

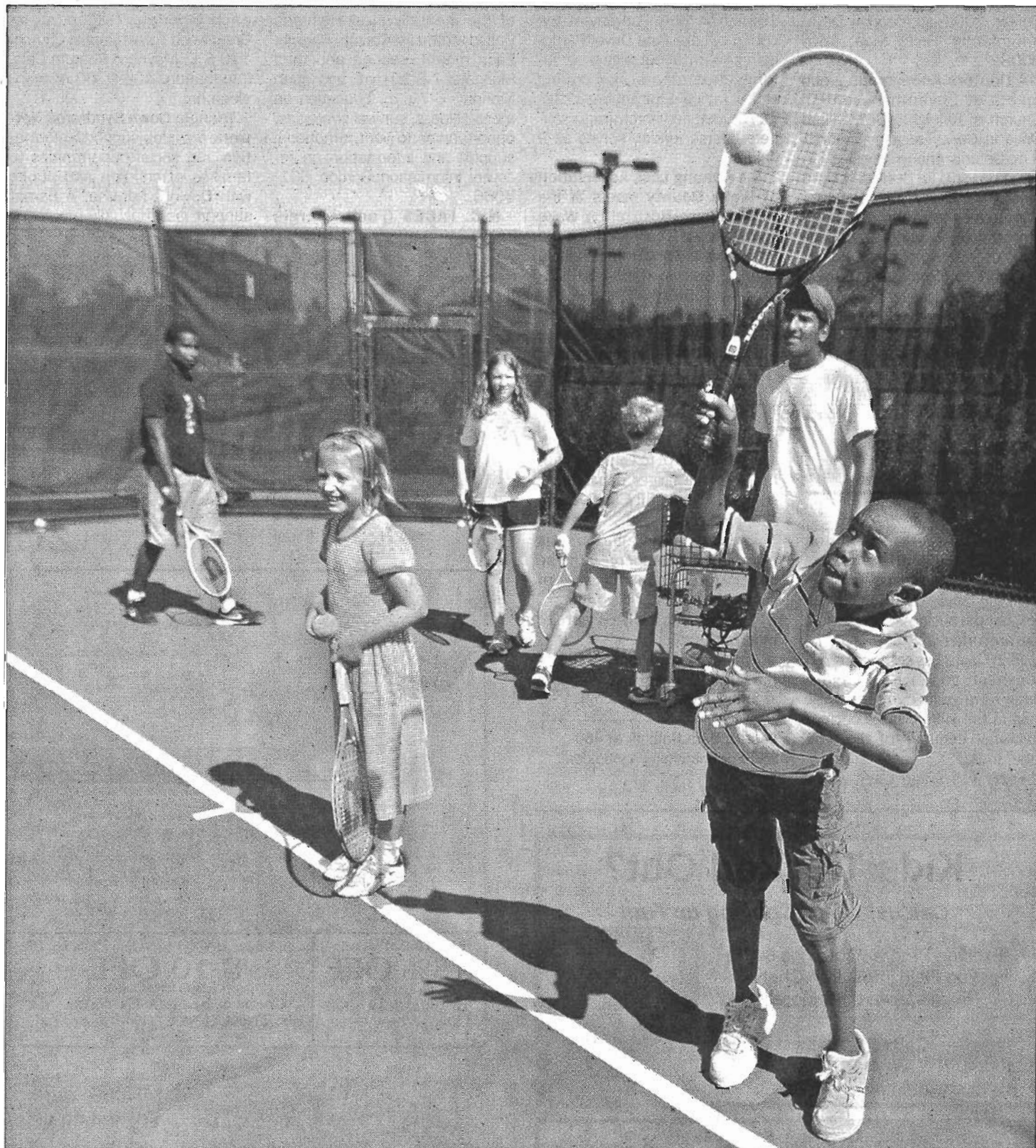
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MORE

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Mary Wehring says "Brideshead Revisited" takes on too many big themes to be explored in a two-hour movie.

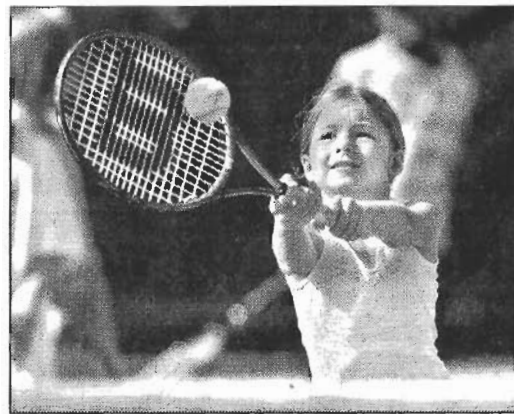


STAFF PHOTOS BY MICHAEL MCLOONE

Junious Whitaker, right, practices his serve during tennis camp at the Cary Tennis Center. Other participants, from left, are Tiyali Ikemefuna, Melanie Walker, Taylor Marshall and Aaron Walker. Camp organizer Aneesh Kodali is second from right.

NET WORTHY

Tennis-loving brothers
teach kids who can't
afford traditional camp



BY ADAM ARNOLD
STAFF WRITER

Western Wake County towns and some nonprofit organizations are making an effort to serve up affordability for needy summer and trackout campers.

The aim is to make it easier for children who otherwise wouldn't have the resources to participate in the programs to do so.

Aneesh Kodali, 16, and his brother Anudeep, 10, turned their love of tennis into an opportunity to share with other kids who wouldn't otherwise have the chance to play.

"Kids for Kids" held its first session for 20 campers over four mornings last month. The camp at Cary Tennis Center was free, funded by the Kodali Family Private Foundation.

The idea sparked immediate interest. "I had so many calls," said Usha Kodali, the boys' mother.

Usha Kodali said the plan was Aneesh's. For several years he has organized book and school-supply drives for kids in the community who can not afford them.

Aneesh and Anudeep Kodali are both competitive tennis players with Anudeep being nationally ranked in his age group.

Aneesh wanted to share that passion. Instead of an academically focused philanthropy project, "I would like to do something in tennis this summer," Usha Kodali recalled Aneesh saying. "How about if I run a camp?"

The Kodalis are not alone in their efforts to provide no- or reduced-cost recreation opportunities for area children who cannot afford them.

The Cary Family YMCA, for instance, has scholarship programs.

The response to the tennis camp floored Usha Kodali, who said she got 55 or 60 calls for the 20 slots.

All the players were beginners and were provided with four hours of instruction from a professional, free rackets, balls and T-shirts.

The success of the camp has the Kodalis planning another for either the third or fourth weekend in August. Details were not available at press time.



Aaron Walker returns a volley during tennis camp. Above, Olivia Cameron practices returning serves.

ANOTHER SERVING OF TENNIS

Because of the success of last month's camp, members of the Kodali family are planning another "Kids for Kids" tennis camp for children who otherwise would not be able to afford it. While the intention was to hold the camp over the third or fourth weekend in August, details were not available at press time. For information contact Usha Kodali at 859-9092 or (910) 308-8369.

Public programs

Cary, Apex, Holly Springs and Morrisville all have programs to offer financial assistance to children who otherwise would not be able to participate in the town's summer day camps and trackout programs.

"We don't want to turn anybody away because they can't afford a program," said Dwayne Jones, Cary's recreation programs supervisor.

Cary offers payment plans or fee waivers, Jones said.

The number of campers using the programs has risen over time. In 2006, 11 children received assistance valued at \$4,500. Those numbers rose to 18 and \$8,200 in 2007. So far in 2008 the aid for 43 children has amounted to \$54,000.

Cary is also working toward developing an aid concept for campers modeled on its Oasis program for residents who cannot pay their water, sewer or solid-waste bills.

The town accepts one-time or regular donations to Oasis from utility customers and passes the money to Christian Community in Action, a private, nonprofit group that administers the program.

Though the program for campers is still in the planning stages, Jones has hopes for it.

"This kind of steps it up to the next level," Jones said.

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