



Jill Richard (President)
Pickleball Alberta Board (2023 – 2025)

Being in love with sport her whole life, Jill Richard is currently the Executive Director at Curling Alberta. Intrigued with ensuring that participation is a positive and rewarding experience, she graduated from the University of Alberta's Faculty of Physical Education specializing in the Coaching Studies concentration in 2007 and immediately pursued a career in sport administration.

Accumulating over 15 years of sport management experience, she has had the tremendous benefit of leading two large provincial sport organizations, Tennis Alberta and Curling Alberta, through periods of major transformation and growth, including an amalgamation. While she has been successful in elevating all areas of the businesses, she has been particularly effective in building partnerships and developing new revenue generating and cost-saving strategies, dramatically improving financial sustainability, which has enabled more resources to be directed to growing participation.

Specifically, during her five-year tenure with Curling Alberta, she led the transformation of the organization's deficit position of more than \$150,000 annually into a healthy surplus budget (the 2023 fiscal year produced a profit of more than \$175,000). Over the same period, Curling Alberta's operating budget has nearly doubled, increasing from \$935,000 in 2019, to \$1.7 million in 2023.

Jill has developed a professional reputation as being highly resourceful, hardworking, trustworthy, and plain fun to work with. She believes in values and data-driven decision making, fearless leadership, and staying connected to a larger obligation to make a positive impact on our communities that extends beyond sport.

With her roots lying on a small farm in Calahoo, Alberta, Jill is experienced at a competitive level across pickleball (4.5 Pickleballbrackets doubles ranking and 2022 silver medalist in Women's Open Doubles and Women's Open Singles in Alberta's Provincial Championships), tennis, squash, softball, hockey, badminton, and volleyball. She is an alumni member of the University of Alberta Softball Team and Concordia University Thunder Badminton Team and is an active member at the Royal Glenora Club in Edmonton.

When she's not on a court, in a rink, or in a boardroom, Jill is all about spending quality time with her family, hitting the golf course, reading, and

soaking in live arts and theatre.



**Charity Christianson (Vice President)
Pickleball Alberta Board (2023 – 2025)**

My name is Charity Christianson. I have been actively pursuing my 4.0 rating in Pickleball since I started playing about 18 months ago. Never someone to do anything “half-way”, I jumped into Pickleball headfirst. March 2023, I partnered with a local pickleball company and have been working hard to continue to develop the brand and grow the company.

In 2000, we started our business with a partner from the US out of our home in Sherwood Park. Last year, we divested from our US based partner and our Canadian group of companies is the largest Master Distributor and Manufacturer of steel flanges, fittings, and pipe in Canada. I have been fortunate to have built the company from the ground up.

I have spent more than 10 years travelling the world sourcing products, working with existing manufacturers and developing new relationships. Since 2015, I have held the position of President of The Allied Group – Canada. In this role, I am responsible for the daily operation of our 5 Canadian locations, 150+ employees, \$100 Million dollars of inventory and an average yearly revenue of \$250 Million dollars over the last 5 years.

It has always been my mission to mentor and support the growth of young women and the “underdogs” within our company and I am thrilled to have 4 of our 9 middle management positions held by individuals who have started their careers with our company.

I have been a competitive equestrian throughout my life and having this close relationship with horses has helped me to develop patience, compassion and a quiet fortitude that has served me extremely well in both my professional and personal lives. I have found that I am good at “reading” people because of my many years of partnership with horses.

I have excellent organizational skills and I am not afraid of putting in the time. Additionally, I have a profound drive to ensure decisions are made in the best interest of the greater community. It has always been my personal mandate to fight for justice for all, even when that isn’t necessarily the easiest path forward.



Andrew Gorman (Communications)
Pickleball Alberta Board (2023 – 2025)

My Name is Andrew Gorman (36), and I am putting my name forward to become the Communications Director for the 2023-2025 term for Pickleball Alberta.

Professionally, I own and operate (since 2009) three Subway stores in Peace River, Grimshaw and Manning in Northern Alberta with my family. During this time, I have served on multiple franchisee advertising boards within the Subway system. I also have four years' experience as a group fitness instructor at one of the local gyms here in Peace River.

I started playing pickleball with my wife, Aireen in December of 2019 both coming from a high-level sports background, Aireen, university volleyball and myself in college basketball, and wanted a sport that we could learn and play together. As we improved within our local club, we wanted to see what it was like at a competitive level. Our first tournament was the 2021 Nationals in Red Deer, and we were hooked after that. We have gone on to compete at the Provincial, Regional and National tournaments, with podium finishes at each one. I am currently 4.0 in both Men's and Mixed.

At the beginning of 2023 I started a pickleball podcast (The Pickleball Diaries) in which I recap our experiences at tournaments and promoted it (along with game highlights) on social media. Through the podcast, I also covered the inaugural season of the CNPL (Canadian National Pickleball League) and was able to make connections with members of the ownership group and many of the pro players from across the country. During the CNPL Western Split event in Edmonton, I was invited onto the broadcast and did the colour commentary for the final game of the event. The podcast, along with Aireen and my successes on the courts, was able to draw the attention of Aniviia Pickleball (Canadian company out of Vancouver) who offered us a sponsorship deal and we are now both ambassador athletes.

I live and work in Peace River with Aireen and our two children Kim (13) and Clark (10) and we are a very sports-active family. Both kids do competitive swimming and volleyball, and keep Aireen and I warm in between matches at pickleball tournaments.

With your support, I look forward to being a valuable member of this board

and hope to keep the growth of pickleball in Alberta progressing forward.



**Jeff Holm (Treasurer)
Pickleball Alberta Board (2023 – 2025)**

Jeff Holm is a seasoned Entrepreneur that owns a Manufacturer Representative sales agency for over 20 years. My experience as a professional manufacturer representative has given me a uniquely qualifies me for the role of Treasurer at Pickleball Alberta.

As a small business owner, you wear many hats. Each day provides unique challenges that I enjoy. I lead a team of 4, so in 1 day I can be a team leader, business development manager, accountant, and marketing manager.

My commitment to business integrity, growth and responsibility is evident in growing our agency to over 16 million in sales in a year. My knowledge of Quickbooks will be an asset in budgeting, financial reporting, and fiscal management and will undoubtedly serve Pickleball Alberta well as they continue to grow and support the sport in the province. I've been working in the background for the last 8 months helping the current Treasurer modernize our books by converting them over to financial software that all Accountants are familiar with.

Furthermore, Jeff Holm's dedication to the sport of pickleball and his financial acumen make him well-rounded for the position of Treasurer. His vision for the organization includes ensuring transparent and efficient financial operations, which will contribute to the sustainable growth and success of Pickleball Alberta.

With his solid business background and passion for pickleball, Jeff Holm is ready to bring his skills to the role of Treasurer, helping to secure the financial future of Pickleball Alberta and further its mission to promote and develop the sport in the province.

I've been playing Pickleball since December 2021 and quickly got hooked. I'm currently a 4.0 and love the competitive aspect of the sport and play in as many tournaments as I can. I've medaled at regionals, provincials, and

both of my local club tournaments for St. Albert and Parkland. I'm interested in becoming a coach as well in 2024.



Doug Fogg (Competitions)
Pickleball Alberta Board (2023 – 2025)

Married with 2 kids and 3 grandchildren and have lived in Alberta for 43 years. Today we spend summers in Edmonton and winters in the Phoenix area playing pickleball 365 days a year.

Governance

- Pickleball Alberta: Founding board member of Charter Vice President.
- Pickleball Canada: 2022 Board of Directors
- Founding Board member Edmonton Pickleball Club.
- Edmonton Pickleball Club Director working with City since 2015 to get permanent pickleball courts in Edmonton.
- Original founding member and treasurer of Woodvale Community.
- Past Board Member of MCARFA who supplied recreation and cultural facilities in Millwood's.
- Past Director of Little League in Millwood's.

Sports

- Pickleball Alberta Provincial Champion 4.0 50+
- Played in many tournaments both in Canada and the USA.
- Belong to the Sun city grand pickleball club in USA a 22-court facility and 1,700 members.
- In USA have planned several pickleball events including Canada vs USA
- Depending on the decade have player competitive sports all my life including: baseball, hockey, volleyball, lacrosse, badminton, last 10 years pickleball.

Business

My partners and I owned Cushman and Wakefield commercial real estate in Edmonton where we were the largest commercial real estate company in Edmonton. I currently do consulting with long term clients. I was a long-term member of ICSC and BOMA and was a guest lecturer and moderator for some 20 plus years.

Community events

Coached hockey and baseball

Guest lectures at University of Alberta in Commercial real estate for some 20 years and helped set up their commercial real estate program.

Strength's

Able to work with groups and help direct a path and vision to get tasks completed.

Strong business acumen and understanding of financials.



Ilsa Wong (Coaching) Pickleball Alberta Board (2023 – 2025)

My name is Ilsa Wong (56) and I have agreed to be nominated for a second 2-year term working as Director-Coaching for the Pickleball Alberta Board of Directors.

I grew up playing soccer and subsequently transitioned into coaching when I moved back to Canada after completing graduate school in Oregon.

Throughout a long coaching career at the University of Lethbridge (2001-2020), I was fortunate to coach Provincial programs at Western Canada (2011) and Canada Summer Games events (2013). In 2001 I became the founding President of the Women's Soccer Association of Lethbridge and have been a member of the Alberta Soccer Association's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigeneity Committee (formerly the Women in Soccer Committee) since 2013.

Coaching has been the perfect avenue to combine my love for teaching with sport, not only in the technique of sport, but also the science of coaching. I have completed National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) sport-specific technical levels in basketball, volleyball, soccer and (hopefully) pickleball, and am a trained Learning Facilitator for multi-sport modules in the Competitions stream. This training in the science of coaching has complimented my work as a faculty member in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Lethbridge where I have Chaired the Department since 2007.

In 2015 my pickleball-addicted parents introduced me to a wonderful community of people in a 'new' sport – both of whom would enrich my life. Since then, I have played at Nationals in Canada and the US, become a Level II trained referee (Canada) and this year, joined the Board of Directors of the Lethbridge Pickleball Club where I organized a series of four 'Intro to Pickleball' clinics and two 'Advancing Skills' clinics during the summer.

The speed with which the sport of pickleball is growing brings many challenges from a coaching perspective. With a 'blank slate' to fill, I see opportunities for the Director-Coaching to work towards a provincial

program that contributes to that growth through alignment with a national program, a collective approach to program development, and grassroots, club-based programs for all.

I look forward to playing a role in the continued success of pickleball in Alberta.



**Brenda Feser (Membership)
Pickleball Alberta Board (2022 – 2024)**

My name is Brenda Feser (68) and I would be happy to continue working on the board of Pickleball Alberta having previously fulfilled the roles of Membership Director (2016-2021) and most recently as Director of Junior Pickleball (2021-2022). During the very busy last term my involvements included establishing the Junior information for the PA website, a junior committee, maintaining junior demographics, Club Grants, School Grants, Youth Scholarships, as well as attending the Alberta Sport for Life and SPARC Summit, working with the Director of Coaching, familiarizing with the Long-Term Athlete Development for Pickleball, and organizing the Junior Jamboree 2022.

I have been playing pickleball since 2014 when we joined the Red Deer Pickleball Club and served on the Red Deer Pickleball Club board as Director for four years (2015-2018) and President (2018-2020). In 2021 my husband, Dick, and I were privileged to co-host the Pickleball Canada National Championship along with Tournament Director Gene Vollmin.

My background is in education (B.Ed. – major P. Ed.; Masters – Ed. Psych.) and was fortunate to spend 28 years as a teacher in Red Deer, initially teaching P. Ed. and concluding my teaching career with 15 years as the district lead of the Early Reading Intervention program for schools in Red Deer, Sylvan Lake, Rocky Mountain House, Innisfail and Olds. As a coach of volleyball, basketball, and softball, NCCP training became a significant component of my career as a teacher and my volunteer work with Red Deer Minor Softball and ten years on the Board of Directors of Softball Alberta. In August of 2018 I completed the IPTPA Teach the Teacher and have continued taking NCCP courses most recently taking Commit to Kids for Coaches, Keeping Girls in Sport, Making Head Way in Sport, and SPARC-ing Positive Youth Development Through Sport.

I am happily married to Dick; we have three children and five

grandchildren, all of whom play pickleball recreationally. This past year we have also initiated a family play group as our siblings, kids and grandkids are now getting into pickleball!

I look forward to continuing the work of the Pickleball Alberta Board of Directors and the awesome skills, knowledge, and dedication that the Board members bring to their roles.



**Garand Jones (Officiating)
Pickleball Alberta Board (2022 – 2024)**

My name is Garand Jones and I am willing to put my name forward to be the Director of Officiating on the Pickleball Alberta Board. I came onto the board in September of 2020 and have really enjoyed my involvement with the Board, the Referee Trainers and the Officials throughout the Province.

I started playing pickleball in 2015 and became a member of the Parkland Pickleheads in Spruce Grove. I started refereeing in 2016 and refereed 400 + matches before being certified in February of 2020 in Pebble Creek, Goodyear, Az. Currently I am a Club Rated 4.0 player and am the President of the Parkland Pickleheads, a position I have held since 2018. I am also a member of the Pebble Creek Pickleball Club in Goodyear, Az. I have refereed close to 1,600 matches at all levels from 2.5 to the Pro Level and enjoy refereeing in tournaments more than playing in tournaments.

As the Director of Officiating with Pickleball Alberta I also represent Alberta on the National Officiating Advisory Council. We as a council have several projects underway to enhance our Referee Program in Canada.

Prior to retiring in 2014 I was involved in several businesses and this experience has helped me greatly in my involvement with Pickleball. The reason I am involved in the Pickleball positions I am, is because I want to give back as much as I can to this great game; a game where anyone of any age and capability can find enjoyment and develop great friendships.



**Dean Kroetsch (Juniors)
Pickleball Alberta Board (2022 – 2024)**

My name is Dean Kroetsch (59) and I am putting my name forward for a two-year term as Provincial Junior Director for Pickleball Alberta. My wife and I live in Hanna, AB. We have four adult children, all married, and we are further blessed with five grandchildren, so far.

Over the years I've been involved in many volunteer executive committees with minor hockey, competitive swimming, dance society, etc. working on everything from fundraising to player selection to bylaw re-write committees and pretty much everything in between. I have played, coached, and officiated in minor hockey, volleyball, basketball, competitive swimming, baseball, and softball. I have personally raised over \$80,000.00 fundraising for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Canada by running half and full marathons in Canada and the United States, including the 2018 Boston Marathon.

Professionally I've served on the corporate Group Accident and Sickness Board of Governors for ATCO, both union and management Collective Bargaining teams and many task force initiatives. I've also served as a municipal Councilor for the Village of Forestburg and their various assigned portfolio responsibilities. Although now retired from full time employment, I am currently the Public Information Officer and Firefighter with the Volunteer Fire Department for Hanna, AB.

In the fall of 2018, I retired from a long and successful career as a Power Engineer with ATCO, most of which was spent in supervisory and management positions. At my Saturday evening retirement party, a fellow retiree insisted that I had no more excuses and I had to try playing Pickleball. My wife and I played the following Monday. And Tuesday. And Wednesday, Thursday and we took an IPTPA instructional clinic for beginners on Saturday. Yes, we were hooked!

We quickly developed a passion for the game. A self-professed student of the game, I began putting together drills and skill development sessions, sharing them with our small local club. Broadening our Pickleball experience, my wife and I started playing in tournaments that first year that we began our Pickleball journey.

Competitive by nature, I currently play at a 3.5 level with the goal of competing at 4.0 in 2023. But it's the social aspect of our sport that very

much appeals to me. Having played in many tournaments in Alberta, BC and Saskatchewan, the Alberta Provincial Championships, the 2021 and 2022 National Championships and the 2022 Western Regional Championships, I treasure the opportunities we've had to meet and network with such wonderful people from all across Canada.

Further to my passion for the game, I have also completed my Certification as an Instructor under both the International Pickleball Teaching Professional Association (IPTPA) and the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) here in Canada. Through my contacts I developed while coaching and instructing it became very clear to me that the youth of our Province is a very small pickleball demographic with so much untapped potential. With previous experience in minor sports coaching and officiating the different sports our children were involved in, I wanted to contribute to the development of Pickleball for kids. I'm also working with Director Ilsa Wong and our Coaching Working Group on the direction of coaching in Alberta. I believe we have a very bright future for our youth, and I would like to lead our youth to become the next generation of passionate pickleball players.



**Murray Young (Secretary)
Pickleball Alberta Board (2022 – 2024)**

My name is Murray Young. I hope to advance pickleball in Alberta with service on the Board of Directors for Pickleball Alberta. So many people have contributed to my enjoyment of the game, I want to 'pay it forward' with you and others on our shared 'pickleball journey'.

From Red Deer Provincials in 2019 to being part of tournaments this year in Medicine Hat, Regina, Red Deer, and Spruce Grove, I have seen the terrific work of Pickleball Alberta volunteers, players, officials, and support staff. As a member of the Calgary and the Cochrane Pickleball clubs I enjoy programming offered by Pickleball Alberta and Pickleball Canada (coaching; officiating).

I've worked with undergraduate and graduate students at universities in Canada, the United States, and several institutions in Asia. Building partnerships, creating learning pathways, and mentoring current and future leaders in business has been the focus of three decades of endeavor.

Along the way, I've been able to contribute to the work of boards of directors of several not-for-profit organizations with regional and national

mandates. Those efforts focused on policy, governance, and operational effectiveness from a client perspective.

Perhaps like you, I have had many people 'invest' in me as a person, a player, and an advocate for pickleball. Join me in helping build, refine, and expand that tradition in Alberta. Together we can shape lives and legacies.