

LINDA PIATT



Linda Piatt played ping pong on her dad's table in the basement growing up, but it wasn't until her 50s that Piatt learned to play table tennis.

Many see the titles as interchangeable but after joining the Oklahoma City Table Tennis Club, Piatt learned what she didn't know, and it was a lot.

"I grew up playing because it was just what we did back then, you know," Piatt said. "Then I took some lessons at the club and immediately discovered that everything I did was incorrect."

The Edmond resident joined the Oklahoma City Table Tennis Club about 10 years ago. She was looking for something fun and active to do with her free time when she discovered the group. Her love for the game was quickly renewed and she threw herself into the club, taking the position as club treasurer, which she still holds, and improving her technique.

Piatt, 60, recently teamed up with fellow club member, Esther Lamptey, for some local tournaments including the Oklahoma Senior Games.

The pair took first in women's doubles at the games this spring. Lamptey also won first in women's singles with Piatt on her heels in second place. And Piatt took first with a male partner in mixed doubles.

Piatt and Lamptey paired up for their first National Senior Games this summer in Albuquerque, where they finished 5th in women's doubles. Piatt will also compete in women's singles and mixed doubles events.

Piatt said Lamptey is an encouraging partner who easily brushes off mistakes and offers tips for improvement.

Lamptey, who is a former African table tennis champion, brings the intensity to the team, while Piatt is full of joy for the game.

“I think we’re a good team because I do pick up things from her and try to emulate her, but ultimately we both enjoy it,” Piatt said.

In the past 10 years, Piatt said table tennis, and her table tennis family, have provided much-needed support as she watched her sister die of cancer and her dad die from Alzheimer's. The game keeps her mind sharp and provides a welcome distraction from the everyday challenges of life, she said. And the other club members have become like family.

“Maybe that is just too simple, but it allows me to enjoy every day,” Piatt said. “I enjoy my job, but when it’s time to leave and I know I’m on my way to a lesson, it’s exciting. It’s something to look forward to.”

Oklahoma Senior Games competitions occur annually in September and October. This year, competitions will be held in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Shawnee, Norman, Yukon and Warr Acres.

Events include three-on-three basketball, track and field, golf, swimming, water walking, 5K and 10K runs, 5K power walk, 5K race walk, bowling, tennis, table tennis, golf croquet, shuffleboard, cycling, cornhole, badminton, archery, pickleball, racquetball, softball and triathlon. Participants age 50 and older will compete in categories by age and gender.

Oklahoma Senior Games qualifies athletes for National Senior Games competition held every two years. About 300 athletes who qualify in 2020 will represent Oklahoma in the National Senior Games competition November 5-18, 2021 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

For more information visit www.okseniorgames.com or call (405) 821-1500.