 3 delegates
 - 61 - 80 members 4 delegates
 - 81 - 100 members 5 delegates

Further expansion of the above will continue in increments of 1 additional delegate for each additional 20 members.

Change to read:

- 6 - 15 members 1 delegate
- 16-30 members 2 delegates
- 31-45 members 3 delegates
- 46-60 members 4 delegates
- Further expansion of the above will continue in increments of 1 additional delegate for each additional 10 members.

REASON: With the shrinking total membership this will allow clubs to have more representation and might encourage more participation at the annual meeting.

7) STANDING RULES -

11. The NCHPA will provide, at no cost to Clubs, plaques to be given as awards in sanctioned tournaments.

Change to read: The NCHPA will provide 2 free plaques per calendar year to each club. Additional plaques are available from NCHPA officers at a cost of

\$20 each. Plaques are to be given as awards in sanctioned tournaments.

14. The NCHPA shall receive 100% of entry fees and shall assume all the tournament expenses for NCHPA sponsored tournaments. (State, Team, NCHPA Championships)

CHANGE to take out the word *Team*
Items #2 through 7 above submitted by Casey Sluys, Sonoma County

8) Article VI: Charter Clubs, Section 2, Any club may apply for a Charter by sending an application to the Secretary-Treasurer. The application must include current dues and names addresses and phone numbers of **ten** members. It must also provide the names, etc. of 3 Club officers consisting of a President, Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer.

Change to read:

Any club may apply for a Charter by sending an application to the Secretary-Treasurer. The application must include current dues and names addresses and phone numbers of **six (6)** members. It must also provide the names, etc. of 3 Club officers consisting of a President, Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer.

REASON: Existing clubs in Article VI, Section 4 are required to have a minimum of six(6) and this makes it consistent and less difficult for new clubs to form.

Submitted by Lorena Tournour, Ukiah Valley

Suggested NEW by-laws:

- 1) All elected or appointed NCHPA officers shall have been a member of the NCHPA, in good standing, for at least 3 years prior to taking office.

REASON: Gives the member time to acquire knowledge of the workings of the NCHPA, have contact with the pitching membership. Have an understanding of the By-Laws and Rules.

- 2) NCHPA Officers shall be limited to only 3 consecutive terms on the Executive Board in any position. (no more than 6 years on board).

REASON: Prevents any officer from controlling the board, prevents nepotism, allows for new ideals, encourages different members to run for office.

- 3) The NCHPA financial records shall be audited every 6 years by an independent auditor at the expense of the NCHPA.

Respectfully submitted by, Sharon Paddock, Secretary/Treasurer, Fortuna Club

The above submissions appear exactly as I received them. Please discuss these with your membership so that your delegates will be prepared to voice your club's desires and vote accordingly. **Lorena Tournour**

5th VP:

I am now a member of the NCHPA Board, as 5th VP. Nicole Saunders recently stepped down, and I was asked to fill her spot. I look forward to serving Northern

California Horseshoes, and since this 5th VP spot is up for election at the Year-End Meeting at Tri-Valley, I hope to be formally elected to the position at that time. The position involves New Members & Recruitment, and I know this is a very pertinent topic for all clubs, both at the Charter and National level. We need to find out what our fastest growing clubs are doing to attract new members, and make plans to duplicate these successful efforts in all of our clubs. I think one of the main reasons new horseshoe pitchers lose interest and drop out is that they become discouraged by their lack of progress in the game. So it would be helpful to make efforts to be sure our new members have instructional material (which I think is lacking) so that their pitching skills and ringer percentage improves at a satisfactory rate. I think last year's plans for a "horseshoe clinic" was a good one (unfortunately rained out), and I think in addition to basic instruction on technique (how to throw the 1 -1/4 turn, the 1-3/4 turn, a reverse turn, the 3/4 turn from 30 ft., and how to throw a single or a double flip) it would be great to develop a "mentor" program where established pitchers took a new pitcher under his or her wing in order to help them to continue to advance and enjoy the sport.

In order to tell you a little about myself, I thought it might be interesting to tell you how I became interested and involved in horseshoe pitching. My story might be subtitled, "How Ottie Reno and Walter Ray Williams, Jr. changed my life" When my dad was a boy he lived in Covina, in Southern California near a park. He told stories of how he watched great horseshoe pitchers at the park, and how he himself was encouraged to pitch. He learned to turn the shoe from some of the pitchers he watched. I have read in some of the books on the NHPA website that Covina was a hot spot for horseshoe pitching in those days, the 1930's. I remember Dad pitching at family picnics on visits to Oregon. When I was about 10 or 11 years old, Dad hammered some stakes in our back yard in San Diego, and showed my brother and I how to pitch horseshoes. We had an old J.C. Higgins set from Sears. He set the stakes about 25 feet apart, and told me that serious horseshoe pitchers "turned the shoe" in order to make it go on the stake for a ringer. He showed me how to hold the shoe, and how to throw it so it rotated open at the stake. It was a time when my brother Steve and I were sports crazy. We spent hours playing catch and playing "pepper" with a baseball. We shot baskets at our basketball hoop endlessly. So horseshoes was another sport to learn, and to try to improve my skill. I was fascinated watching my dad throw the shoe so it slowly rotated, and settled around the stake for a ringer. What a great sound the shoe made when it hit the stake! I have wonderful memories using a shovel to loosen up the dirt around the stakes, and running to the opposite stake to brush the dirt away from the shoes to see if I had made a ringer.

But soon I became serious about baseball and football. Horseshoes became a forgotten memory. High school, college, marriage, dental school, career, Raising a Family; the years went by. Not long before moving to Northern California I was invited to a BBQ at the home of an old high school football teammate. My friend lived in

the country, and he had a horseshoe court. We had a great time pitching horseshoes, and that old thrill of throwing a ringer came pleasantly back from childhood. Golf had become my sport by that time, but I went out to a sporting goods store and bought a set of horseshoes and stakes within the next few days. I moved to Stockton to practice dentistry, and the horseshoes came along. Several moves occurred, I never had room in my yard for a horseshoe court, but I occasionally pounded a stake in the ground, and threw a few shoes at it. Almost ten years went by, but I never got rid of my horseshoes. I moved to a place on 5 acres in the country near Lockeford...I finally had room to have a horseshoe court.

I found a book in the Stockton Library, Pitching Championship Horseshoes, by Ottie Reno. I was fascinated by the book. Ottie Reno was a Judge from Ohio, and had been an Alabama State Horseshoe Champion. I had always known that horseshoe pitching was fun, but I had no idea it was such a serious and organized sport until I read Ottie's book. In the first pages of the book he wrote "Dedicated to the recognition of horseshoe pitching as a sport. This game is as American as banjo and is part and parcel of American history." I read about the history of horseshoe pitching, and about the founding of the NHPA. I read about the discovery of the "open shoe", and how it revolutionized the game previous to 1920. I smiled when I read the description of an open shoe as being one that landed "fork to" to the stake. The book described the exact layout of a court, and how the stake wasn't just pounded into the ground, but was driven into a block of solid oak...raised foul lines 1" high and 2 " wide were described... and instead of plain dirt or sand, the pit area should be filled with blue clay. This was a real sport...I could hardly wait to build a real horseshoe court. I read about champion horseshoe pitchers.....Ted Allen, Elmer Hohl, Curt Day, Carl Steinfeldt, and Don Titcomb...names I had never heard of. I read about the World Tournament held each year, where 36 of the best pitchers in the country gathered to pitch a 36-man round robin to determine the World Champion of Horseshoe Pitching. Who knew? Why hadn't an avid sports fan like myself ever heard of all of this? I read about how to throw ringers, and sure enough as my dad told me years earlier, Ottie advised that I should learn to turn the shoe if I wanted to be a serious pitcher.....to learn a 1-1/4 turn or a 1-3/4 turn. There was a picture of a young Jesse Gonzalez holding a shoe in a flip grip, with a caption that read that Jesse often bettered 80% throwing a flip shoe, but it was implied that that was a real rarity, and that one should turn the shoe. Years later when I had the honor of meeting Jesse, he told me that Jim Weeks, the 1959 California Champion told Jesse that he needed to learn to throw a turn, that he would never be a champion throwing a flip. Jesse tells the story with a gleam in his eye...knowing that in 1977 and 1985 Jesse became the California State Champion himself. I've been around World Champions Alan Francis, and Brian Simmons, and they don't elicit the crowd reaction that Jesse Gonzalez does...Jesse is the closest thing to a rock star that horseshoe pitching has to offer. Jesse walks around

followed by an entourage...what a great man...they told him he couldn't do it, but Jesse flipped his shoe, and became a champion, paving the way for great flip pitchers like Dan Watson, and Gary Bearpaw

After reading Ottie's book I had discovered that there was such a thing as a player's ringer percentage, and that there was a specific horseshoe scoresheet, and an exact method of keeping score in a game. I was exposed for the first time to horseshoe jargon like "two-dead-one," and the ultimate call of "four-dead". I learned that there were several models of professional style horseshoes. I was amazed to see that there was a formal rule book, and I was a little set back to read that there was no such thing as a leaner! I read that there were horseshoe clubs and organizations, and tournament schedules! All the States had Horseshoe Champions that went back decades, and there was a World Champion crowned each year! Great stuff!

I even read about a family of horseshoe pitchers in California....The Williams Family. The father Walter Ray, Sr. was the Secretary of the NHPA, mother Esther had been a California Women's Champion, and all nine of the Williams children played tournament horseshoes, including Walter Ray, Jr., and Jeffrey who were Junior World Champions at that point.

How could all of this been going on without my knowing about it? How could I get involved? Now Ottie's book was fairly dated so the contact for Northern California was listed as a Verdun Zelmar of Campbell. I sent off a letter of inquiry to Verdun at the given address, but was disappointed to receive the letter back in a few days marked "return to sender-no new address" There was another address given in the book for an Earl Winston in La Monte, Missouri who was 3rd VP of the NHPA, the national organization. I took a chance on Earl imagining him to be a solid horseshoe pitching farmer from the Midwest who had been on his land for generations. Sure enough I got a nice letter from Earl Winston, who is an NHPA Hall of Famer, who told me I lived "right down the road" from Walter Ray Williams, Jr. who was a World Champion Horseshoe Pitcher. Earl gave me the name of the current Norcal Secretary, Jerry Smith, who gave me the phone number of Stockton's long time President, and Secretary Joe and Millie Schultz. Millie was a sweetheart and invited me to a Stockton Tournament that was to be held within a few days. I went out to Louis Park where I found horseshoe courts that I never even knew existed. There were what seemed like dozens of horseshoe pitchers...and it was there that I first heard that great sound we all know as the familiar and unique sound of an ongoing horseshoe tournament...clank-clank, clank-clank...that cacophony of sound that is like a blacksmith's convention! As I stood near the courts taking it all in, the first person that noticed a newcomer and approached me was in typical character Casey Sluys. Casey invited me over to meet Joe and Millie Schultz, Stockton's legendary club leaders, and then I saw something that I will never forget... something that changed my life... I saw Walter Ray Williams, Jr. pitch a horseshoe! Now I had seen Tony Gwynn hit a baseball, and had witnessed Arnold

Palmer drive a golf ball, but Walter Ray pitching a horseshoe was one of the most beautiful athletic moves I had ever seen! Everything was fluid and grace. He took that shoe back higher than his head, a perfectly timed long stride started the shoe to descend on a perfect arc, he swooped up on his front foot, he released the shoe with a flourish, finishing in a pose fitting a Greek statue....and the shoe arced lazily, turning horizontally toward the far stake, the shoe opened perfectly to literally eat up the stake, making a sound not of the typical metal on metal clank, but the swishing sound of a sword being drawn from a scabbard, as the horseshoe sucked into the clay! Walter Ray launched the second shoe with the same fluid motion in an identical arc, the same lazy turn, and with the same deadly accuracy the shoe spun on the stake bouncing on top of the first shoe. Wow!! I had never seen anything like that! I wanted to do that myself! I wanted a little of that magic!

So I joined the Stockton Horseshoe Club, bought a pair of Deadeye Clydesdale shoes (like Walter Ray used), and set about learning to throw a 1-1/4 turn. I had to work on practice night so I couldn't learn from Walter Ray, but Ottie Reno was available by the written page to tell me that "the turn is accomplished by shifting the weight of the shoe with a roll of the forearm....that by letting the shoe hang down and leveling it before the release you cause it to turn...the amount of turn is increased by waiting longer to level the shoe and decreased by leveling it sooner...that each pitcher must learn to regulate the amount of turn so that it opens at the stake." None of that ever made much sense to me, but I kept working at turning the shoe on my court at home. I qualified at 15%. In my first tournament I pitched in the second shift of a Stockton Tournament with a loud-mouthed, pushy guy by the name of Joe Summers, who told me "Welcome to F-troop!" I remember that day, Joe had what he called a bad case of "right-itis." Incidentally, the loud mouth guy has become one of my favorite people in horseshoes, and he still has right-itis! One of my favorite pitchers was a nice guy named Richard Robbins, who seemed to always have a good time, win or lose. My first 4-dead happened while I played our club president, Joe Schultz, and what a fuss he made! I'll never forget Joe...what a character he was! I kept practicing on my home court, eventually getting my average up to 36% I enjoyed pitching for about 7 or 8 years...traveling to clubs around Northern California...a great escape from a busy career...but as they say "life happened"...I was divorced, I had to leave my home practice courts, and my teenage sons lived with me in an apartment. Between career, watching my son's high school baseball games, and keeping my sons out of trouble, I had no time for horseshoes. I pitched in tournaments where I threw one ringer a game...I became discouraged...my frustrating horseshoe game was becoming another of life's difficulties...I regrettably dropped out of the game. Eight years went by. I met and married my Karen. Karen's dad and uncle had always loved to pitch backyard horseshoes. Karen's dad had passed away, but one day the subject of horseshoe pitching came up

with Karen's Uncle Wade. I told Wade I had once been real serious about horseshoe pitching, so we decided we should pitch horseshoes. For Wade's birthday, we bought him a pair of Alan Francis Signature horseshoes, and two regulation stakes.

Wade put a court in his side yard, I brought over my old Clydesdales one day, and we started to pitch. We had a great time, and horseshoes started to come back into my life. Wade and I teamed up to win a Church Picnic Horseshoe tournament, and the next day during his sermon the preacher, who thought he was a pretty fair pitcher, announced that he had been beaten at horseshoes by a couple of old guys. I knew it was time, I was ready to return to my old love, horseshoe pitching!

I soon retired from dentistry, and I would have time to get my horseshoe game in serious shape. I put in a horseshoe court in my backyard, and started to practice a 1 ¾ turn, a turn I always had admired as thrown by the likes of Tim Saunders. I contacted the Stockton Club, and went down to Louis Park to re-qualify after 8 years away from the sport. Millie Schultz came down to the park that night to see if it was really me...if I had maybe returned from the dead! I qualified at 25%, and attended the next Stockton tournament. There to greet me was none other than Richard Robbins, still pitching, still having fun! I tied for first in my group with Turlock's John Garcia, then went on to lose the playoff. I had lost to a damned 30 footer I thought, but it had been a great day, and I was back in horseshoes. Walter Ray was gone to Florida, but there was this guy Rick Bermingham that threw a 1-1/4 that was so sweet it would bring a tear to your eye, and he was winning State Championships left and right!

Eight years have gone by, and I've been club president the last few years. I've been able to go to 6 World Tournaments, seeing parts of the country I never thought I would see, and I've had a chance to watch the best players in the world in person, and have met many pitchers from around the country. In Iowa, I was able to meet Earl Winston, and his wife Vickie (a 10-time women's champion herself.) I thanked Earl for responding to my letter years earlier, and was able to shake his hand. He didn't completely understand, dementia taking its toll, but I could tell he was a horseshoe pitcher with a warm heart, and his wife Vicky was very kind to me. I love the game more than ever, I don't know what my life would be like without it! I have had some wonderful moments, and made some great friends. I have never accomplished as much as I would have liked to on the courts...I've pitched a few memorable games in the 50-57.5% range, but I've never had an average higher than 37.5%. I will be turning 70 next year, and I've decided to move up to 30 ft....yes, the years are turning me into a damn 30 footer my ownself!! I'm excited to face new challenges and to pursue new dreams! How many sports offer you such fresh start at 70 years of age! I have a wife who supports my horseshoe dreams, and neighbors that tolerate the constant clatter that accompanies an old horseshoe pitcher's dreams of future championships! Now you know how Ottie Reno, and Walter Ray

Williams, Jr. have changed my life! I've seen Ottie Reno at the World Tournament, but have not yet had the chance to properly thank him for what he has given me! Hopefully, one day I will get the chance!! Walter Ray came to a Stockton tournament last year, and I understand arthritis in his fingers have forced him to throw a reverse turn instead of his classic 1-1/4 turn, but it is still special to watch Walter Ray handle a horseshoe. Had Walter Ray not pursued bowling as a profession, I believe he would have won several more World Titles, and even now Walter Ray's name is always part of the conversation when it comes to who is the greatest horseshoe pitcher that ever lived.

So that's my horseshoe story. I think it is helpful for all of us to reflect on how we became interested and then involved in horseshoe pitching, for it can yield insights into how we might bring others into our great sport. I am so very thankful that I became involved in horseshoe pitching, and I look forward to serving Norcal Horseshoes as a Board Member. **George Davis**

Regional Director:

You may not agree with every decision that is made by your board of officers, but that is why there is a group of them. Decisions cannot be made by one individual in an organization that encompasses an area of 78,427 square miles. Yes indeed that is what size the Northern CA Charter is. It must be a majority of the officers voting on any one decision and THEN the question uppermost in their decision process is: "Does this benefit the majority and is this good for horseshoe pitching." If the answer is not yes to both of these thoughts then perhaps we should not implement a particular decision? Of course decisions are discussed among all the officers and a reasonable agreement is usually reached.

Having attended the last 30 World Tournaments this last one was the first time in 25 years I did not attend the NHPA annual convention either as a delegate an observer or an officer. Circumstances dictated that I be back in Santa Rosa on August 1st. We (the NCHPA) were very fortunate that 3rd VP John Barney was able to represent us at the convention. We all owe John a debt of gratitude for without him we would not have had a delegate in attendance. Let's hope this scenario does not occur in future years. It's imperative that a Charter as large as this one have adequate representation at our national convention. Let's make it a point to have a full contingent of delegates at all future conventions.

As your Regional Director some of the responsibilities involved with this position are to attend World Tournaments and assist in the shoe check area. There we weigh and measure every participant horseshoe, we check your NHPA membership card and whether or not you have a shirt with your name and state on the back of it, proper footwear and so on. This is just one of the tasks. Another one is making certain that all our court complexes remain in good repair and that any new ones built in the charter boundaries meet the sanctioning requirement set by the NHPA. A third and critical portion of this position is to guide anyone wishing to begin a new

club, build new courts or construct portable pits. Make presentations to various Parks Departments, Chamber of Commerce people and Convention and Visitors Bureaus. The fourth part of this position entails ordering all the patches and sanction certificates for all the various tournaments we host in the NCHPA. Fill out all certificates assign specific sanction numbers to each tournament on our schedule. Some charters allow the RD the autonomy to develop a charter schedule with input from the officers. That's a thought, which would certainly eliminate 4 and 5 tournaments in one weekend!

If there is anyone that would like to learn this critical position with the NHPA please let me know I'll be happy to guide you along to eventually become our Regional Director. *Casey Sluys*

State Report:

I would like to thank all the Pitchers who came out to San Diego for the **California 2016 State Championships**. This was one of the largest State tournaments we've had in awhile. Because of you, the class groups were larger and the averages were a lot tighter in most cases. We had **7 Divisions** broken up into **22 Class** groups. With 188 official Pitchers that played their games we had 913 games pitched. From those games, we hit 20,740 Ringers in 75,848 Shoes for an average of 27.34%. That was 94.8 Tons of Steel thrown 540 Miles in competition. **Sandra Johnson** (80%) threw the highest game and she also had the highest tournament average of 61.01%. Marcus Santillana won the Men's Championship, **Sandra Johnson** won the Women's Division, **Mike Oberlander** took the Elders, **Paul Hopkins** won in the Sr. Men's, **Joseph Valdepena** went (10-1) in the Jr. Boys Division, **Elissa Bishop** took home the Jr Girls and **Dillon Kyle** won the Cadet Division Championship.

A Special **"Shout Out"** to the **San Diego Horseshoe Club** for all the work they put into the courts. **Charlie and Linda Castelo** did a great job following through with all the many variables it takes to host this size of a tournament. As you could see, they had dozens of tasks that had to be worked out beyond the work done on the courts. I only heard of one broken peg and that was quickly taken care of. Another **"Shout Out"** to the **SCHPA Officers** that donated their Labor Day weekend to work the long hours it took to pitch 22 Class Groups. Another **"Shout Out"** to the **NCHPA Officers** that made the long drive to San Diego and also donated their time to help work during the tournament and together, both Charter Officers had their annual **Joint Officers** meeting late Saturday Evening.

The results have already been posted with the NHPA and available for your viewing at www.pitchwithus.com/SOCAL/results16/SCHPA%2004-16-095.txt

With so many Class Groups, it would be impossible for me to give a run down on each one. They're special to the Pitchers that were in them and I don't have enough paper to describe the amount of fun and excitement that happened in each one. The next state Championships

will be hosted by the **NCHPA** and they will decide where it will be at their Annual Meeting. They think it will probably be in Stockton but they have a few other options to review and then decide at their meeting. Another thing I saw on Facebook was pictures taken from Pitchers that took advantage of some of the tourist attractions in San Diego. They have a lot of history artifacts and beautiful sites to visit when you're not pitching. The next time the **SCHPA** hosts the State, will be held in **Bakersfield** and the **Danny Kyle's Shoecrew** has a lot of experience in this challenge. *Dale Hughes SCHPA Statistician.*

CLUBS

Half Moon Bay

Hop Along Outlaw

We had a new member join us during our 4th of July tournaments. We named her Hop Along Outlaw. This bird stayed and hung out in the pitchers platforms while our games were being played. When a game was over she would leave that court and go to another court were a game was being played and hang out there. This happened for both of our tournaments. Dick McCall submitted this to Joan Morris of the San Jose Mercury. She responded in her column that this was a juvenile brown-headed cow bird. The cow bird is classified as a parasitic bird. They get their name from being around cows. The cows disturb parasites which becomes a food source for the birds. These birds are also known for laying their eggs in other birds nest, letting those birds raise their young (Go to our web site for the complete story. <http://halfmoonbayhorseshoeclub.wikifoundry.com>

We also had another great story. Sam Caputo won the 2016 Half Moon Bay Horseshoe Club Tournament. Sam is the oldest member in our club at age 89. The ex-school teacher beat two of his former students, Bill Terry & Pat McGowan. Sam had a playoff with Pat and beat Pat 32 to 13 for the Club Championship.

Congratulations to Janice Hughes and Mark Bernard for winning the Glen O'Brien Doubles. This was their first tournament Championship.

Our club has started cementing the pitchers platforms thanks to Richard (Pops) & Alex Voskes, Matt DeChane & Pat McGowan. This will be a long process for our 16 courts. A Best Western is being built next to Cameron's Inn on the corner of Highway 1 & Wavecrest Rd. It will complete in 2017.

This is a good time to learn HS Master for scoring your tournaments. If you would like help, please contact me. We have been running HS Master for almost 4 years without electricity. So we can help you with any problem you might have. HS Master makes life easy when it comes to sending your tournament info to NATSTATS. *Rick Della Santina*

San Jose

Things were a little slow in San Jose in July and August with no scheduled tournaments, but things will get better in September with tournaments on Sept. 17 and Sept. 18. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us. We also have our rain postponement tournaments scheduled for Oct. 29 and Oct. 30. We hope you can be in San Jose for those tournaments too.

On July 18 and July 19 the San Jose Horseshoe Club, represented by Leon Moore, hosted the California Firemen's Athletic Association horseshoe event on our courts as part of the CFAA's annual Summer Olympic Games. On Monday July 18 8 pitchers participated in a singles tournament and on Tuesday July 19 8 pitchers participated in a doubles tournament. Leon said that they were a very nice bunch to work with. Two or three of the firemen expressed interest in perhaps joining NCHPA. Leon will work on getting their contact info to the club representatives near where they live.

As we have said before, our club still has copies of our "A Ringer of Recipes" cookbook available for \$15 each. If you are interested then please ask Nancy Cloutier about cookbooks the next time you see her at a San Jose tournament. Wishing you the best of luck in your pitching. **Mike Anderson**

Fortuna

Our money tournament last July went very well. Our Park in Fortuna allows free camping and people started camping on Thursday before the tournament and left Monday after the tournament. We have secure bathrooms that are like new with locks, lights, very clean and close by, the park kept them open for the campers night and day starting Thursday night. We held a fun pitch Friday afternoon, the courts were set up with obstacles that you had to pitch through, over, around, between and even threw a couple shoes against Horace the horseshoe pitching machine. Pitchers had a lot of fun, they had to laugh at themselves and opponents trying to negotiate the crazy course. Turns out Gil Tournour was crowned, King of the night. Then a free picnic dinner was enjoyed by everyone, around the campfire. A large row of tents were setup with air mattress's for campers, all they needed were a pillow and blankets. There were numerous people with travel trailers, campers and motor homes camping at the courts. The Fortuna horseshoe courts and park are clean and feel very safe. Campers gathered around the campfire in the morning where Howard McGill from Oregon cooked breakfast for everyone, consisted of scrambled eggs, biscuits with gravy and coffee all free, provided by Fortuna Club. Thanks Howard.

We started pitching Sat. morning, a drawing was done mid morning and the pitcher in each division who had just won the round won \$30 dollars in quarters and a large bag of candy all in a special pouch made and decorated by Sharon. We had 4 groups pitching each

day so 8 of these prizes were handed out. First and second prize money was good in each group, paid on Sunday. Saturday at noon again a free lunch was served, then Sat. evening we had awards and a drawing sponsored by Bill and Sharon Paddock where a pitchers name is drawn and the pitchers dues for local, Northern and National are paid for the following year. This years winner was Blair Rowley. Sunday morning and at noon free food again. Fortuna Club puts on a large raffle each day and the last two years a large ornate bird house was the main attraction. This year the stand for the bird house was a forked tree, with a large unique bird house on the top of the left branch and then there was a bird outhouse on the right fork of the tree. Connecting the two structures was a stairway for the birds to get to the outhouse. The outhouse had a moon on the door which opened into a realistic setting with a bird setting on the throne looking at you when you opened the door.

Mr. and Mrs. Vierra from Stockton Club won it. Our other tournaments are not as grand but we have fun and you can camp for free. We are having a tournament in Oct. which is our turkey shoot which will be lots of fun. If you can make it, try to come to our next years money tournament it is getting better each year, inexpensive to attend and the food, camping and atmosphere is fun. Hey I have joke for you; this older lady rides into an old west town on her mule and ties him up at the hitching post. Just then a drunk cowboy spills out of the saloon, seeing the old lady, he draws his pistol and asks her if she likes to dance and proceeds to shoot at her feet. She does not want a toe shot off, so she starts jumping around until he runs out of bullets, he laughs and turns around, starting back into the saloon. She walks over to her mule, pulls her double barrel shot gun out of the scabbard, cocks both barrels and points it at the cowboy, he heard her cock the gun and spins around and at the same time remembers his gun is empty. She says, sonny have you ever kissed a mules ass, he said no, but I have always wanted to.

Ha Ha Ha Ha. That's funny I don't care who you are. **Bill Paddock and Blair Rowley**

Tri-Valley

Tri-Valley's August tournament was a rousing success with 32 pitchers on Saturday - used every court! That hasn't happened in a long time; thank you all for proving "Horseshoes Live". Sunday, another balmy day, found 24 throwing shoes followed by the Bernard Hughes scrumptious catered dinner. A huge hug, pat on the back goes out to Bill Faler for keeping all of the necessary court maintenance equipment running plus he often mows along with Richard Robbins, our noble and forever president. Can't beat that team rounded out by Tim Saunders, Harvey Kooy, Wayne Major and Ray Szczepanski. Ray is about to leave us for the high country - we'll miss him and his last name, the longest on our roster! **Marge Wood**

...More TV...

First Tri-Valley members are sorry to lose Ray Szczepanski to the Chico area – but happy that he is moving closer to children and grandchildren – many more good years and ringers for you Ray -

This year we had two members attend and participate in the world tournament in Montgomery, AL – Richard Robbins and Harvey Kooy – both enjoyed their trip

We had several Tri-Valley members enjoy the State Tournament in San Diego, Labor Day weekend – Richard Robbins - 3rd place in Men’s J, Tim Saunders - 8th in Men’s D, Mark Bernard - 4th in Men’s E, and Harvey Kooy - 6th in Men’s Elder – a good time had by all – a special thank you to SCHPA – next year Stockton

Courts at Tri-Valley ready for all to come out and enjoy September 24/25 – thanks to the upkeep and hard work many of our members - hope to see you there. **Tim & Sue Saunders**

Ukiah

Hello from Ukiah, we are having beautiful fall weather with some warm afternoons but morning and evenings are nice and cool. Some of our members traveled to the State tournament in September and had a great time in San Diego. Debra Belvail came in 3rd in the Women's Division. James Taylor, Earl Davis, Cody Davis, Norm Johns and Dave Defino all enjoyed their experience and are looking forward to the NCHPA Championships.

One of the things I enjoy when observing tournaments is seeing what clubs are represented and who is pitching. It is difficult to determine the names of the players and the clubs they represent if the pitcher is not wearing a shirt that displays that information. It would be great if the club presidents would encourage their members to wear shirts showing that information. Scorekeepers would really appreciate the use of regulation attire since it helps identify who is earning the score called. Tournament directors, scorekeepers, other pitchers and even observers would appreciate the adherence to the following rules from the NHPA Rules/requirements Guidelines Specifications -

RULE 12 – APPROPRIATE NHPA MEMBER CONDUCT

Section	C	–	Dress	Code
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All contestants competing in a World Tournament shall have, as a minimum, their last name and State or Country abbreviation professionally lettered on the back of their shirts. Said shirts cannot be sleeveless. No cut-offs are permitted and closed-toe shoes must be worn. Further dress code restrictions may be imposed by the Executive Council if all entrants are notified no later than the mailing date of their pitching schedules. This Dress Code may also be adopted into any Charter Bylaws or

may be enforced at any State Championship Tournament or at any local tournament, if announced in advance by the Tournament/League Officials. Contestants that do not comply may not be allowed to participate in the event.

Section D – Alcohol, Tobacco Products, and Illegal Controlled Substances

During the World and State Championship Tournaments, the use of alcohol, any form of tobacco, or illegal controlled substances while in the confines of the courts shall be prohibited for all contestants, officials, and scorekeepers. This rule may also be adopted into any Charter Bylaws or may be enforced at any local tournament, if announced in advance by the Tournament/League Officials. Violations may result in the forfeiture of games.

Section	E	–	Cell	Phones
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During the World and State Championship Tournaments, the use of cell phones shall not be allowed by anyone on the courts. This rule may also be adopted into any Charter Bylaws or may be enforced at any local tournament, if announced in advance by the Tournament/League Officials. Violations may result in the forfeiture of games. **Lorena Tournour, Secretary**

Sonoma County (Santa Rosa)

There was a tournament listed on our 2016 schedule with a major typo. The last tournament of the season was called the Darryl Beardall 33K, it should have been **the Darryl Beardall 330K. Three hundred and thirty thousand miles** is the figure that Darryl has run since 1952. He holds the Guinness World Book of records title as having run more miles than anyone in the world. He’s had a movie made of his exploits in the running world called, “On the Edge” starring Bruce Dern. We apologize for having the wrong number on the plates Darryl.

Coming soon to the Sonoma County Club will be the NCHPA Championships, be sure to come and pitch in this beautiful location. We have a group of brand new Cadets from San Francisco coming to play in this years Championship. The courts look really good and we look forward to hosting this event. Many thanks to Brian Smith for all the work he and Lynette have done on the facility!

New members in our club are Jack Madigan, (he’s won a 1st and 2nd already) Rob Chandler, (was Travis’s history teacher in high school) Dave Sims, (A neighbor that’s been listening to us pitch for 20 years), Carmen Cavallero & Connor Hawkins, (grandfather and grandson). We expect to see great things from all these enthusiastic members.

Casey Sluys

NCHPA CLUB TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

DATES: October 22nd & 23rd LOCATION: STOCKTON HORSESHOE CLUB

1. ENTRY FEE: \$80.00 per team. This is a **1 or 2-day event** and **pre-registration is required**.
2. Teams may be mixed, may include juniors (but may not be all juniors), and must have 4 players per team. Each team may register 1 alternate player to be used in case of injury,
3. All players must be NCHPA members and wear a shirt with their last name neatly on the back.
4. This format will be used if there are more than 8 teams if not we will pitch only one day and that will be considered the finals following the rule of the Finals. Day One Tournament play will consist of 7 - 30 shoe count-all games using an 80% handicap. We will need to have scorekeepers therefore a final decision has not yet been made to pitch all teams at once or in two shifts. Pitching times for Saturday will be **9:30 A.M. & 12:00 P.M** – If we only have enough teams for one day pitching time will be 9:00A.M Saturday. The finals will consist of the top 8 teams from the Saturday's rounds carrying over totals and will be played at **9:00A.M.** Sunday. Finals will be 7 - 40 shoe, count-all games using an 80% handicap with 20 bonus points for each player win and 40 bonus points for each team that wins 3 or more games in any single round. The 2-day points total including bonus points will determine final standings. All teams should plan to play on Sunday because the first alternate team will replace any team not able to return for the finals.
5. Prize money will be determined by the number of teams entered and will be announced.

It would be great to have 24 teams fielded. Each day will count as a separate tournament because they are played under different formats. Pitchers are required to pay scorekeepers .50 cents per game each day.

Send check, made payable to NCHPA, in the amount of \$80.00 per team to:

Gail Sluys - 1721 San Ramon Way, Santa Rosa, CA 95409

Be sure to mark your pitching time request.

DEADLINE: postmarked by 10/14/16

Cut on line below and mail bottom only

Club

Name _____

Team Members: 1. _____ **2.** _____

3. _____ **4.** _____

Team Captain _____ **Alternate** _____

Pitching time request _____

NCHPA NEWS & VIEWS is published quarterly, and distributed by the most economical methods. That includes email, website and USPS, as per the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) of the NCHPA. The deadlines for submitting articles are: **Mar. 15th, June 15th, Sept. 15th Dec. 15th** Mail to Casey Sluys, kclus@sbcglobal.net

Articles and/or comments appearing in this newsletter are the sole responsibility of the article's author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or beliefs of the NCHPA's Executive Council, the Newsletter editor or individual members of the Executive Council.
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Need information; call Casey at (707) 477-8893 or e-mail at kclus@sbcglobal.net
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Special Notice from GRS

NHPA GAME RELATED SALES HAS THESE ITEMS IN ABUNDANCE IF ANYONE IS INTERESTED:

- 2013 BUFFALO WT PINS - \$3.00
- 2016 MONTGOMERY PATCHES - \$4.00
- 2016 NEW NHPA LOGO PATCHES - \$4.00 PLEASE CALL 636-327-5271 IF INTERESTED IN PURCHASING!

<http://www.nchpa.com>

What World Do You Live In?

Here is a point to ponder.

Why do we marvel at modern movie visuals? Why do we play cheap games on our iphones? We do not live in movies or computers. We live in the real world. We attend school or work in the real world. We love, marry, and raise a family in the real world. So why do so many dedicate so much of their lives to a world that does not exist? To paraphrase Winston Churchill: Never in the history of mankind has so much time been wasted by so many on such futility. Are you striving to better your world, or just wasting your time?

Support the NHPF

The only horseshoe pitching related Charity needs your tax-deductible donations to support many programs of the sport; including the Hall of Fame and Grants to install new or upgrade existing courts. Deadlines for Grant Applications: March 1st and September 1st. Mail contributions and inquiries to: NHPF, 100 Bluestem Way, Wentzville, MO 63385. We would love to have your financial support....please help?

<http://www.nhpf.info>

2017 WT winner is St George, Utah! Plan ahead and experience a World Tournament. It's a beautiful area. Dates are **July 17-30, 2017**

<http://www.horseshoepitching.com>

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National Horseshoe Pitchers Foundation



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