

Tennis Families

- **Three Generations...** Frances (Fran) Buss, first generation, was instrumental in getting each new generation of the family involved in sports, including tennis.

When Regina (Regi), second generation and daughter was in her late 20's and Fran was in her late 40's, they both decided to take up tennis and enrolled in beginner tennis lessons where they got a solid foundation in the sport. Both continued to take lessons for several summers and played and played! According to Regi, "We were lucky to have each other to play within those beginning years. I still remember how thrilled we were the first time we actually had a long rally!" Eventually both Fran and Regi joined Northwood Tennis Club and got involved with various leagues and teams.

Around the same time, Lori, second generation and younger daughter began playing tennis in high school when her mother and sister started playing. She remembers her mother saying that since she'd taken up skiing, after raising her kids, she needed a sport on the "off" season to keep her in shape. After playing for a few years, Lori developed a shoulder injury which caused her to give up tennis. But, after a decade of not playing, she decided to try tennis again and started playing in a summer league where she worked her way up the divisions, having fun and remaining injury free. "Regi was nice enough to go out and play with me even though she was already an outstanding player and I was a beginner. She 'pounded me into the pavement' on every occasion. I have to credit her for helping me to climb to the top division."

Terri, third generation and daughter of Regi, remembers her first introduction to tennis being when her mom and grandmother started playing. She was about 10 year old and was "dragged" to the courts when her mom played with her grandmother. "I stayed and watched while they were in their 'learning' process, as mom didn't have a sitter. I hit a little with them as they were learning. I clearly remember the expletives while they were learning." However, in high school and college, Terri was involved in track. She threw discus and shot, breaking the school records in the shot and discus while at Millersville, becoming a state champion in the discus her senior year. After graduating from college, she started power-lifting and currently holds all the PA records for the 148 pound class for USAPL. After power-lifting, Terri decided she needed another sport in which to compete. Aunt Lori, grandmother Fran and mother Regi, all kept trying to get her to play tennis, which she did in the summer of 2007.

Currently, all are playing tennis, including Fran who recently turned 85! "She has lived as a wonderful example that we are all so grateful for. Maybe that endurance, tenacity, strength, and mental toughness will help us to hit just one more ball than our opponent" Lori added, as she noted that her daughter Melanie also plays tennis.

Regi wrote, "I am thrilled to now be on a USTA team with both my sister, Lori Huth, and my daughter, Terri Kunsman. My mom comes to many of the games to cheer on the team. Tennis has turned out to be much more than a sport! As well as being a unifying factor in our family, tennis has introduced me to many dear and life-long friends! A side benefit is it is great exercise and a life-time sport!"

- **Camp Gram-mom...** Eight, a number. A number of grandchildren one grandmother could have. In this case she did. It all started 9 years ago when Beverly Tihansky, alias Gram-mom, decided she wanted to spend some time with her 8 grandchildren during the summer. Looking for ideas as to how to entertain them, she enrolled them in tennis lessons at a nearby club, now Winning Touch Tennis Lehigh Valley. The rest is history! Coming to Gram-mom's Bethlehem home in pairs, a boy and a girl cousin of the same age, tennis camp began and it has continued for the past 9 years. Camp Gram-mom now includes three hours of tennis camp each morning follow by a variety of activities the rest of the day. It may include swimming, a field trip, worksheets, cooking class, movie night, miniature golfing or a trip to the mall, to name a few. The kids look forward to this adventure each year and start planning their week early in the

spring. Tennis remains a given and many have extended their instructions to include lessons during the winter months. In fact, Kayla did so well, she made the tennis team at Peddie, the school she now attends.

- **Oakmont Tennis Club in Allentown Celebrates 90 Years of Family Tennis...** Having been founded in 1919 by a group of Army World War I officers stationed in the Allentown area who wanted a place to play tennis, the club, now known as Oakmont Tennis Club, still serves tennis enthusiasts at its 21st and Allen Streets location. This historic club, in the heart of a West End Allentown neighborhood, sports seven red clay courts, which provide a soft and forgiving surface on which to play. Jeff Wenck, current president and club member for fifty years...since age four, emphasized the value of clay courts which allow players, including his own mother, to play well into their 80's because the surface is so much easier on the wear and tear of the player. He, along with a core group of dedicated club member families, many of whom are second and third generations, provide the volunteers that help with the maintenance of the courts and surroundings, including a clubhouse that has a locker room, lounge and showers. The "family friendly" atmosphere is evident by the number of father/mother-son/daughter families playing together at the club.

Since Oakmont is an outdoor facility without lights, it operates in good weather during the day until dusk from March through November. From 1926 to 1947, Oakmont served as host to the PA Clay Court Championships which drew world-class players like Bobby Riggs and Don Bulge. Today, with the same goal of growing the game of tennis, teaching tennis is a big part of the club, which offers clinics for all levels of play. The club also hosts USTA tournaments, the Lehigh Valley Junior Tennis Tournament, an Open Invitational as well as the Sports Fest Tennis Tournament.

Oakmont was selected "2008 Tennis Club of the Year" by the USTA/Middle States/Eastern PA District. Jeff describes the club as a "diamond in the rough" and a highlight of the city of Allentown's West End. For more information, go to www.oakmonttennis.com.

- **The Carpenter Kids-2002 and Beyond...**In 2002, the Carpenter Family of Alburtis, PA, Diane (mom), Peter Jr. (dad), Kaitlin (daughter, age 13) and Peter Tyler (son, age 11) was nominated as "Family of the Year" by EPD. At that time, Kaitlyn was in 8th grade, planning on attending Allentown Central Catholic High School the following year. After training as a gymnast for 10 years, she switched her focus and trained at Adams International Tennis Academy and played in USTA Junior Tournaments. In the summer of 2001, she won the Girls 14's Singles/Doubles in the St. Lucia Coca-Cola Tournament in St. Lucia.

Since that time, Kaitlyn has made her mark in tennis. She graduated from Allentown Central Catholic High School in 2007. While there, she was a four-year varsity member and No. 1 singles and doubles player for the Vikettes. She won the PIAA Districts Title in her senior year and was MVP and a member of the All-Star team in each of her four years in high school. She won the district singles championship in her freshman and senior years and was runner up as a sophomore. She won the districts doubles championship as a junior. Recording a 109-7 win-loss record in her four years, she holds the title of most wins in her school for a female tennis player. She had an undefeated season in her senior year (22-0), but lost in the states tournament.

She currently is attending the University of Massachusetts and is a starter on the tennis team which faces some of the top teams in the country. Last year, in her sophomore year, she received recognition as the "Most Improved Player" after posting a total of 11 wins, including many impressive showings against some top opponents. Slated to play in the middle of the lineup, she stepped up to No. 2 singles on numerous occasions and posted a solid 4-4 record. Overall, her nine dual wins were good for fourth best on the team. Kaitlyn also improved in doubles, posting a 13-12

record after going 6-7 as a freshman.

She credits her parents as the persons who most influenced her tennis career as well as the people she most admires. A Pre-Med/Microbiology ... A Kinesiology Major, after graduation, she hopes to have a career in the field of sports medicine.

Peter Tyler, in 5th grade at the time at St. Francis Academy in Bally, Pa, also trained at the Adams International Tennis Academy and played in USTA sponsored tournaments. He won the Boy's Under 12 Tournament in Princeton in the summer of 2000.

In 2005 Peter moved to Bradenton, Florida to train at Tony Driscoll's Hurricane Tennis Academy based out of the Ritz Carlton in Sarasota and Serendipity Racquet Club. He received private coaching from Andrei Iordachescu who was born in Romania and played on the ATP tour.

Pete attended Pendleton School at IMG Academies in Bradenton for his first 3 years of high school; then transferred to St. Stephens Episcopal College Prep School, also in Bradenton, for his senior year. At St. Stephens, he captained the Boy's Varsity Tennis Team and had a 16-2 season record in singles and a 10-2 record in doubles. He won the District and Regional Title for individual singles and finished in the top 8, losing in the quarter-finals of the state tournament.

The Bradenton-Herald newspaper named Pete as "Spring All-Area Athlete of the Year" for tennis, winning the individual Class 1A Region 6 District and Regional titles.

Since 2007, Pete has played in professional tournaments, two of them as a Wild Card Player; he participated in 13 ITF tournaments and 9 USTA National tournaments, gaining a ranking of 500 nationally. He also reached a USTA ranking in the top 50 in Florida in both the Boys 16's and 18's.

At St. Stephens, Pete was inducted into the National Honor Society with a 3.7 GPA and was named MVP at the spring sports conference. After graduating this past June, he is taking a break, playing pro tournaments such as Futures and Challengers, while deciding where he will likely pursue his collegiate and tennis career.

As for mom and dad...Peter Jr., who was a Liberty High School (Bethlehem, PA) and Susquehanna University tennis team player, continues playing and coaching tennis, entering local tournaments as well as helping coach the Muhlenberg College (Allentown, PA) men's tennis team. Diane, who played tennis for Villanova University, continues her tennis endeavors by playing USTA team tennis. Either or both can be found at various tennis tournaments, matches and competitions supporting and cheering on Kaitlyn and/or Peter Tyler.