



Community Connections

News & Notes for New England Bridge Players

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Spectacle Regional – Recap

The Spectacle Regional in Southbridge turned out to be one of our best tournaments ever, and if attendance is any indication, face-to-face bridge is coming back.

Many attendees commented on the event's amazing vibe. The hotel was impressive, the bridge players were congenial, and our tournament staff were friendly, fun and helpful. Here's the team that created the week.



From left, Tim Hill, Horace Gower, Sue Miguel, Denise Bahosh, and Gary Peterson.

Our sincere thanks to all five of you, Sally Kirtley (our Tournament Manager), and to the players, of course!

Our experimental "Bridge Olympics" event each evening was a big hit. The Olympics gave us the chance to play a variety of formats in a fun environment and finish early enough to play regular events again the next day. We'll be offering the Olympics in Warwick, along with the usual pairs and team games.

Bill Segraves was crowned Olympian, based on what we called "Laurel Points," and Wayne Burt won for overall masterpoints. That's Bill in the yellow tee shirt with Tim Hill. Wayne is shown on the right. ■



Join Us in Nashua

Speaking tournaments, be sure to join us for our next Regional, the Granite State Get-Away, June 11-16, in Nashua, NH. For the full tournament flyer and schedule, click here.

This six-day event will offer a week of fun to get your summer off to a golden start. In addition to the usual events, Nashua will feature "Bracketed Pairs," Bridge FEST!, and a return of the "Pro-Am" in Four-is-Enough format.



What is the Pro-Am, you ask? It's an opportunity for a non-Life Master (the "Am") to play with an expert, or for a "Pro" (a Life Master) to mentor an up-and-coming player.

This year, Sue and Mike Wavada will host the event on Friday evening, June 14. Mike says he volunteered to head up the Pro-Am because he has “played in every previous one sponsored by D25 and enjoyed them all immensely.”

Pros are encouraged to invite Ams to play with them, but there is no reason that an Am could not do the asking. Ams can also play with their regular partners. Sue (ChaChaSue@aol.com) and Mike (Mike@Wavada.org) are serving as matchmakers. If you need a partner or have a question, contact one of them. They will also be on duty at a table near the information area for the tournament. You can also sign up onsite. If you’re willing to help in any way, please contact Sue or Mike. ■

Bridge FEST! in Nashua

Bridge FEST!! will return to Nashua with three full days of workshops to improve your game. There will be interesting (but relaxing) games and a chance to earn **GOLD points**. There will also be welcome gifts, door prizes, trophies, and yummy snacks.

Bill Segraves is our featured presenter for Wednesday’s workshop. His “JAM! Session” will stress how to torture your opponents by opening with super-long suits but few points. Then David Metcalf, our Director-in-Charge, will give his insights into how directors can be a vital part of your success at the table. Bring your director-related questions to David’s session.

In addition to the usual Bridge FEST! games, we’re debuting a new event: the world premiere of the **Bridge FEST! GOLD Point Pairs**. Plan on playing Friday in this fun, relaxed but profitable golden game. As always, lunch is on us! Don’t forget, if you don’t have a partner, we’ll find you one. RSVP soon, because space is limited. Details are on our website. ■

Meet the Leadership

Carolyn Weiser (shown in the next column left, with her sister Elizabeth) is the secretary of both District 25 and Unit 108, a director and bridge teacher, and a tireless supporter of bridge and the New England bridge community.

This multi-talented Life Master taught psychology and ancient and medieval history for more than 35 years, but these days her pedagogy is focused on bridge students. She is also an

accomplished pianist and artist. Some of her artwork is shown below.

When asked about how she got hooked on our fascinating game, Carolyn says, “I grew up in a card-playing family. I started playing bridge and whist with my aunts and grandmother when I was about 7-years-old.” She says if anyone shuffled a deck of cards in her house, three others would show up to play. Her years of social bridge ended about 30 years ago when a friend asked her to attend a “Dawson’s Bridge” weekend, and thus began her rise through the ranks.



Carolyn Weiser (left)

We asked Carolyn about her preferred conventions, and she said she prefers the “Big Club” system but quickly adds that most players use far more conventions than they need. She encourages her students to adopt the KISS method. “If you do the simple things well, you’ll come out ahead in the long run.”

Carolyn feels the game is evolving in how it’s presented, and not always for the better. She doesn’t care for online games, much preferring the social aspects of in-person play. And she worries about whether younger generations, so accustomed to the immediate gratification that electronic games provide, will be attracted to three-hour F2F bridge sessions. ■



Meet A Director

Horace Gower of Freeport, ME (shown here with Sue Miguel), has been a Tournament Director for some 50 years and learned bridge about ten years before that.



Horace says that very early on he witnessed a Grand Life Master carry out a Double Grand Coup. “From that day on I was committed to the game of bridge.”

A versatile player, Horace will use practically any system a partner wants. “I like to keep it simple and just use my experience,” he says. Sue found this out recently when she partnered with Horace for the first time in the Bridge Olympics.

“We played ‘1950s Little Old Lady Bridge’ – only Stayman, major suit transfers, and standard Blackwood – and we still came out ahead of the young whippersnappers with all their fancy systems,” she says.

If given the opportunity, Horace does like to play two-over-one and Jacoby 2NT, but otherwise he just uses the KISS method. Carolyn would heartily approve. ■

Directors’ Tales

Bridge Directors take their jobs seriously, but they do have a sense of humor. Consider one situation Gary Peterson confronted in Mansfield. After hearing “Director Please!” he approached the table and learned that one player felt the declarer was playing too slowly. Here’s how the scene unfolded:

PLAYER: Director, please!

DIRECTOR: Hi, there! How can I help?

PLAYER: Tempo.

[Pause]

DIRECTOR: And a-one, and a-two, and a-three.

PLAYER: Can I have a *real* director, please!



Partner, Partner!

The best bridge partnerships last for years, and the players think of each other as family. Every so often, however, *real* families show up at the bridge table. We had that situation at Southbridge, when a mother/daughter pair played versus a father/son pair. Ya gotta love it!



Lanette Sweeney & Gail Perry vs. Jonathan Howe & Hubert Howe, Jr.

North American Pairs Returns

District 25’s annual North American Pairs Finals are back *in person*! That’s the perfect way to experience a national event and earn tons of **GOLD** points.

We will play the district finals during the Norwich Regional in November this year, and there will be three flights: Open, 2500 and 500 NLM. The winners of each flight will receive a stipend to help defray the cost of a trip to the national finals, which will be held during the NABC in Memphis in the spring of 2025.



There is just one catch: you must qualify to play. But qualifying is easy and fun. Just play in one of your local club’s NAP Qualifying games this summer. You’ll enjoy it and the awards include red points. If you win points or have a 50% game, you’ll qualify for the district finals in November. Contact your local club and ask about their schedule for the qualifying games. ■

Sectional Spotlight

This is the premier article in “Sectional Spotlight,” our new regular feature highlighting local tournaments around New England. With this issue we look at the St. Patrick’s Day

Sectional, held last March at St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Orange, CT.

Hosted by the Connecticut Bridge Association (ACBL Unit 126), the tournament emphasized zany fun and a fresh playing experience. (Think “party where you play bridge.”) The results seemed to live up to expectations, as seen by the accompanying photos.

You’re invited to play in the CBA’s Summer Sectional to be held August 9-11 in Stamford, CT. Who knows what wacky fun they’ll have in store?

Following are a few photos from the March event. Some attendees were a little more “Irish” than others, as you can see. ■



St. Barbara’s Spectacular Venue

New Hampshire Award Given

The New Hampshire unit has a special award named for Leroy Lake (1896-1966), a dairy farmer, politician, and bridge player. The prize is given to a player who is a notable presence in the New Hampshire bridge community, has had a good deal of success in NH bridge during the year, and demonstrates gracious behavior at and away from the bridge table.

The 2024 winner of the Leroy Lake Award is Jane Verdrager. Congratulations, Jane! ■



Larry Lake Award winner Jane Verdrager, shown with Lucia Carlisle, Bill Kennedy, and Dave Lawrence. (Committee chair Betty Brewster was not available for the photo).

BRIDGE FEST

Fascinating, Fun & Friendly



Wednesday, June 12

- 10:00 **JAM! Session**
Bill Segraves shares the secrets of opening the bidding when you have long suits but few points.
- 12:00 **Lunch** *Enjoy a free lunch and meet new people.*
- 1:00 **Trophy Pairs**
Relaxed Duplicate Game with Pro Tips & Red Points!
- 3:30 **Awards & Prizes**

An Experience
Designed for
New and
Advancing
Players

Thursday, June 13

- 9:30 **Secrets from the Director's Vault**
A practical mini-lesson with instant results.
- 10:00 **Championship Pairs - Session 1**
A relaxing, yet challenging two-session pair event. Single-session entries accepted. RED Points!
- 1:00 **Lunch** *Enjoy a free lunch with your new friends.*
- 2:00 **Championship Pairs - Session 2**
- 5:00 **Awards & Prizes**

Just
\$30
a Day

Lunch is
FREE!

Friday, June 14 ~ NEW! BRIDGE FEST GOLDEN PAIRS

10:00 & 2:00

*Only play with fellow Festers in a relaxed atmosphere!
Plan to come ready for FUN & we'll take care of the rest.*

This is your BEST way earn GOLD and have
a real chance to WIN your first regional event!

Sheraton
Nashua
11 Tara Boulevard
Nashua NH 03062
Bridge rate just \$159
for overnight guests.

No Partner? No Problem!

We'll find you one if you sign up early!



Email.Call.Text
To RSVP
Or Ask a ?

The Fairy
GOLDmother

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