

The Fort

Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center



2020 Annual Report

Coming Together

Our Mission

We bring people together of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to embrace the lifelong game of tennis while serving under-resourced youth with the support of the Community.

Our Values

Community - Inclusivity - Joy - Accountability

Our Board

President: Rick Rinkoff **Vice President:** John Ahern
Secretary: Thomas Judd **Treasurer:** Santosh Krishnan
Directors: David Erickson, Jack Foss, Visala Goswitz, Ann Hathaway, Michele Mingo, Keith Radtke, Jim Vaughan

Our Volunteers

Tariq Abdullah, Eddie Anderson, Greg Anderson, Jacob Barrie, Doug Benson, Katie Bergmann, Brandt Berube, Celia Carlisano, Dan Collins, Tisha Colton, Rachel Csintyan, Melissa Dalum, John Denis, Ceci Driano, Alex Fong, Evan Fraser, Deb Frishberg, Karen Gjerstad, Ethan Heidtke, Elizabeth Kauth, K.C. Kauth, Meadow Kinder, Dave Kocemba, Britta Koch, Nancy Lawrence, Will Lieberman, Meghan Lowe, Alexandra Martinez, Annika Mattice, Abby Mattice, Charles Miller, Rasheeda Mitchem, Irwin Montavlo Jr., Lisa Mushett, Ryann Mushett, Reagan Mushett, Susie Neet, LT Nguyen, Marija Nicholson, Abigail Pecholt, Molly Peterson, Gopal Sadagopal, Delaney Schurhamer, Caren Seenauth, Mitchell Sherman, Michael Sieng, Emme Sugnet, Shundrice Tucker, Gavin Webb, Jamee Whaley, Elliot Van Dyke, Kevin Veenstra, Margot Willett, Mel Yasis, Sophia Youngdahl

Our Staff

Esther Tsai, Ally Baker, Ryan Berkas, Richard Buckles, Robin Coverdale, Jackson Farley, Craig Gordon, Brian Grossman, Aaron Holland, Judy Long, Mike Lunka, Christian Maki, Isaac McBroom, Grady McHugh, Lisa Mushett, Christine Nickels, Viet Pham, Martin Schneider, Ursula Shute, Clay Sollenberger, Levin Stewart, David Stingley, Dan Swanson, Nguyen Vo, Niltooli Wilkins

A Letter From Esther and Rick

Dear friends of The Fort,

2020 is a year we'll never forget. Although compounded by the crisis of the pandemic, we could not be prouder of how The Fort has continued to move forward and evolve despite the considerable challenges. This a testament of our Fort community coming together during difficult times and looking out for one another. And because of you, we have been able to continue to focus on our mission of bringing people together of all ages, abilities and backgrounds and providing support for youth with less access to resources.

When the stay-at-home order was enacted, many patrons expressed concern for our staff and their well-being. We are very grateful to our board for caring and supporting our staff with a compensation plan during the closure period. Many of you also came forward with generous donations supporting our COVID-19 emergency relief fund.

The COVID restrictions posed challenges to further our capital campaign fundraising efforts; hence the campaign ended in June raising 1.125million although our goal was 1.7million. We were blessed by an anonymous "Guardian Angel" who stepped in big time and provided the final \$100,000 donation. The Fort remained financially solvent and found a way to complete the replacement of the back air-supported bubble.

We are very grateful to the Wells family Isora Foundation; they have remained our key grant funder since the opening in 2002 supporting The Fort's general operations, youth scholarships and capital campaign. This funding allows us to persevere and keep our focus on delivering our mission. We are humbled and honored to become one of the Foundation's Wells Legacy grant recipients in the coming year.

2020 stretched us in many ways and has led to an even greater appreciation of the power that tennis and our community has in improving physical, mental, and social well-being. We have doubled down on our charge to ensure equitable access to these benefits regardless of age, ability, or background, and we thank you for your partnership and unwavering support in this effort.

With gratitude,



Esther Tsai
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Esther Tsai".



Rick Rinkoff
Board President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard J. Rinkoff".



Play on, staying healthy...

“Why did you continue to play tennis at The Fort during Covid?”



The Colton Family: “We are lucky enough to be in the medical field, so we were able to calculate the risk versus benefits of playing indoor. We decided it was more beneficial to keep playing a sport we love and stay active throughout the pandemic knowing The Fort has all the precautions in place. We trusted The Fort staff to do their part in keeping us safe.”

Sandhya Joshi and Gopal Sadagopal:

“Firstly, we love tennis and secondly we want to “Support The Fort” in their mission to bring the sport to everyone in a inclusive manner. We saw that The Fort followed CDC and State mandated protocols, they were careful in screening people entering and playing with a mask on wasn't as bad as we had thought it might be. The friendliness of the staff and their dedication to the game both on and off court.”



Jim Nichols:

“The way you have redone the tennis center with new air filters, air-conditioning and the inside environment , make us feel very safe and comfortable. During COVID, 85% of our players continued playing tennis in our senior leagues. I am very passionate about the game; love organizing and getting our people to keep playing tennis during COVID to stay active. Pre-COVID, we consistently had 20 courts reserved each week and I am confident most of our players will be returning this fall. I think it is important that seniors like us be

given the opportunity to play competitive tennis as it is great exercise. Five members in our league are over 90 years including myself. Many are in their 80s. For good health play tennis. It is more than a racquet.”



Phil Hallaway:

“I continued to play at The Fort because the pay back outweighed the risk. The Fort had good safety protocols in place and I felt safe. I enjoy playing tennis, and connecting with people of all ages and cultures. Coming to The Fort got me out of the house, and kept me active. The other reason I kept coming to The Fort was to support the organization financially. If no one showed up, The Fort would not get any revenue and it worried me that the coaches could have a financial struggle.”



...in a pandemic year.

David Schultz: "Tennis is simply not a sport. It is about building together mind, body, integrity, and team building. During the pandemic and afterwards, The Fort was a welcoming place that nourished these four virtues. That is why I came back to The Fort, that is why I stay."



Nancy Brown: "The impeccable cleanliness, CDC guidelines that were fully supported by staff/patrons and our unconditional commitment to those guidelines helped me feel safe and ensure The Fort would remain open to our community throughout the pandemic."

Kaylan Pingilli: "We were so amazed the way the Fred Wells team has handled the COVID-19 situation, safety measures taken by each and every one working at Fred Wells give us the confidence to play. We are really impressed the way the staff handled the situation overall."



Lauren Schenck: "I chose to allow Lauryn to continue playing tennis at The Fort because I saw what the leadership and staff quickly implemented to ensure top priority for the safety and well-being of their staff and patrons. I read and saw where the staff made physical changes and took additional protection measures around the tennis facility. Also, Lauryn loves playing tennis at The Fort because she has always felt the welcoming environment from the staff and coaches there. In addition, The Fort's leadership and staff also lead by example, that all those who desire to learn and play the game of tennis are welcome."



Reese Ellingson: "From a parent perspective, Reese continued to play tennis as we feel physical activity is very important plus the social aspect. Kids need to move, meet friends and have healthy relationships. Reese is a very athletic child and we would never take tennis or hockey from her regardless of the situation."



Sue Hommeyer: "During the pandemic, The Fort became my outlet and happy place. I was pleased you put the protocols in place and it was diligently enforced as the protocols were not good in many other places. So the only way I would have come back is knowing The Fort was being overly cautious. It made me feel confident to be in an environment with other people social distancing and following mask requirements. I feel fortunate to be part of The Fort community."

Needs may have changed...

Distance Learning Day Program

With schools not returning in-person in the Fall of 2020, The Fort launched a Distance Learning Day Program to support our students' evolving needs. Our upstairs classrooms were transformed into supportive library spaces, and our atrium served as a socially-distanced café where students could connect over their varying lunch breaks. In the afternoon, the students headed to the courts for 1.5 hours of tennis with professional coaches. Van transportation was provided, as we were able with capacity limits, as well as healthy snacks and lunch.



Highlights

- 3 days per week from 7am – 4pm
- 30 students total
- 9 different Minneapolis schools
- Grades 4-10

"I like being here because I don't get distracted while I do schoolwork and I also don't get distracted by video games."
- Day Program Participant

A perfect combination to support physical, mental, social, and academic needs!



... but the connection remained

Food Deliveries/ Clothing Drives/ Home Visits

Our Fort community rallied around each other to support basic family needs at a time of increased challenge in 2020. TennisWorks coaches hit the road to complete four rounds of home visits to check in with students each month during the summer and over the Thanksgiving holiday. Fresh groceries were provided along with tennis equipment, enrichment activities, cash assistance from a generous donor, and gift cards.

We also supported the Urban Academy winter clothing drive, collected winter fun kits for families, and distributed 3,000 pairs of Bombas socks to six local schools thanks to a partnership with the USTA Foundation and Bombas.



Programming in the Parks

Tennis is a great socially distanced sport, and we created new summer programming to engage TennisWorks students and families at an outdoor tennis facility in Minneapolis on Friday afternoons during the summer of 2020. 54 unique students participated over 10 weeks.



Our Fearlessly GiRL program transitioned from Zoom to in-person in late June with girls and adult coach mentors coming together on Tuesday evenings at Lake Hiawatha Park in Minneapolis.

Virtual Programming

We journeyed together in 2020 to establish new and bring back old ways to stay connected and support each other whether it was over Instagram, on ZOOM or Google Meet, group text, coach videos or good 'ol snail mail.

A Community Coming Together...



"The Fort is special to me because of its awesome sense of community. It feels like family! Fred Wells' mission of service, care and compassion for our younger members and greater community is both admirable and inspiring. The Fort's heart is in the right place and aligns with my own both on and off the tennis court!" Molly Fischer

"I began hitting at The Fort in 2017 and since then I have not only gained the knowledge and skill of tennis, but I have gained so many friends. At The Fort I am able to learn tennis as well as life skills that I apply in my day-to-day life. For example, the respect of others on and off the court. At The Fort I am able to hit with different friends every day. Together we are able to walk on and off the court as friends while also competing and learning from each other." Mary Kate



"I like The Fort because there is a lot of support, and they are caring people that will protect you and keep you safe. Everyone is welcome to come, and I hope we get to see more people at tennis center plus they make you laugh and do fun stuff with you. Everyone is welcomed!" Ashley

... Day After Day



"As a single dad, I cannot tell you how awesome Fearlessly GiRL is for girls at this age. I feel like I'm a good dad but the exercises and activities you provide are invaluable and definitely things I would not have thought to get into. I worry a lot about socialization at this age and would even if COVID wasn't a thing but worry more because of all the isolation students have. They are burying themselves in their devices now more than ever. So, kudos to The Fort for recognizing a need and making it happen." Shannon O'Hanlon

"Having my kids play tennis at The Fort was a no-brainer for me. The Pros make it a point to know your children individually and they make tennis fun! I personally love The Fort's community feel and the fact that they have an after-school program that serves under resourced youth." Sally Leary



"I am pleased to financially support the Fort's programs, and in particular its youth programs - those that develop self-esteem in combination with fun activities, community-building and skill-building. The Fort's outreach to underserved populations and anti-racism messaging make it especially attractive to me as a donor." Liz Hathaway Castelán



Financials

Ending December 31, 2020

Revenues & Other Support

	2020	2019
Program Revenues	\$ 1,296,125	\$ 1,693,850
Support	860,876	784,812

Net assets released from restrictions

Restrictions satisfied by payments or time	135,500	446,187
--	---------	---------

Total Revenues and Other Support without Donor Restriction

	2,165,197	2,493,066
--	-----------	-----------

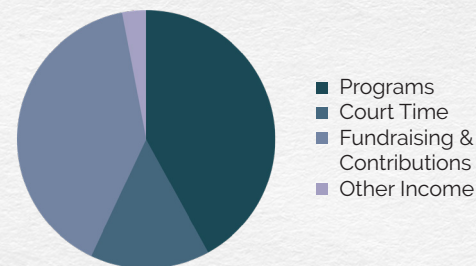
Statement of Cash Flow

Cash at Beginning of Year	1,113,789	909,263
Cash at End of Year	661,697	1,113,789

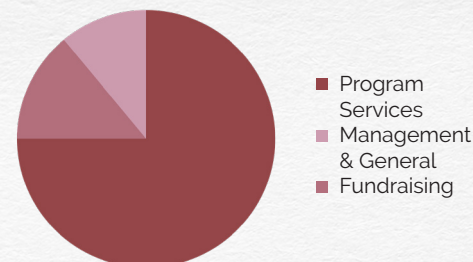
Statement of Net Assets

Net Assets Beginning of Year	3,176,818	3,217,274
Net Assets End of Year	3,343,489	3,176,818

Revenues



Expenses



Donors

\$100,000+

Anonymous Household

\$65,000+

Isora Foundation

\$50,000+

USTA National

\$25,000+

Anonymous Household

Otto Bremer Trust

USTA Foundation

\$10,000-\$24,999

Thomas & Michelle

Bradley

Wells Family Fund

of Minneapolis

Foundation

\$5,000-\$9,999

Sheltering Arms

Foundation

Nancy & Dom Driano

Terry & Darrin Jackson

Rick Rinkoff &

Julia Ferguson

USTA Northern

\$2,500-\$4,999

Tom & Deb Frishberg

Visala & Joseph

Goswitz

Ann Hathaway

Michele & Tom Mingo

Ken, Sadie, Lee & Taylor

Reiners Charitable

Foundation

David Schultz

Albert & Esther Tsai

\$1,000-\$2,499

Nancy Brown

Curtis L. Carlson

Family Foundation

John Carnahan &

Leslie Yoder

Hyung Choi

Dr. & Mrs. Chris Coetzee

Frederic C. Collins Trust

Josh & Tisha Colton

Mike & Leslie Connelly

Philippe & Jeni Duliere

Kim Foley

Jack & Madeline Foss

Richard C. &

Britt L. Gage

Family Foundation

Tom & Monica Hangge

Charlotte

Hanley-Jacobson

Jeff & Lucy Heegaard

John Hill

Luis Laguna

Nancy & Mark

Lawrence

Bill Lunka

Margaret Madden

Regal Wood Cabinets,

LLC

Rich Rosenberg

Saint Paul and

Minnesota Foundation

Jim Schneider

Senior Tennis Players

Club Inc

Debby Tresidder

Mary Kay Ulness

David Vanney &

Cathy Ruther

James Vaughan

William & Jane Williams

\$250-\$999

John Ahern

Leslie Antunovich

Becky Arlt

Virginia & Walter Bailey

Kathy Baker

John Bantle

Larry Baran

Simona & John Berkner

Bob Beverage

Andrea Birkeland

Dale Borgeson

Cynthia Brady

BraveNorth Technology

Leslie Broerman

Terri Cairns

Angel Chandler

Carol Culligan

Laura & John Dale

Melissa & Ryan Dalum

Kaitlyn Dennis

Jeffrey Devens

Andy Dizon

Amber, Ryan, & Reese

Ellingson

Marti & Ryan Estey

Gretchen Faul

Julie Faulkner

Karyn Fuchs

Becky & Jamie Galioto

Sue Gehrity

Nancy Greer

Jason & Nicole Grosz

Janet & Phil Hallaway

Kathleen Johnson

Cindy Hames

Michael & Cindy

Harriage

Jason & Jenifer Heath

Diamond Ho

Karen Hoffman

Michael Klevay

Donald Kleven

Ruth Konop

Ruth & Santosh

Krishnan

Mark Kurilla

Pablo & Roseanne Levi

Jean & Arnold London

Jessica London

Mike & Barbara Lowe

Jamie Lukehart &

Sam Hobbs

Rose Lunka

Timothy & Cynthia

Lynch

Franz Macedo

Kirsten Mair

Azimir Mahmic

Susan Makela

Bob Manning

Corrine McCarthy

Carolyn

McCarthy-Reckard

Matt & Zeny McCoy

Kara & Matt McGuire

Salman & Saira Mitha

Garrett Mulrooney &

Anissa Mediger

Paul Mueller

Andrew & Lisa Mushett

Marcie Myers

Jim Nichols

Tom & Christine Nickels

Gillian O'Shaughnessy

Roshan & Jen Rajkumar

Mary Reimann

Christine Salmen

Phoukhine & Phonekeo

Soundara

Brian Shoemaker

Diane Snodgrass

Amy & Matthew Steuart

Tony & Ronda Stingley

Peter & Maria Stitzel

Caryn Sullivan &

Christopher Galler

Vivien Talghader

John & Kristin Tengwall

Thuy Tran

Cindy & Joe Walz

Jeremy & Carrie Webb

Jennifer Wenck

Margot Willett &

Bob Miller

Frank Zink &

Katie Resch

Up to \$249

Suzanne Anderson

Krista Anderson

Kristi Anderson

Tiffany & Sam Anderson

Christopher Angell

Meena Arun

Sybil Axner

Melissa Bartz

Carter Bayne

Tobi Bell

Tom & Becky Berkas

Raju Bhupatiraju

Kathy Bjornson

Teresa Borzcik

Thierry Boudet

Vadim Braginsky

Betsy Braman

Angie Brinkmeier

Shannon Browne

Diane Bundlie

Ann Burt

Jim Butala

Roseanne & David

Byrne

Joan Cahill

Matthew Callahan

Stephanie Callahan

Becky & Aldo

Castellano

Teri Carlisano

Ryan Carlson

Michelle & Bill Caulfield	Hickey Lisa Himmelstrup	Warren Munson Mary Ellen Murphy	Megan Tucci Sarah & Mark Twedt	John Reiling Marc & Cheryl Remhof
Ian & Kathy Charpentier	Jim & Deb Holland Susan Hommeyer	Megan Murphy Varda Nauen	Dave Uhler Gale Van Buskirk	John Ryan Jack & Gretchen Sjoholm
Bert Chien	Thalia Hooker	Dee Neeley	Verena & Pat Van Fleet	Donald Smith & Jodell Husnik Smith
Joan Cochran & Matt Crellin	Kathy & Mike Hopkins Stacy & Greg Horwitz	Roberta Nelson Susan Nelson	Jacob VanScoy Amy & Paul Vargo	Tom Spencer Linda & Louis Tilton
Lisa Cohen	Sherry Houle	Jane Newman	Anthony Vavoulis	Verena & Pat Van Fleet
Dan Collins	Emily Howard	Gloria & Julius Ngwendson	Kevin Veenstra	Judith Vogen
Don Combs	Howard Family Fund	Kaleb Ngwendson	Zlata Vlodayer	Rita & James Waletski
Robin Coverdale	Jerry & Judy Hunt	Mike & Julie Nickels	Tara Waldron	Kristen Wilk
Molly & Patrick Cronin	Laura Hunt	Susan Nissen	Rita & James Waletski	Ric & Linda Yates
Elizabeth Culligan	Coral Hurley Polson	Tara Norgard	Richard Wallin	In Memory of John McCarthy
Matt Cummins	Kyle Huseth	Judith & Glenn Nylander	Anne Weber	Jerry & Patrice Stahnke
Charles Davis	Pam Huss	Steven Nyman	Emily Weber	In Memory of Ray Pearson
Craig Davis	Dennis Hykes	Deborah Oladapo	Susan Wehrenberg	Roland Glessing
John DeHarpporte	William Jacobson	Ian Olesak	Tim Wells & Mary Ellen Griffith-Wells	In Honor of Karen Gjerstad
Miriam Deskin	John Jerhoff	Kendra Olive	Jamee & Jarvis Whaley	Kevin Duchscher
Carie Dicke	Del Johnson	Erika Olson	Trisha Whinnery	Tom & Deb Frishberg
Jim & Gail Dixon	Stacey Johnson	Steve Pankratz	Terry Willems	Anne Jones
Tad Dolphay	Liz Jones	Steve Pankratz	Michael Woolsey	Romaine Scharlemann
Jordana & Josh Dorn	Molly Jubert	Linda Pavic	Rob Zelada	In Honor of Jeff & Bea Melby
Cathy Duthie	Elizabeth Junghans	Robyn Pearson	Kjirsten Zellmer	Marti & Ryan Estey
Josh Dwyer	Mary Kalish-Johnson	JP & Melissa Peltier	Nguyen Vo Family Scholarship Fund	In Honor of Tyler Waldron
Nicholas Dyer	Shon Kane	Richard Perry	Nguyen & Emi Vo	Vicki McKenna
Kristin Dyrhaug	Kenneth & Elizabeth Kauth	Molly & Tom Peterson	In Memory of Matthew Anderson	In-Kind Donations
Laurie Ehle	Marilyn Kelley	Robert Peterson	Krista Anderson	Charlie Aul
Dave Ehrhardt	Christopher Kelly	Anne & Brian Petschel	In Memory of Jim Dixon	Joachim & Juli Baecker
Sue Ensign	Jan Kentala	Marie Plourde	Virginia & Walter Bailey	Bombas Socks
David Erickson	William Kiefer	Julie & Jim Quandt	Alice & Charles Berquist	Davanni's
Patty Erickson	Jacqueline Kirk	Elyse Rabinowitz	Edwin & Sharon Booth	Downtown Eyes
Nancy Etwiler	Nancy & Dan Klausner	Dipu Rahman	Tom & Janine Braman	Eagan Massage Center
Kara Fairbairn	Gretchen Koehn	Monica Raina	Jane Clappier	Jackson Farley
Sarah Fairbanks	Leigh Koidahl	Shashi Rao	Neil & Catherine	Good Sports Foundation
Kevin Farley Sr.	Betsy Kuller	Kevin Reber	Convery	Julene & William Denet
Shannon Fasching	Kathryn Laird	Christopher Reedy	Julene & William Denet	Ronald Dodd
Jason Faul	Jennifer Landers	Jennifer Ressmeyer	Dee Dolny	Dee Dolny
Ann Fecht	Linda Langeness	Thomas & Mary Ricker	Daniel Flesher	Daniel Flesher
Rena Feldman	Victoria Lappi	Shelly Ritz	Susan Furtney	Susan Furtney
Bruce Field	Sharon Larkins	Ferrol & Catherine Robinson	Annie Gehan & Bill Shoemaker	Annie Gehan & Bill Shoemaker
Joe & Lisa Filhart	Susan Laylon	Dennis Rodning	Karen Gjerstad	Susan Haigh
Molly Fischer	Tom Lencowski	Douglas Roome	Susan Haigh	Cindy Hames
Beverly Franklin	Tony Leonard	Terissa Sajevic	Cindy Hames	Mike & Maureen Harms
Elizabeth & Steve Fridinger	Sarah & David Lilja	Gopal Sadagopal & Sandhya Joshi	Mike & Maureen Harms	Michael & Cindy Harriage
Renee Frisch	Christina & Derrick Lindstrom	Sally Sand	Michael & Cindy Harriage	Ann Hathaway
Douglas & Paula Fusco	Anne List	Sonya Schober	Ann Hathaway	Dennis Hayden
Michael Galegher	Barbara Little	Christine Schneider	Dennis Hayden	Diamond Ho
Sonia Gercheva	Kathleen Lopiano	Steve & Kathy Schneider	Diamond Ho	Janie Kirschbaum
Anne Gibson	Mike & Amy Lunka	Tina Seidenfeld	Janie Kirschbaum	Joyce Kjeldseth
Jim Giefer	Huda Malik	Andrea Shaker	Joyce Kjeldseth	Sandy Martin
Tom Ginther	Niaz Mahmood	Ursula Shute	Sandy Martin	Victoria McCabe
Karen Gjerstad	Joan Madden	Kate Singer	Victoria McCabe	Corrine McCarthy
John Glasenapp	Laura Maki	Gretchen Sjoholm	Corrine McCarthy	William Merwin Jr
Kate Graf	Amy Marret	Barb & Bruce Smith	William Merwin Jr	Patrice Nadeau
Elizabeth Greenfield	Cindy Mattice	Claire Solnitzky	Patrice Nadeau	Eric & Wanda Narvaez
Megan Gunderson	Stephen & Andrea McCue	Mike Stein	Eric & Wanda Narvaez	Ralph Norusis
Alan Gustafson	Kim McDevitt	Marc & Lisa Stingley	Ralph Norusis	Mary Ann Ogden
Kyle & Betty Gustafson	Angie McIntyre	Kelley Stoneburner	Mary Ann Ogden	Carl Ohrn & Peggy Reichert
Amy Guttery	Vicki McKenna	Meredith Stromberg	Carl Ohrn & Peggy Reichert	John & Louise Palmer
Patti Hade	Laurie Meidt	Scott & Erika Sullivan	John & Louise Palmer	Eleanor & Merle Peden
Susan Haigh	Lena Merman	Erik Sutcliffe	Eleanor & Merle Peden	William Pederson
Amy Hall	Laura Meyer	Deni Svendsen	William Pederson	Michele & John Potts
John Hanlon	Dawn Meyers	Scott & Christine Swanson	Michele & John Potts	
Cynthia Hanson	Diane & Bruce Meyers	Michael Tennis		
Dan & Molly Hartnett	Hannah Mody	Heather Teskey		
Liz Hathaway Castelan	Amy Moeller	Bao Thao		
Beth Haupt	Brett Molitor	Stacy & Troy Tonnessen		
Rich Heichert	Drew Mons	Khari Tran		
John & Sarah Heidtke	Amy Moore			
Kristin Henkenius	Juanita Mora			
Sanny Hermes	Pam & Randy Muetzel			
William & Virginia				

The Fort

Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center

