

CLIFTON PARK

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Neighbors



Pete MacArthur

Head Coach of The
Adirondack Thunder



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Head Coach of The Adirondack Thunder

By Jenna Caputo | Photos by Brooklynne Beebe & Contributed by the MacArthur Family

Born into a sports-oriented family, Pete MacArthur has had athletics as a major part of his life since day one. Both of his parents taught elementary school at the Shenendehowa School District. His mother, Belinda, taught kindergarten and loves to play pickleball and practices yoga every week. His father, Bill, was a physical education teacher who helped start Shen's high-school hockey program and served as the Head Coach for 20 years. Pete's sister, Courtney, was a Shen swimmer and went on to set national records as a swimmer at SUNY Geneseo. His older brother, Trevor, played tennis and hockey for Shen before continuing hockey at Hamilton College. "Growing up was so much fun," says Pete. "If we weren't involved with hockey, tennis, soccer, or swimming, we would have been at Lake George with family and friends, enjoying lake times or spending time in places such as Maine or Myrtle Beach."

It was inevitable that Pete would end up out on the ice too. "Monkey see, monkey do!" as he says. Pete's days on the ice began with the SCYHA, and his father was instrumental in his training and athletic journey. "From a very young age, my father has been someone that has guided me in the right direction as it pertains to my development as an athlete. He would have me out in the driveway, exploring movement and hand-eye coordination whenever he had the chance to and would consistently introduce

new ideas that would be fun but also build confidence in myself. At the time, I had zero clue I was being 'trained.'"

Hockey became an important part of Pete's life, becoming a passion more than a hobby. "I love everything about the game," he says, "but if I had to choose one thing that really stands out, it would have to be the combination of grace, physicality, and skill necessary to be an effective player."

After two years at Shen, Trevor attended prep school at the Northwood School in Lake Placid, and nine years later, Pete did the same. They both continued playing hockey for Northwood. Pete went on to play one year in the USHL in Waterloo, IA before winning a Division I scholarship to Boston University where he played for four years while earning his degree in Physical Education. After graduation, he began his journey with the pros, which brought him to teams both here in the US and overseas to Germany, Austria, and Italy. Over the years, he played for: the Bridgeport Islanders, Rockford IceHogs, Peoria Rivermen, Cleveland Monsters (AHL), Fresno Falcons, Vegas Wranglers, Allen Americans, Adirondack Thunder (ECHL), Augsburg Panther (Germany DEL), Vienna Capitals, Graz 99ers (Austria EBEL), and Val Pusteria Wolves (Italy ALPSHL).

The variety gave him a wealth of experience, and playing overseas



was a once-in-a-lifetime adventure. “Playing overseas was an unforgettable experience,” he says. “I would encourage anyone who has this opportunity to take advantage if they have the chance. The fan engagement, learning a new culture, traveling to different cities and countries while abroad with your teammates and friends...priceless. Unreal beers and food, too!”

Pete says that playing for Team USA in the Deutschland Cup was one of his favorite experiences. The tournament itself didn't mean a lot, but he had his wife there, and they played against some of the best players in all of Europe...and won. Pete won several awards over the years, including MVP of the Beanpot in 2006, All-American 2008 at BU, Rockford IceHogs ROY 2009 (AHL), and MVP of the Adirondack Thunder in 2017 (ECHL). Unfortunately, he has also sustained a lot of injuries over the years, too. His first serious injury happened in junior hockey when he played in Waterloo, IA. A pain in his groin ended up being a double hernia. It affected his game for the whole year, which in turn affected his draft status. In college, he only missed one game in all four years, but by year three of the AHL, he had a labrum and micro fracture surgery on his right shoulder while playing in San Antonio. That ended his year, costing him 60 games. Six years later, he got speared with a stick, which tore his pec completely off the bone on his right side. This also cost him another 60 games. The last big injury happened during his last year playing for the Adirondack Thunder. He broke three ribs and punctured his lung.

“That one was a bit scary, but none of these situations ever made me actually want to stop playing,” he says. “Each injury was fuel to become smarter and stronger. I almost wanted to prove to myself that I could come back and be a better version of the old guy. Other than those, I've lost several teeth, broken my nose a few times, broken a couple of fingers, had plenty of stitches, and a handful of concussions as well. All part of the game and a rite of passage in my opinion!”

On June 21st, 2022, Pete took a new position as Head Coach of the Adirondack Thunder. The move was a natural progression. “I always knew I would be a coach, and from a young age,” he

explains. “Growing up in a family of teachers and leaders, it was a natural path and fit for me. Luck is seriously on my side being that this opportunity presented itself at the time it did.” His advice for young players just starting out is simple: “Enjoy it! Don't take the game too seriously. Be a great teammate and have fun with your team. WORK. Enjoy it some more and have fun!”

Pete met his wife Cristina while playing in San Antonio, TX. Cristina had just been hired to host a local TV show and was attending the game that evening. Since Pete was sidelined with an injury that night, the in-game arena host introduced them during that game on March 13, 2011, and the two hit it off. They exchanged numbers and met for dinner the following Friday. They've been together ever since.

Cristina graduated UTSA with a degree in Communications. She was “discovered” while writing a story for a local publication, and her career quickly grew as a TV show host for the next ten years while she worked in San Antonio and Miami. She also has a degree in Culinary Arts from Le Cordon Blue in Paris, which Pete quite enjoys. As a Mexican American, she loves celebrating her culture through the traditional foods, and their family especially enjoyed the mid-September celebrations when the team came over to celebrate Mexico's independence from Spain. Cristina served homemade Mexican food, which always included her famous empanadas...and maybe a little tequila too.

No longer on camera, Cristina now focuses on caring for their family. The MacArthurs have two sons and three pets: William (8) loves sports and is obsessed with fishing; Daniel (3) is obsessed with his mother and his baba and adores his big brother; Moni the yorkie (15); Rosie the Boston Terrier (3); and Thunder the Maine Coon Cat (6 months). They decided to homeschool William toward the end of last year and have enjoyed the resulting change in pace. “We are together for a good chunk of time during the off-season, and a big focus has been teaching both of our boys to be grateful and how to show gratitude,” says Pete. “Will has been learning how to write and send letters over the past few months, which he has come to enjoy!”

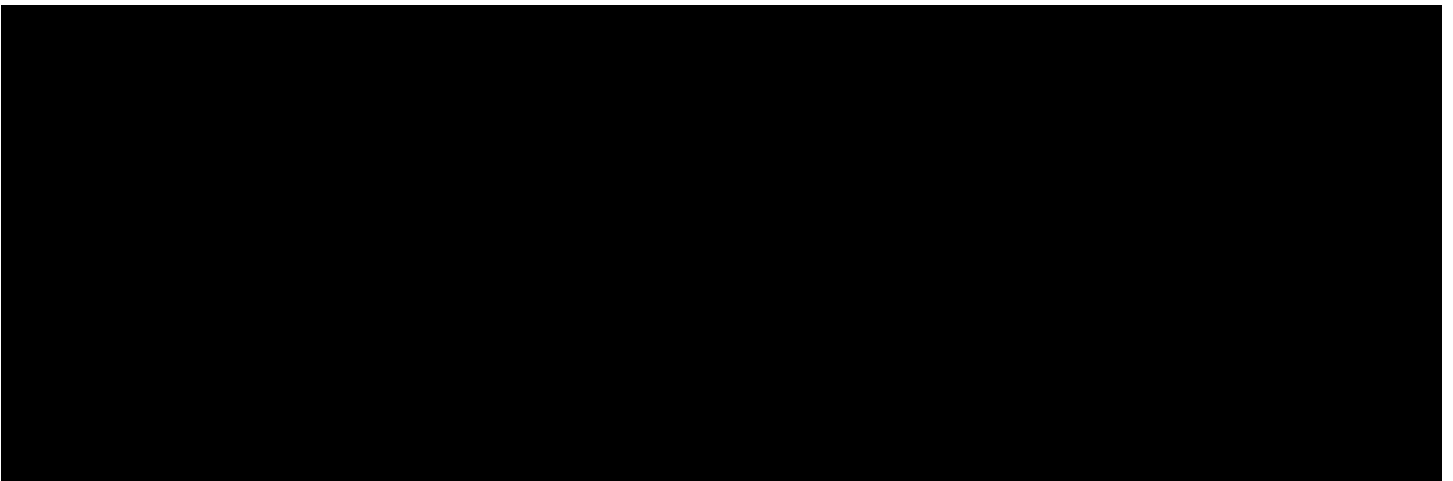
Pete's family has always been a close, tight-knit unit, supporting



each other in everything they do. His grandfather, Stanley, was a part of the Army Air Force during World War II. He was shot out of his B-17 bomber during his first mission and taken to an enemy prison camp in Austria where he survived for 23 months as a POW. Set free when the war ended, he walked with thousands of other troops back into France and eventually found his way to Buffalo, NY before coming upstate. He later moved to Mesa, AZ where he settled by many other

POWs for around 30 years. He lived to be just under 100. Pete's parents are both now retired and are celebrating 50 years of marriage next month. "That is rare nowadays, and they're special people," says Pete. "We are lucky to have them so close and so healthy." Bill still coaches tennis (in his 53rd year!). In addition to hockey, Trevor was also a superstar tennis player, making varsity in seventh grade and holding the number one singles player spot through his senior year. He also

recently won a club championship near San Diego. Pete always thought Trevor would go on to professional tennis, but Trevor was well-rounded and interested in other things, too. He played in the band YARN for many years and now works for ESPN in California. He is married with two kids. Courtney lives in Clifton Park with her husband and four kids. She also taught elementary students at Shen and is now very active with volunteer work, especially at Orenda.





Their family are big Thunder fans and always come out to support each other's endeavors whenever possible. William is now also involved with youth hockey along with his cousins Drew and Brody. "Games and practices over the years have certainly been a family affair with countless memories made!" says Pete. "There aren't many games in the CIA these days where we don't have a couple family members in the crowd."

When he's not working at the rink, Pete can always be found spending time with his family. They often volunteer with the youth sports programs and make monthly Salvation Army donations. They also own a rental property in Saratoga and have enjoyed learning about the rental business for the last 10 years. When he was working

overseas, they used the condo to live in during late spring/early summer while they were home, then rented it out when away for the season. Once they moved home permanently and bought their house, they rented it to two players from the team.

While many of their travels have been through hockey, the MacArthurs also enjoy traveling for fun, too. They recently went on an incredible trip to Mexico City and Puerto Vallarta to visit Cristina's 100-year-old grandpa and her other family still living there. Another memorable vacation was a trip to the tiny town of St. Cergue outside of Geneva in Switzerland. They had traveled there while Pete played for Germany, and they enjoyed an amazing mountain trip with several other families on the team. They also enjoy visiting Lake Placid when they can. When here in the Capital District, they love to search for the best slice of pizza. Their favorites so far are Clifton Park Pizza, Venezia, and Blaze Pizza in Clifton Park; Marinos in Saratoga and Glens Falls; Napoli in Malta; and Guiseppies, Capri, and Pizza Jerks in Lake George.

But spending time with the family in Lake George is their number one favorite spot. "We love cruising the shoreline, and the kids love to build fires and go fishing," says Pete. "When that's not possible, movies on the couch are hard to pass by as well. I also enjoy playing tennis and pickleball when the competition is right!"

Pete describes himself as a simple person who doesn't need a lot to be happy. He gets anxious in big groups of people, so he prefers to stick to himself or smaller

groups when possible. He likes to go after life, wishes for people to have respect for one another, and is grateful for all his experiences over the years.

"I would personally like to thank everyone for the support over the years, specifically my friends and family members. We have had the opportunity to live a special life to this point, and things like this are not possible without great people in your corner. My hope is for the Adirondack and Capital District regions to continue flourishing into the foreseeable future and for our corner of the world to be a symbol of hope, peace, and prosperity. We truly live in a very special place!"

Want to catch an Adirondack Thunder game? Check their website for their schedule and latest updates: www.echlthunder.com.