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## Pickleball showcase puts a fun spin on open house

By Jon Kingdon



From left: Karen Reedy, Dana Reedy, Carmen Sanz, Melanie Snow, Chris Otani Photo Jon Kingdon

In a recent listing of an open house on April 30 at 3911 Happy Valley Road in Lafayette, Melanie Snow, an agent from Coldwell Banker, listed its seven bedrooms, six and a half baths, and luxurious view on 1.5 acres among its many other selling points. In addition, Snow made it clear prior to the showing that the owner, a pickleball enthusiast, had resurfaced the tennis court and lined it to make two pickleball courts available as well.

"Most of my friends play religiously and there has been more excitement for residential homes to have pickleball courts," Snow said. "It's a very social sport and it leans into what's popular for all age groups. They can bring their friends and have small events. Potential buyers can try out the pickleball courts because we have the nets ready to go."

To make it clear how the game was played for the uninformed, Snow had Carmen Sanz, a pickleball instructor at the Lafayette Tennis Club and a part time competitor on the pro tour, demonstrate the game with three of her students and answer any questions agents

might have about the game.

Sanz came to the United States from Spain ten years ago and was working in the pharmaceutical industry. Four years later, she discovered pickleball and never looked back. "I always loved sports and when I found pickleball, I knew that it was what I wanted to do and it gave me a real purpose," Sanz said. "I can see it adding value to a property as there is a real shortage of pickleball courts for people to play on. It has become popular with professional tennis players and celebrities so it's something that can become a core of their backyard."

Sanz is also available to come to people's home and bring people together. "My team and I will conduct competitive events, birthday, retirement, and bachelorette parties, and corporate and team events," Sanz said. "Today we're here doing exhibition matches for the realtors to observe."

Sanz takes more of a holistic approach in teaching the game. "Pickleball can be a platform to learn more and be the best version of yourself," Sanz said. "It really takes the values that you need in life to do better like perseverance, physical and strength, conditioning, and positivity. It's a 24/7 approach in mind, body, and soul."

Like all sports there is the potential for injuries. "There is a risk in everything we do in life and in sports but from an injury point of view, it is a low impact sport and people don't get injured as much compared to other sports in that you don't need to move a lot," Sanz said. "However, people should consider wearing protection for their eyes."

Chris Otani, one of Sanz's students, began playing two years ago and was soon won over. "I used to play tennis in high school, and I found that pickleball is simple to play but hard to master and that's what makes pickleball very addicting."

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