

# The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

## Play pickleball and back children's brain tumor research in April

By Stephanie Toone, for The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

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Paddle up for a game of pickleball with a purpose.

On Sunday, April 16, [Ian's Friends Foundation](#) will host its 2nd Annual IFF Pickleball Open at the Atlanta Pickleball Center. The Atlanta-based pediatric brain tumor research organization invites spectators and pickleball pros to the event, which will be held from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The [charity tournament](#) is open to players of all levels and ages.

Proceeds from the tournament will help IFF's mission of funding innovative, targeted research for new therapeutic methodologies for treating and curing pediatric brain tumors. That mission began in 2006 when the organization's founders Phil and Cheryl Yagoda's son Ian was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor at the age of 2. In 2022, it was estimated that [5,900 children were to be diagnosed](#) with brain tumors that year. Brain tumors receive less than 1% of funding from the National Institute of Health, according to an IFF press release.

“We made it our mission to prioritize pediatric brain tumor research and help spread awareness of this disease,” Phil Yagoda said in a written statement. “For us, it is a labor of love and a mission that is close to our hearts. At the end of the day, the greatest gift you can give to a parent is the life of their child.”

IFF has financially supported 37 projects at 27 medical institutions including Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta, Emory University, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, Johns Hopkins University, and Duke University. The research at labs worldwide can impact survival rates, patient care, and help to find a cure. The survival rate is key since [pediatric brain tumors](#) are the leading cancer-related cause of death for infants to age 19.

Ian, now a teenager, has survived his pediatric brain tumor, and he’s continuing therapies, diagnostic tests, and numerous doctor visits each year to ensure the lesion on his brain remains stable.

“We truly want to thank our family, friends and supporters who all have shown sincerity, determination and so much love for this cause,” the Yagodas said in a statement on their [website](#). “A social obligation to ensure every child has a chance in life is the greatest responsibility that any individual can ever have.”

For tickets to the IFF Annual Pickleball Open, visit their website [here](#).

## **2nd Annual IFF Pickleball Open**

1 p.m.-5 p.m.

Sunday, April 16

Atlanta Pickleball Center: 1359 Ellsworth Industrial Blvd. NW  
Suite B

Tickets: \$35 for spectators, \$100 for a team ticket; two tickets  
included for each team

<https://www.ajc.com/life/aging-in-atlanta/pickleball-courts-atlanta-support-childrens-brain-tumor-research/5AUQH3H6SRAWLPFCXKJ7CRIWB4/>