



Senior Tennis Times

Newsletter of the Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc.

December
2011

Renewals, and birth dates!

We've already received **more than half** of the renewals from current members. If you haven't already renewed, we've noticed something that many people are ignoring: ***please remember to fill in your birth date!*** As we've said before, this information is for internal use only, and will never be published. If you **don't** let us know your birth date, we'll use a "best guess" based on the last "decade" you declared. That will look silly when you renew in 2012!

Get your renewal in now! If we don't have it by January, you'll miss newsletters, your roster, and you won't be able to participate in any STPC activities. Senior Tennis for just \$25—the best deal in town.

Happy Holidays to all !



On the inside

This is a BIG newsletter! See these especially:

P. 2: **Letters**—what's a "double hit" or "carry?" Is it bad? **Letters** continues on P. 12 with a fine letter from **Herb Cederberg**, and finally some anonymous "Notes from retiring members."

P. 3: **Mark's corner** announces a new opportunity for **individual or group lessons**.

P. 3: Captains still **want players**. And **Marv Schneider** explains his **ladder** groups, and also wants players.

P. 8: Signup for an **Afternoon Mixer** on Saturday, February 11. Opportunity for those who'd rather not play in the evening!

P. 9: **Steve Jobs and Tennis?** Fascinating article about Jobs, **David Foster Wallace**, **Steve Wilkinson** and **Andre Agassiz**, showing remarkable commonality in the life philosophies of these four amazing men.



Tennis events

By **Bob Busch**

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. With this final column of 2011, we send our best wishes that your holiday season be filled with happiness, peace and joy.

Benefits of Volunteering

You probably volunteer for the same reason I do—to give back to the community. Research has proven that volunteers may realize better health. Orly Avitzuir, a board certified neurologist, indicated that research has proven health benefits of volunteer work in her Consumer Reports December 2011 article. Researchers who tracked older adults who do volunteer work have shown that they live longer and rate themselves at higher levels of health. Studies revealed that those that rated themselves in just "fair health" at the start of the study were likely to improve their stair-climbing speed, walking speeds and cognitive function. Studies have linked volunteering to greater life satisfaction, reduced stress and less depression. Volunteering for youth-focused programs, a food bank, Meals on Wheels, or other program can be a good way to balance your holiday season. Do some research to determine which organization is the best match for you. You will be more satisfied if your experience, skills and interests match the needs of the volunteer work.

High School Girls

Edina in Class 2A and Blake in Class 1A won state tennis team titles in late October. It was the 15th consecutive title and 30th of the past 34 years for the Edina Hornet Girls. Edina finished playing the toughest teams in the Midwest with a 22-0 record. Mounds View, Elk River and Rochester Mayo fell to

(Tennis events—continued on page 6)



Upcoming Events

February 11, 2012:
Reed-Sweatt Afternoon Mixer
Details and signup page 8

Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc.

A nonprofit corporation, P.O. Box 5525
Hopkins, MN 55343

On the web: www.seniortennismn.com

Senior Tennis Times

The Senior Tennis Times is published ten times annually by and for the members of the Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc.

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Mark Mudra.....952-833-1469

Advisor: Mary Kaminski612-781-3271

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St. Paul tennis schedules:

Thue Rasmussen.....651-917-0075

Newsletter Editor and Webmaster

David Sommer612-276-1313

Advertising

Send by email or USPS to the newsletter editor by the 15th of the month for publication the following month. **Please send all payments to the newsletter editor.**

Ad rates (first month/additional months):

Full page (7.5x10) \$165/135

Half page (7.5x4.9) 110/85

Half page on back cover 125/100

Quarter page (3.7x4.9) 70/50

Eighth page (3.7x2.4) 45/30

Business card special 30/20

Horizontal strip ads: \$55 first two inches; \$20 each additional inch. Vertical: \$75 first two inches; \$25 each add'l inch.

4-line ad (members only)\$10

2-line ad (members only) First three months: free, then \$5/issue.

Membership information changes, newsletter delivery problems, etc., can be made by writing Senior Tennis Players Club, P.O. Box 5525, Hopkins, MN 55343 or email dsommer7@usiwireless.com.

Membership total: 1440

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Letters to the editor

Editor's note: We welcome letters, and also Peeves. I invite readers to submit their own Peeves. It's OK to be peevish—anonymity protected if you wish.



An odd shot

Last week, I hit an odd shot. The ball stayed on my racquet for a long time and it felt like I pushed it rather than hit it over the net. My opponent called out “double hit.” I had never heard that term, but shook my head, and we continued playing. Later, he said he thought he heard two hits. Is this shot OK, and what is the correct thing to do in this situation?

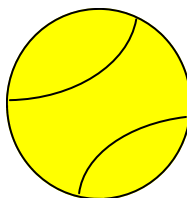
—Louise Halverson

Editor comment: Rule 24.f: (The point is lost if...) “The player deliberately carries or catches the ball in play on the racket, or deliberately touches it with the racket more than once.” And Code 19: “A player shall promptly acknowledge when: ... The player deliberately carries or double hits a ball ... The opponent is not entitled to make these calls.” Underlining added for emphasis. Clearly Louise did not deliberately carry or double hit the ball, and in any case, the opponent had no right to make such a call.

Some history: back in the 1970's, any double hit constituted loss of point. Then the rule was changed, as I recall, to allow for “continuous motion” if that was what caused a double hit. Now, the rules and code simply refer to “deliberately.” So if I scoop a low ball up and then slam it as an overhead, that would obviously be deliberate. But most

(Letters—continued on page 12)

As a non-profit organization, the Senior Tennis Players Club gratefully accepts donations, memorials and estate gifts.



Mission Statement

The primary purpose of the STPC is to provide tennis playing opportunities to people 50 and older for their mental, physical, and social well-being; and to support the growth of tennis.

Newsletter Submissions

To help make the newsletter as correct as possible, please submit all items in writing only, by mail or email. The deadline is the 17th of the month for publication the following month. All material submitted for publication is subject to editing. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope if you want materials returned.

Send your submissions to: David Sommer, 3657 17th Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55407-2805.
Email: dsommer7@usiwireless.com.

Opinions expressed in articles, letters or advertisements are those of the author, and do not necessarily represent views of the newsletter editor or the Board or officers of STPC.

Mark's corner

By Mark Mudra

Just in time for the holidays, STPC introduces our new Group/Individual Lesson Program. Lessons run by STPC professionals you know and who know you. You can arrange for one of our pros to work with you or your group of tennis friends. As simple as 1, 2, 3:



1. Reserve a one-hour court time.*
2. Email to Mark Mudra, (markmudra@aol.com). Include court reservation info and more.**
3. Hand the pro a \$35.00 check made out to STPC at the lesson.*

* **Note:** your lesson could also be 1½ or 2 hours. Cost for those is \$47.50 and \$60.00 respectively.

** See page 7 of this newsletter or click **Lessons** on our web site for additional information. We are testing the new program at Public Indoor since they have courts available six days a week, including Saturday and Sunday for the special STPC rate of \$25.00.

Only the person making the court reservation has to be an STPC member—you can invite others to your lesson.

We will try to expand to include Baseline, Reed/Sweatt, and Fred Wells.

The stroke for December is the ground stroke, backhand. See bottom of page 4 for details.

Any questions please let me know.

Players wanted

Matchpoint, 3.0-3.5 W, Tue/Thu noon-1:30

Subs needed Tuesdays and Thursdays for women's 3.0-3.5 groups. Captain Pat Judge 651-452-1124.

Baseline, 2.5 W, Thursdays 10:00-11:00

Looking for regular and subs. Contact Brenda

Zimmerman, 651-645-1662 or bzimm003@yahoo.com

Baseline, 3.5 MW, Tuesdays 8:30-10:00 & 8:30-10:30

Regulars & subs. Captain Ann Dillon, 651-645-6091.

Want ads

These two-liner want ads are available to all STPC members. Your ad is free for three issues. After that, there is a charge of \$5 per publication.



Expert Racket service. Fred Jurewicz 952-496-1018 (H); 612-250-3185. *10% STPC discount.*

Time for fall/winter project? Kitchen, bath, paint, lighting/electrical, plumbing, tile. High quality attention to detail. Home Improvement Specialist 612-710-7055, ericostergaard@yahoo.com.

2 Greek homes 3BR 2.5BA near Nafplio. €585-€780/wk. MN owner Sally Howard 612-340-9706 for details.

Snowbird Alert! 2BR/2BA furnished condo available in East Bloomington. 6 month rental. 612-243-1300.

www.tampaareavacationrentals.com Mention Al Holter for 10% discount. 1 BR-5 BR.

For sale: new Uggs boots, tan, size 8B, \$90 or best offer. Leola Garvander 612-798-4372.

Old Naples seasonal rental; 2 bedroom, 2 bath; 3 blocks to beach. pamgerl@aol.com

Wanted: used car for our grandson. Call Jo Robles at 763-473-5959 or e-mail jo@jorobles.com.

Marv's Ladders, MW 3.0-4.0

I am captaining 3 groups of senior tennis players (both men and women) using a ladder format and expect to have some spots available in each for the Spring sessions (January thru April). The 3 groups are:

- 1:30-3:30 PM Tuesdays, Reed-Sweatt
- 7-9 AM Fridays, Reed Sweatt
- 3-5 PM Saturdays, Williston in Minnetonka.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to the ladder format I use.

Advantages are:

- You generally play only with players your own skill level. Result: more competitive matches for more fun.
- Ladder rankings are determined by performance.
- If for any reason you cannot play on a particular day, you don't have to get a sub (there are no subs) or tell anyone; you just don't go and we play without you.
- It is often cheaper because there are more than 4 players paying for a court.

Disadvantages are:

- You have paid for the right to play whether or not you actually do play.
- You might have a sit-out (about a half hour) when we have more than four players on a court.

Interested? Call Marv Schneider at 952-975-1895.

●● STPC lessons and drills—September through April—All levels ●●

Some court locations are subject to change during the season. No reservations necessary.

Location	Day	Time	Skill	Cost	Instructor, Phone, Email
Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center 4005 Nicollet Ave S Minneapolis 612-825-6844	Mon	1:30-3:00 PM	All	\$7.00	Dilcia Pederson 612-824-6099 dilcia.pederson@innercitytennis.org
					Duncan Welty 952-933-8592 idwelty@q.com
	Thu	8:30-10:00AM	All	\$7.00	Duncan Welty 952-933-8592
					Paul Stormo 952-944-6286 pjstormo@aol.com
Fred Wells Tennis and Education Center. 100 Federal Drive, Minneapolis	Tue	12:30-2:00	All	\$7.00	Brandon Heath 612-252-8367 ext 2 brandon@fwtec.org
Williston Fitness & Sports 14509 Minnetonka Drive Minnetonka 952-939-8370	Wed	5:30-7:00PM	All	\$7.00	Duane Ryman 612-865-9517 dhrtennis40@hotmail.com
PublicIndoorTennis.Com 7833 Highway 65 N.E. Spring Lake Park, MN 55432	Fri	1:00-2:30 PM	All	\$7.00	Mark Mudra 952-833-1469 markmudra@aol.com

Free or low-cost lessons* are offered as part of your STPC membership. New members are encouraged to take advantage of them.

* Lessons are free during outdoor season; they cost \$7 when indoor (to pay for court time). You may continue taking lessons as long as you are a member of the club.

●● Private Club Drills Open to STPC Members ●●

Location	Day	Cost	Time	Information
PublicIndoorTennis.com 7833 Hwy 65 N.E., Spring Lake Park	Mon	\$18	7:00-8:30 PM Two groups: 2.5-3.0 NTRP 3.0-3.5 NTRP	Call 763-231-3109 for reservation. Each group limited to six players.
Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center 4005 Nicollet Ave S, Minneapolis	Tue Thu	\$9.00	9:00-10:00 AM	Call 612-825-6844 for reservation.
Williston Fitness Center 14509 Minnetonka DR. Minnetonka, MN 55345	Mon	Williston member \$8, non-member \$10	3:00-4:00, 2.0-2.5	Call front desk to sign up: 952-939-8370
	Wed		8:00-9:00 am, 3.0-3.5	
	Fri		8:00-9:00 am, stroke & play	

Drills for December

Note: each month all our instructors will place greater attention on one subject. For December:

Backhand ground stroke

- Target: 4' x 4' square in court corner, 2' from sideline and baseline. Right hip dictates shot direction.
- Full shoulder turn—touch chin to shoulder.

- Weight on back foot.
- Keep head down through the shot.
- Push palm through contact point.

December 26 drills at Reed-Sweatt will take place as usual.

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90 minute massage	\$90

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3 months	\$180
6 months	\$360
12 months	\$720

90 minute Massage a Month

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6 months	\$540
12 months	\$1080

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(Tennis events—continued from page 1)

Edina in the State Tournament.

Blake played in its first Class 1A Tournament since 2004 and defeated defending champion Rochester Lourdes 6-1 in the final. Blake also defeated Virginia and Providence Academy by the same 6-1 score. Blake coach **Jeannette Cluskey** was a two-time Edina singles champion in 1998 and 1999.

Amber Washington, a senior at Mounds Park Academy, won her 6th state title in the individual play category of the State Class 1A tournament by defeating **Sonia Das** of St. Paul Academy 6-4, 7-5 in the final. Washington won four doubles titles from 2006-2009 and won singles in 2010-2011 to compile a six-title record that no one in the state high school tennis history has achieved.

The sister team, **Elena and Eva Sullivan** of Providence Academy defeated **Margaret Pearson/Sofia Terzic** of Rochester Lourdes 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 in the Class 1A doubles final. In Class 2A, **Jessica Aney**, 8th-grader from Rochester Century, defeated **Caroline Ward** of Edina 6-2, 6-2 in the singles final. Ward defeated **Kelsey Frechette** of Rochester Century 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 in a 3 hr, 15 minute semifinal match. Rochester Mayo's **Kylie Boyer/Kate Rosenow** defeated Mounds View's **Tract Haws-Lay/Summer Brills** in an exciting final 6-3, 6-7, 6-4.

Rydberg on USA Team

Jon Rydberg will be on a wheelchair tennis team representing the USA in world competition in Guadalajara, Mexico in mid-November. Rydberg coaches varsity tennis at East Ridge High School in Woodbury. He was ranked #11 in the world in 2007 and competed in the 2004 and 2007 Paralympics. He won the gold medal in singles and silver in doubles in the 2007 Para Pan Am Games. He will again participate in this multi-sport event for athletes with a physical disability. The games are played every four years. Approximately 1,500 athletes from 26 countries will compete in 13 different sports.

Super Seniors Win in Turkey

Ten USA teams participating in International Tennis Federation Super Senior World Team Championships in Antalya, Turkey in October came back with seven World Titles. USA men and women teams were competing in five different age categories in five-year brackets from 60 to 80 years of age. Men won four titles and women won 3 titles. Men-60's defeated Australia 2-1, 65's defeated France 2-1, 75's defeated Australia 3-0 and 80's defeated France 3-0. Women-

60's defeated France 3-0, 70's defeated Germany 3-0 and 75's defeated Great Britain 2-1.

Gopher Tennis

The Gopher women's team completed the fall season in North Carolina at the Kitty Harrison Invitational. The three-day event was played at Chapel Hill and Durham. The Gophers won 13 and lost 12 in singles and won 3 and lost 6 in doubles. In their final fall match-up with Princeton, the Gophers won 3 of 6 singles matches including wins by former Minnesota high school players **Alexa Palen** and **Aria Lambert**. Gopher Women begin the 2012 season on January 27 at the U of M Baseline Center.

Minnesota's men's team completed fall play at the Lakewood Ranch Intercollegiate Classic Tournament in Lakewood Ranch, Florida. Four Gophers played in the 32 player event. **Julian Dehn** lost in the semi-finals to Vlad Bondarenko of Oklahoma State 6-1, 3-6, 6-0. The men will begin the spring season on January 21 against Marquette at the Baseline Tennis Center.

Florida Grand Prix

The 2012 Florida Super Senior Grand Prix will include eight West Coast tournaments and four East Coast

(Tennis events—continued on page 7)

FINALLY, THE "FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH" HAS BEEN BOTTLED

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Professional Group/Individual Request for Lessons

STPC introduces our new Group/Individual Lesson Program. Lessons run by STPC professionals you know and who know you. You can arrange for one of our pros to work with you or your group of tennis friends. As simple as 1, 2, 3:

1. Reserve a one-hour court time.*
2. Email information** to Mark Mudra, (markmudra@aol.com). He will arrange a pro to cover your lesson.
3. You will be notified by email from the professional of confirmation of your lesson.
4. Hand the pro a \$35.00 check made out to STPC at the lesson.*

* **Note:** your lesson may also be 1½ or 2 hours. Cost for those is \$47.50 and \$60.00 respectively.

** Include the following in your email to Mark:

- Your name, email address, and phone number
- Court Information. (You are responsible to arrange and pay for court.)
Reserved at (facility), time, and date.
- Optional information: professional requested, stroke/tactic etc. you'd like to focus on.

Facilities available

(Currently just one, more soon):

(Tennis events—continued from page 6)

tournaments. Minnesota snowbirds looking for competitive tennis will have an opportunity to compete in 55 to 90 age brackets in singles and doubles. The following tournaments are scheduled in southern Florida in early 2012:

West coast: January 9-14, Colonial Country Club, Fort Myers; January 16-21, Cape Coral Racquet Club; January 23-28, Sterling Oaks Country Club, Naples; January 30 through February 8, University Park Country Club, Sarasota; February 13-18, Payne Park, Sarasota; Feb 20-25, Meadows Country Club, Sarasota; February 27 through March 3, St Pete Tennis Club, St Petersburg; March 5-11, St Pete Country Club, St Petersburg.

East coast: January 16-22, Quail Ridge Country Club, Boynton Beach; February 13-19, Polo Club, Boca Raton; March 19-25, Broken Sound Club, Boca Raton; April 9-15, Woodfield Country Club, Boca Raton.

PublicIndoorTennis.com

7833 Highway 65 N.E.

Phone: 763-231-3109

Web site: www.publicindoortennis.com

Special court rate for STPC members \$25.00 a hour

Times available:

Mondays: 12:00 noon, 1:00pm, 2:00pm

Wednesdays: 11:30 am, 12:30 pm, 1:30 pm, 2:30 pm

Thursdays: 2:00 pm

Fridays: 10:00 am, 11:00 am, 12:00 pm, 2:30 pm

Saturdays: 5:30 pm

Sundays: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 11:30 am

You must bring a check to professional at the lesson made out to Senior Tennis Players Club (STPC), for the lesson. Amount is \$35 for 1 hour, \$47.50 for 1½, \$60 for 2 hours.

You are responsible to contact that professional of any changes after confirmation.

Only the person setting up the lesson needs to be a member of STPC to get the discounted court rate. The group can consist of family, friends, teammates, etc

Any questions, please email or call: Mark Mudra, markmudra@aol.com, 952-833-1469.

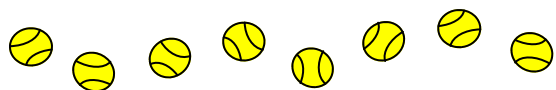
November tennis mixer

By Mary Ann McGuire

Thank you to all the members who came to our November tennis social at Public Indoor Tennis. We had 32 members registered plus one guest, so the four courts were filled with energetic players for two sessions. Everyone contributed to a good time for all. A special recognition goes to Ann Barten, Ardelle Hansen, Mary Ann McGuire and Marv Schneider, our loyal crew who made this party a successful evening of tennis and social connections. Also thanks to Joanne Schwartz, Judy Sweeney and Jack Richmond who offered to assist with set-up and take-down after the party. Plan to attend the tennis social scheduled in February, 2012!

Donation to Senior Tennis

Our thanks to Dorothy Greig for her generous donation to Senior Tennis. We encourage all our members to think of STPC as you plan your holiday giving.



Reed-Sweatt Afternoon Mixer



Saturday, February 11, 2012

1:00-4:00 PM

Reed-Sweatt Family Tennis Center, 40th & Nicollet, Minneapolis

Open to Singles and Couples. Mixed Doubles. Rotating Partners.

Only the first 40 players to enter will play!!

Cost: \$13 for tennis and food; \$3 food only

Light snack food and beverages. Bring your own water bottle.

Play will be 1½ hours at a time. You will be called as to when you will play.

Questions? Call Mary Ann McGuire 612-929-2038 or Ann Barten 612-724-0712.

Please detach and mail in this registration form.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Skill Level: 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0

I agree that any participation by me in the activities of, or sponsored by, the Senior Tennis Players Club, Inc. (STPC), a nonprofit organization, including, but without limitation, activities such as tennis lessons, clinics, drills, rating sessions, camps, trips, playing in or attending tennis games, tournaments, groups or social events, shall be at my sole risk; and I hereby release and hold harmless STPC and its officers, directors, members, employees, agents, tennis pros, tennis clubs, courts and facilities used or licensed by STPC, and all independent contractors with STPC (all being "Associated Others") for all claims of damage, whether due to injuries to person or property; to any direction, conduct, scheduling or claimed discrimination, nonfeasance or malfeasance, or otherwise, arising out of, or occurring in connection with, any such activities or conduct of STPC or such Associated Others.

Signature _____ Date _____

Send check for \$13 payable to STPC before February 5 to:
Mary Ann McGuire, 5017 Sheridan Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55410

Steve Jobs and Tennis?

By Bill Cosgrove

Suppose you instinctively felt and eventually convinced yourself that the recently deceased Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple, had some kind of connection to tennis—how would you go about proving it? Some variation on six degrees of separation? How about the fact that the late Jobs gave a revealing and optimistic commencement speech at Stanford in 2005 in which he spelled out his deepest beliefs, the same year that the late **David Foster Wallace**, an accomplished tennis player and perhaps our best writer about tennis*, gave his famous commencement speech at Kenyon College in which he did the same? [***Note.** If you want proof of this, too, read Wallace’s “String Theory” in Esquire, 1996 http://www.esquire.com/features/sports/the-string-theory-0796?click=main_sr or in his collection called A Supposedly Fun Thing I’ll Never Do Again (1997).] And suppose you found some of their ideas and beliefs to be compellingly similar. Close enough for me.

But maybe not close enough for you or the guardians of this newsletter devoted to all things tennis. Happily, however, there are other connections I’ve found between Steve Jobs and tennis by comparing him to two other tennis players you may know—Andre Agassi and Steve Wilkinson. See if you agree. If you don’t, write a letter of complaint to me (but send it to the editor of Senior Tennis Times).

Steve Jobs begins and ends his 2005 Stanford commencement speech with variations on the idea that you must find and do “what you love.” As he says, follow “your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.” Between these opening and closing ideas in his relatively short speech he offers personal examples of how he successfully followed, as he says, “my curiosity and intuition.”

Early in his speech he tells of trusting his instincts and “following my curiosity and intuition” by dropping out of his required classes at Reed College and “dropping in on” a calligraphy class that “looked interesting.” He “stumbled into” whatever classes he was curious about, “loved it,” as he says, and simply “trust[ed] that it would all work out OK.” And it did. Following his intuition turned out to be “priceless,” and dropping out was “one of the best decisions I ever made.” The calligraphy class had no “practical application” in his life at the time, he knew, but he trusted the “dots” to somehow “connect” in the future.

A quick comparison to **Andre Agassi** here. Jobs’ trusting his intuition this way is very like Agassi’s various leaps of faith detailed in his autobiography OPEN. In one case, he takes control of his life by trusting himself enough to put everything on one return of serve: “You control what you can control.” He wanted it his way, on his own recognizance, what he earned himself, not what he’s given by someone else. He took control by taking the chance, just as Jobs did.

Steve Wilkinson, too, may be said to practice and recommend controlling what you can in tennis: “When you focus on things outside of your control, like winning a match... that’s when you tend to get uptight because you can’t control the outcome you want.” For him, like Agassi and Jobs, you work on “trusting” yourself to execute what you can control as a player, as well as, he adds crucially, trusting and respecting your opponent as a person: “Avoid unpleasant accusations against your opponent. Work to build an atmosphere of harmony and trust rather than conflict and suspicion.”

When, indeed, Steve Jobs did connect the dots 10 years later it resulted in Apple developing the beautiful fonts we take for granted in computers today. And so, Jobs claims, “The Mac was the first computer with beautiful typography.” Had he never intuitively “dropped in” on that calligraphy class, he believes, computers “might not have the wonderful typography that they do.”

Jobs draws a large lesson from that experience which connects him with our tennis players here: “You have to trust in something – your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever.” And doing so has never let him down—as he says, it “has made all the difference in my life.” And so with David Foster Wallace and Andre Agassi.

Wallace, for one, draws similar conclusions about college in his commencement speech when he brings up the cliché about the “liberal arts... teaching you how to think.” He not only affirms the truth of this old platitude, but insists that we must have “total freedom of choice” of “what to think about.” As he says, “learning how to think really means learning how to exercise some control over how and what you think” because, as he puts it so delicately, “if you cannot exercise this kind of choice in adult life, you will be totally hosed.”

You must become “conscious and aware enough to choose what you pay attention to and to choose how you construct meaning from experience.” Like many clichés, this one “actually expresses a great and terrible truth” that we must learn and trust, just as Jobs learned

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to trust his “gut” or “karma” or “whatever.”

One of Steve Jobs’ most compelling insights is one that ties him closely to one of Wallace’s main arguments. In the last of three stories he tells, Jobs claims that “all external expectations” and all our pride and fears of failure and embarrassment in life are a “trap” to make us think we “have something to lose.” But he insists we have nothing to lose in life because we are “already naked” and as exposed and vulnerable as we will ever be. Why? Because of death—“Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose.” And avoiding that trap causes these external expectations and fears of failure to “just fall away... leaving only what is truly important.” And what’s truly important for Jobs is “to follow your heart.”

Here Jobs reveals himself to be even a bit of an existentialist in that he affirms a zest for life in the face of knowing that he, like each of us, is at every moment of his existence up against the reality of death. In more existential terms, Jobs is seeking here “authentic existence” where keeping alive one’s rightness or sense of individual integrity can become the most important reality in one’s life, more important than keeping alive one’s expectations or even oneself.

It’s what existentialists call “finitude” -- an awareness that we are vulnerable creatures, subject to the passing of time and the loss that it brings, including, ultimately, death. But an awareness of finitude and death, far from dooming us, actually saves us—it is critical to our full appreciation of and immersion in life, the key to truly living life. For Jobs as well as existentialists, knowing that we will one day die and that all the things that matter to us will eventually cease injects an intensity, a poignancy, even an urgency into life that cannot be had in any other way. As one existentialist puts it, “Awareness of death makes plain what is truly important in life, and what is not.” It “trivializes the trivial,” leaving, as Jobs puts it in his own words that echo the existentialist’s words, “only what is truly important” in life.

Wallace’s corresponding insight is to identify, expose, and, most important, free us of what he calls our “default setting” which is “hard-wired into our boards at birth.” Basically, it’s the imperial, triumphant self-centeredness of each of us which he describes this way: “to be deeply and literally self-centered and to see and interpret everything through this lens of self,” to operate “on the automatic, unconscious belief that I am the absolute centre of the universe; the realest, most

vivid and important person in existence.” In a word, solipsism. And, like Jobs’ traps, Wallace’s default setting is something we must learn to overcome.

Considered together, both Jobs’ and Wallace’s commencement speeches are intended to get their college graduates to escape the traps posed by others’ expectations and by their default settings, and to choose from their own hearts the direction of that escape.

The knowledge that we will die, for Jobs, should free us from wasting our limited time “living someone else’s life,” being “trapped by dogma,” and “living with the results of other people’s thinking.” As Jobs repeatedly says, “Don’t lose faith,” but it is essential to make it your own faith not somebody else’s. “You’ve got to find what you love” and “keep looking until you find it.”—“Don’t settle.”

For David Foster Wallace, not settling means getting free of our natural, automatic default setting and the resulting “unconsciousness” of our indifference to other people. This “freedom” is from “the so-called real world of men and money and power [which] hums merrily along in a pool of fear and anger and frustration and craving and worship of self.” It means rejecting the self-worship of solipsism and choosing what you have faith in, choosing what you “worship” consciously, not unconsciously, and not by default, neglect, or failure to act.

Choosing what to worship is crucial because it’s impossible to not worship something, Wallace claims—“everybody worships.” But as he says so insistently, “The only choice we get is what to worship.” [Wallace is channeling here Bob Dylan’s song “Gotta Serve Somebody”: “It may be the devil, it may be the Lord, but yah gotta serve **somebody**.” Check it out.]

In addition to these affinities Steve Jobs has with the late tennis player and writer David Foster Wallace, there are some compelling connections to one of the greatest tennis players in the modern era, Andre Agassi. Like Jobs, Agassi was a celebrated dropout who rose to the top of his profession, became famous and wealthy, and extolled the importance of what he had neglected—formal education. Toward the end of his autobiography he calls “Agassi Prep,” his K-12 charter tennis school for underprivileged children, his “proudest accomplishment.”

Agassi himself was a ninth-grade dropout who substituted punk rock rebellion for formal education for much of his early life. But like both Jobs and

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Wallace, he parlayed his personal success into an instrument to try to help others benefit from the knowledge he had gained along the way in spite of his own lack of education.

When Jobs was fired from Apple in 1985 at age 30, his response could well be Agassi's own when he fell out of world-class tennis competition and had to rededicate himself to recreating his game and virtually starting over. "I didn't see it then," Jobs says, "but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me..." For both men, their fall from grace made it possible for them "to enter one of the most creative periods of my life," as Jobs puts it.

Though the rules didn't seem to apply the way they should have and plans didn't work out the way they should have (Jobs asks, "How can you get fired from a company you started?"), he soon instinctively realizes that the moment was his to control, to do something with, to execute ("something slowly began to dawn on me"). His intuitive awareness of the possibilities in failure came from the same place that Agassi's, Wallace's and Steve Wilkinson's did. They commend the same kind of openness and spontaneity—a kind of impulsive behavior prompted by internal processes—that Jobs also practiced. Jobs repeatedly appeals to "your own inner voice," "your heart and intuition" as the most trustworthy guides to the "big choices" you make about how you live your life.

Wilkinson, too, endorses a similar kind of faith in yourself and control in the face of failure by a commitment to what he calls "ultimate values." And such a commitment, he says, "requires primarily courage," including the courage to treat others fairly: "You may choose to be sportsmanlike, controlled, dedicated, and unselfish, no matter what others might do. These commitments and actions lie within your control." Like Wallace's rejection of our natural, automatic, solipsistic "default setting," Wilkinson rejects self-centeredness—"Put your ego and sense of self-importance in proper perspective."

Choice and control, commitment and courage are bedrock issues for him, as for the others. What he says about tennis in his article "The Ultimate Competitor" applies as well to Agassi, Wallace, and especially Jobs: "Affirm with pride your ability to continue trying your hardest while remaining indifferent to how well you are playing, what others may think of your play, and what

others may do or say."

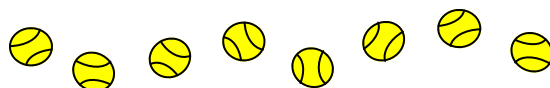
Such a non-conformist, non-ego driven attitude is evident in Jobs' earnest enlistment of "The Whole Earth Catalog" of the 1960s and 70s, and his endorsement of its climactic message at the end of his commencement speech—"Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish." All these men seem to doubt any formulaic, rigid, prescriptive approach to daily life, along with the overconfident, arrogant assurance that I am always infallibly right. And together they question what Wallace describes as "blind certainty, a close-mindedness that amounts to an imprisonment so total that the prisoner doesn't even know he's locked up."

Finally, in virtually reversing the repeated refrain of his autobiography in which he insistently says how much he hates tennis, Agassi echoes Jobs, Wilkinson, and Wallace in emphasizing the importance of consciously "choosing" your destiny, of not submitting to Wallace's default setting or Jobs' external expectations: "I play and keep playing because I **choose** to play. Even if it's not your ideal life, you can always choose it. No matter what your life is, choosing it changes everything."

Steve Jobs, David Foster Wallace, and Steve Wilkinson would agree that "choosing... changes everything." From Wallace's "choosing how you construct meaning from experience," to Jobs' listen to "your own inner voice" and "follow your heart" to "make the big choices in life," to Wilkinson's use of the Serenity Prayer in asking for "the courage to change the things I can."

As all four would say, and do say, "Don't Settle," "Stay Hungry," "Stay Foolish," "You get to decide what to worship," "Never lose your resolve to treat others fairly," and "I want to play just a little while longer." For me, all four men in their words and lives evidence what one of them calls upon us all to see: life as "sacred, on fire with the same force that made the stars: love, fellowship, the mystical oneness of all things deep down." The alternative is settling for "the constant gnawing sense of having had, and lost, some infinite thing." As Jobs has said elsewhere, it's "the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes" whom we count on to "Think Different."

What better way than tennis to settle on and see life this way?



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double hits or carries are not deliberate.

From a wounded STPC member

One of the many advantages of Senior Tennis is the availability of this newsletter as an outlet for opinions, tips, gripes, etc.; and in my case an expression of gratitude. Those of you who know me are aware that I have been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer—which is invariably fatal (unless you have the dubious good fortune to die of something else). Since word of my situation has gotten around, my spirits have been lifted by cards, emails, calls, visits, and welcome offers to just bang the ball back and forth—the latter, I am sure, to keep me humble and to remind me that a lifetime of struggle to improve my game has gone nearly for naught. Having said that, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that you, my Senior Tennis friends, have enriched my life beyond measure for years, both on and off the courts. Some of my most memorable moments have been in keen competition with players who have fought fiercely for every point, but have been good sports about blown line calls, and have shown equal grace in winning and losing. A mark of Senior Tennis.

I continue to do much better than every one of my physicians thought I would, but the pneumonia that plagued me continues to hold me back even though I

have gotten out on the courts a couple of times for an hour of practice.

Playing with you and getting to know you all has been a fun and rewarding experience. Stay as you are. I think of you often.

—Herb Cederberg

Editor's note: *Herb is a dear friend to many of us. He continues his multiple loves: wife Alice, tennis, and art history. On the latter, he is refining a virtually complete book Edward Hopper Unveiled: A Posthumous Autobiography. I am reading a draft, which is delightful and educational. Herb, thank you for your grace, your tennis, and your sportsmanship.*

Notes from retiring members (anonymous)

I enjoyed it while I lasted and it lasted. Thank you.

I'm sorry but due to health reasons I won't be able to continue my membership in STPC. You have done a good job and I'll miss being a member. Thanks!

I've enjoyed many years of playing tennis. I regret to say my tennis days are over due to health problems. Thanks for everything!

Sorry—no longer able to play. Bummer. OLD!

Sorry! Got too old to play. Waiting for a reversal.

I can no longer play. Thanks for the many years of membership!