



# Community Connections

News & Notes for New England Bridge Players

Issue 3. October 2024

## Warwick Regional: Oceans of Fun

Our Ocean State Regional, in Warwick, RI, was a huge success. The table count (more than 930) made this our biggest tournament since well before COVID. District President, Sue Miguel called it “a triumph of fun, camaraderie, and community celebration.”

We welcomed new directors to the staff, hosted a make-your-own-sundae party, and honored long-time director Horace Gower for his 30+ years of service to the District and ACBL.



Players wore “I ♥ Horace” pins and the staff sported “Super Horace” tee shirts in his honor.



Sue, who’s also been Horace’s partner in directing for 20 years, chose the superhero theme because Horace is her directing hero. “In addition to being thoughtful, kind, funny, efficient, and dedicated to each and every player he encounters, he’s a wicked awesome player! I’m sad our days competing

as partners in the Bridge Olympics have come to an end.”

He’s shown here flanked by Sue and his wife Sonya after receiving a “bouquet” of Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups (his favorite treat) and a lifetime free play certificate for D25 regionals.

Horace has been playing bridge since his college days, and he and a partner won the Maine state championship in 1972. He became a director more than 30 years ago and has made many friends at the tournaments he’s directed. The halls of the event venue were plastered with signs describing many of Horace’s endearing qualities.

Thank you, Horace, for all you have done and continue to do for New England bridge! We look forward to seeing you as a player in our upcoming events. ■

## Life Masters Crowned in RI

Recent Rhode Island tournaments saw two players reach the Life Master milestone. Jen Reidy (shown at right, with her partner Stephen Glazer) needed 0.3 silver points for the longest time and finally got them at the RIBA Fall Sectional.



Sally Fallon (shown left with partner Phil Tiff) earned the gold points she needed winning her bracket in Warwick.

Congratulations, Jen and Sally for a job well done!

## USBF Youth Medalists

A U.S. Bridge Federation team participated in the 8<sup>th</sup> World Youth Transnational Championships held recently in Wroclaw, Poland. The JACK team (its name being an acronym from the players' first names) took the GOLD in the Under-16 event.

Shown here with their coach Steve Chen (father of Andrew and Charlie) are Charlie Chen, Andrew Chen, Kyo Chen (no relation), and Jeff Xiao. Jeff is from D25, and his older brother Eric also played in the tournament.



It was the first time a US team had ever won the U-16 category, and Kyo, at age 10, became the youngest player ever to win a World Championship. ■

## How to Start a Bridge Club (In One Easy Lesson)

"I have a group of people who like to play bridge, but how do I start a sanctioned club?" This question was on the mind of Lorraine Alexander (at top right) when she played in a recent sectional in Watertown, MA.

Lorraine had just moved to Weston, MA, after living in Los Angeles for 25 years, and when the

Weston Council on Aging needed a volunteer, and because she loves the game of bridge, she said "Yes, I'll do it!" Word spread through the Council newsletter that there was a casual bridge game every Tuesday morning, and slowly but surely the group began to grow.



Lorraine contacted Jori Grossack, who agreed to give lessons.

They really began to gel after that, so they hired Jori to come back for additional lessons. Jori encouraged everyone to start playing in tournaments, and some went



to the Summer Regional in Nashua, NH. They had such a good time that two of them flew to Toronto to play in the Summer NABC.

Lorraine noticed that tournament attendees had magnetic name tags with their first name and where they were from, so she asked her program director at the Council on Aging to order name tags for the group. The name tags arrived in August, and everyone was thrilled to wear them.

The next step was turning this casual group into an ACBL-sanctioned club. Lorraine contacted our well-known tournament director, Gary Peterson, who came the following Tuesday to meet people and discuss the possibility of becoming a sanctioned club. The players were delighted with the idea; they



asked Gary to obtain the sanction and run the game every week. The sanction was issued several days later, and the first masterpoints were awarded the following Tuesday.

Lorraine went from having a “bridge club issue” to having a new sanctioned club in just 10 days. Welcome to D25 club family! ■

## Bridge Thrives in Central Mass

With only 187 members, the Central Mass Bridge Association Unit 113 (CMBA) is one of the smaller units in the ACBL. But what they lack in numbers, they make in enthusiasm.

Of necessity, face-to-face club games disappeared in 2020 in the wake of the COVID pandemic. But thanks to the hard work of current directors like Denise Bahosh, Shirley Wagner, and Al Berg, they’ve since come roaring back. Now you can play in a sanctioned game four days a week. In fact, the CMBA clubs have been doing so well this year that based on the current numbers, the total tables for all the clubs in 2024 should easily surpass 1500. That’s a lot of bridge players filling a lot of seats!

There is also a crop of new folks who’ve heard the call and passed the director’s exam, so there’ll be plenty of people to run our clubs well into the future.

In addition to the four club games on offer each week, CMBA also runs a monthly Unit Game, scheduled on a Saturday at a more central location. The Unit Games began in 2009 as a way for



folks who play in different games during the week to get to know each other. From the beginning, the games have been a rousing success — although it’s possible that they owe at least some of their popularity to the goodies that are provided by a rotating schedule of unit members.

Until this year, our Unit Games have mostly been traditional pair events, but with an overall winner and paying out a slightly higher number of masterpoints.

In 2024, the Executive Board decided to try new types of events. In both March and June, in addition to



the regular Unit Game, we ran a second game, a one-session Swiss Team where the teams had signed up to play in advance. In August, we held a Pro-Am, a pairs event where each pair was made up of a Life Master and a Non-Life Master who’d never before played together.

All the new games were well-received, and they’re planning on repeating both games before the end of the calendar year. Not only were these events fun and different, they were also a way for players to have the chance to play with — or against — bridge players they may never have otherwise met. And for newcomers, it was also an opportunity to play with the more seasoned players.

They’re currently considering holding other types of Unit Games in 2025, such as an Individual or a Board-a-Match.

The regularity of the club games, as well as the excitement of having new events to play in,

seems to have energized the members and revitalized the unit as a whole. As a result, the number of tables for both the weekly club games and the special Unit Games has continued to increase throughout the year.

Of course, all of their success would have been impossible without the enthusiastic participation of our members. Some have been playing bridge for years, while others recently learned the game via the bridge lessons offered by several area players. But whether the members are just learning, or have been playing for decades, all enjoy the mental challenge, competitive spirit, and sociability that can be found playing duplicate bridge.

### Hamilton Club Celebrates Fifty Years!

In 1974, Bob Bonazoli founded a club in his hometown simply because he likes bridge and wanted a place to play with his friends. Fifty years later, the Hamilton DBC is going strong at the Hamilton Senior Center every Wednesday afternoon with Bob as the director.



To celebrate this milestone, Bob (pictured above in checkered shirt) was feted by forty people with a pot-luck lunch and gifts, followed by a ten-table game. In addition, Bob surprised everyone with a special notebook titled, “Hamilton Duplicate Bridge Club, 50 Years of Bold Bids and Brilliant Plays.”

Congratulations to you, Bob. “Keep it up; you’re doing great!” ■

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**North American Pairs**

**INFO & DETAILS**  
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**Tournament** Susan Miguel  
 thefairygolddmother@nebridge.org

**Schedule**  
[www.nebridge.org](http://www.nebridge.org)

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