

THE NORTH PENN FINESSE

NORTH PENN DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

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President's Message: "April showers bring May flowers." Spring is here and with it rain. The flowers are blooming, the grass is growing, and the pollen is everywhere causing coughing, sneezing, and grumpy people. What a great time to play bridge!

Over the winter our club celebrated many new Life Masters as well as accomplishments in other levels of bridge. We have some bridge classes on the drawing board and hope all of you will win some points at the District 4 regional later in June.

We welcome to the North Penn Duplicate Bridge Club all new players, all returning "Snow Birds," and especially all of the faithful who always support the club with loyalty and enthusiasm.

Marlene Hino, President, e-mail marleneh25@verizon.net

Club Manager's Message: It seems like we just started the year, and summer is right around the corner. Hopefully it will be an enjoyable summer for all with lots of bridge intermixed with other activities.

Two notable changes at the club - **Dennis O'Brien** will be directing Wednesday games, and **Ed Alcott** will be directing Thursday games. I am stepping back to the role of "fill-in." I think you will find each one a benefit to our game.

The Philadelphia Regional at Valley Forge (District 4) is being held June 26 to July 2. I hope to see you all there. North Penn will run an abbreviated game schedule that week. No game on either Tuesday evening or Friday evening. All other games will run as scheduled.

The North American Pairs (NAP) qualifying begins in June and extends through July and August. Unlike prior years, we are not scheduling NAP qualifications for the morning games. ACBL conditions of contest just don't cooperate. If you are a "C" player and wish to qualify for the NAP, you will need to do so in one of the open games.

A minor schedule change - The Friday night game will continue as a pairs game. There will be no more Swiss team games.

And a reminder to our players - Both North/South and East/West should please clean your area at the end of the game. For those playing East/West, please take your trash with you when you



leave the table. Also, when disposing of cups, please pour remaining liquid down the sink before tossing the cup.

Have a great summer!

Larry Umphlet, Club Manager, e-mail ichor0@verizon.net

Something to Smile About #1 - "And how is Bridge supposed to make me smarter? Every time I learn something new, it pushes some old stuff out of my brain. Remember when I took that winemaking course, and I forgot how to drive?"

Masterpoint Milestones:

Alan Meyers	Junior Life Master	Lois Meyers	Junior Life Master
Thorpe Aschoff	Club Life Master	Cathy Vogel	Club Life Master
Donald Baker	Regional Master	May Sakr	Regional Master
Lisa Mita	Adv. NABC Master	Prem Premakuman	Adv. NABC Master
Eileen Zakuto	Life Master	Milind Vaze	Life Master
Andrew Rosenberg	Life Master	Susan Morse	Bronze Life Master
David Silberman	Bronze Life Master	Pat Andrews	Silver Life Master
Sandy Sill	Ruby Life Master	Steve Becker	Gold Life Master

The NP Club honors members who've achieved Life, Silver, Gold, Diamond, Emerald, Platinum, and Grand Life Masters. Congratulations to our newest achievers!!



Life Masters Maryland and Nick Wanck



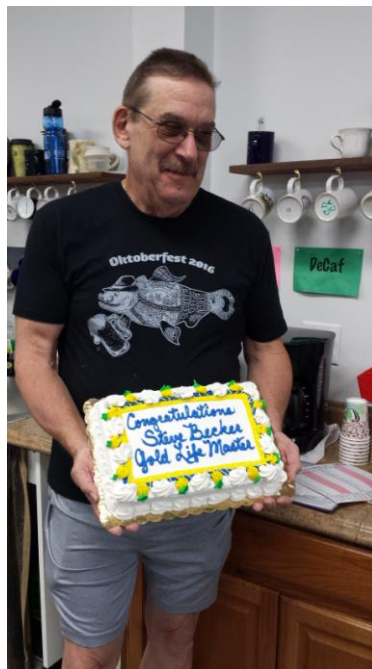
Life Master Eileen Zakuto

Silver Life Master Pat Andrews

Life Master Andy Rosenberg



Gold Life Master Steve Becker



Grand National Teams: Congratulations to Flight A team winners **Everett Young, Doug Dye, Estelle and Al Ronderos** who will be representing District 4 at the National GNT finals at the Summer NABC in Toronto, Ontario on July 19. Team winners receive at least \$1,000 plus card fees to compete in Toronto. (Open Flight Runner-Up was North Penn Club member **Andy Kauffman's** team. Flight A Runner-Up was North Penn Club member **John Dickenson's** team. Flight B Runner-Up was North Penn Club member **Gary Hillenbrand's** team.)

Sunshine: *Please welcome our new members:* Mike Kohler, Peggy Michaud, Lauren Dougherty, Peter Swatsburg, Stanley Morganstein, Betty Abrams, Barbara McLaren, Diana Currie, Richard Seideman, Carol Shannon, Maryl Hitchings, Shelly Rosen, Claire Schragger, Mark Henderson, Mass Burton, and Joan Astoreca. Denna Donley, and Deepak Khanna.

North Penn club member **Charlotte Perry** passed away in March. We want to express our deepest sympathies to her family and friends.

Birthday greetings go to all of you who are celebrating in June, July, August, and September. The list is too long to publish here in the newsletter. So, check out the bulletin board at the club and wish your friends a "Happy Birthday." At the right, **Alison Shoemaker** is celebrating **Tony Zacchei**'s birthday on March 31.

Something to Smile About #2 - Giving a man his physical, the doctor noticed several dark, ugly bruises on his shins. So the doc asked if he played hockey, soccer, or some physical sport. The man answered, "No, I play bridge with my wife."

Charity Games: The Club intends to donate its charity funds to the *Variety Club Camp and Development Center of Philadelphia* located on Potshop Road in Worcester. All proceeds from our "Charity Games" will be given to this worthwhile organization.



Membership: To date we have 335 paid members. If you haven't paid your \$10 dues, please do so the next time you play at the club. Please place your dues in an envelope, write your name on it, and put it in the **RED MAILBOX** located at the back of the room. If you have not received your **club directory**, please ask the director for one.

Elaine Watters, Membership Chair

Miscellaneous: Need a partner? Check out the **"Partnership Board"** located to the left as you walk into the club. When you need a partner, post a note on the bulletin board and maybe someone will be able to play with you on the day you want a partner.

Club member **Ginny Tinner** had a bridge hand dealt to her in February which she wants to share with you: "I had seven spades headed by the KQ and six hearts headed by the AQ....no diamonds or clubs!! Of course opponents were bidding the minors, and I overcalled one spade. We competed to their five diamonds. I bid five hearts, and partner corrected to five spades. My partner had four points but two of them were the jacks of spades and hearts. She also had four spades and three hearts....bless her soul. I lost the Ace of spades and the King of hearts (the finesse was off). What a fun hand to play! Don't you just love this game?!!!"

2017 Board of Directors: Back row - Alan Flicker, Larry Umphlet, Mitch Snyder, Roger Milton and Bob Umfer. Front row - Real Fradette, Marlene Hino, Elaine Claire, Elaine Watters, and Sue Bailey.

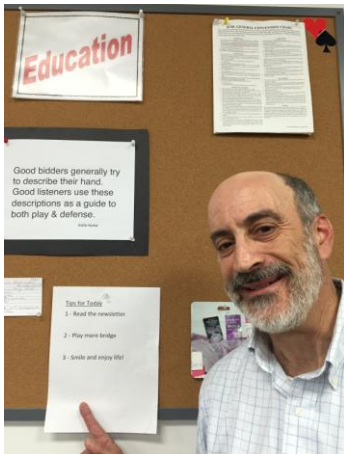


Human Interest Feature: *Blunders at the bridge table* - Have you ever made a mistake playing bridge? If so, this article might just be what the bridge doctor would order for you. If not, I don't believe you (neither does anyone else). We all know that there are a few bumps in the road when we play. The percentage plays don't always work. The opening bidder doesn't always have the key cards that you'd hoped they would have. And sometimes we think when we shouldn't think or don't think when we should. With this in mind, let's begin. I've broken down bridge mistakes into three general categories with an example for each category:

1) Less than stellar concentration - I was deciding whether to bid 7S or 7NT. I bid 7S and was very happy I made the right decision when the dummy came down. The play of the hand started, and I was still feeling giddy about my bidding success. Then I noticed that I made a simple error in the first few tricks on what should have been a cold grand slam. Down one and I still wish I was paying attention!

2) Rushing/not looking at the whole situation - On the game's first hand I counted up my 16 points and quickly opened the bidding with 1NT on what seemed to be a balanced hand. Then I noticed I was missing a suit. I was horrified, but assumed someone else would make a bid in order for me to escape. I was passed out at 1NT and yes, they led my void.

3) Applying a good technique to the wrong situation - Dummy had three top trumps and a singleton in my three-card suit. The opponents took the first trick and gave me the next trick. I trumped my two losing tricks in dummy and made my 4C bid. Then my opponent asked why I trumped any tricks when I had two six-card suits that I could run - one of them was trump. That's still a very good question.



Another category of mistakes was shared by **Carole Bishop**. After the play of the hand started, her left hand opponent led the ace of diamonds. This is not an unusual thing except Carole had the ace of diamonds in her hand. To make a long story short, the opponent was using cards from a different board. This was a real eye opener for Carole!

Solutions for all of this can be summarized with the following: Eat properly, get enough sleep, exercise, practice forgiveness and focus on the positive. In bridge terms this can be translated to mean pay attention, plan your play carefully, stop thinking about the Phillies and/or the goodies in the snack area! This reminds me of my friend who lost his job at the orange juice factory because he couldn't *concentrate*! To conclude, it's a good thing that despite the mistakes that sometimes occur, bridge really is fun!

This edition's interviews are with **Robert Bencker** and **Richard Godshall**. Good luck in your next bridge game!

Michael Carver, Human Interest Feature Reporter

Robert Bencker: Robert was born in Norristown. He was raised in North Wales, and his mother is still enjoying life there. He went to High School at Lansdale Catholic and then attended college at St. Josephs. He graduated with a degree in history. After college he was a typical 22-year-old, wandering around in a variety of jobs. In 1969 he began a teaching position in Hartford, Connecticut which lasted until 2004. He taught history, economics, psychology....a little bit of everything. While he became a "problem specialist" at the school helping others move forward, his last ten years there were mostly teaching Adult Education. He experienced plenty of excitement doing a variety of humanistic tasks while working there. He retired in 2004.



Robert was married and is now single. He lives with his daughter and his 20-year-old grandson. He was athletic in his younger years and used to go bike riding. Currently he likes to read, travel (he takes a couple of trips a year), and play bridge. He also works as a Bridge Director on cruise ships where he's made a lot of new friends.

Q – How did you start playing bridge? A - Robert started playing bridge as a kid in North Wales. His parents had a bridge game on Friday nights with friends. During the summer his mother played bridge during daytime hours. He was about 12 years old when one day he was leaving to play baseball. But Mom needed him to play bridge – someone was absent, and she needed a fourth. He played a little bit at that time and also played in college. After college he got married but later divorced. He did not play while married. He started playing later when he couldn't afford much – a night of bridge was only \$1.25. When he had a night off, bridge fit his lifestyle as a single parent. It was inexpensive and social.

Q – What led you to play duplicate? A - While living in Hartford as a single parent, Robert was reading the bridge column in the paper. The bridge article mentioned that bridge lessons were given at the local junior high school. He got a babysitter and went to the lesson. At the end of the lesson there was a follow-up game, and they needed another pair. He played with Ruth Morrison, a nice 80-year-old woman. They ended up in 1st place! Ruth became a regular partner over the next 20+ years. She was not a LOL at the bridge table. She was relentless, tenacious and a tiger on defense. She taught Robert a lot. It would be a dishonor to her memory to paint her as a den mother. He saw her enjoyment of the game, and it left a very positive impression. Robert stated, “I play to finish first. Like everyone else, if we are not playing to win, why are we keeping score?”

Q – What are some of your favorite bridge memories? A – Robert and three friends decided to play in the GNT's in Boston. They were flight C players, and they won! Their victory included a trip to the National's in DC. He had a great time and picked up lots of masterpoints. The wins in Boston and at the nationals gave them all the colored points they needed to become Life Masters. Then they had to get more black points. All four became Life Masters, and they're all still good friends.



Richard Godshall: Richard was born and raised in Franconia. His father had a farm with a hatchery for chickens and turkeys. Richard stated that living on a farm taught him how to work. There was always something that needed to be done. He graduated from Souderton HS and then went to Juniata College and Jefferson Medical College where he graduated in 1959. He did his internship in central PA and was in the Air Force from 1960 to 1962. He started his formal orthopedic training in Ohio and completed it at the University of Pennsylvania in 1965. Richard founded the Upper Bucks Orthopedic Association in 1965 affiliated with Grandview Hospital in Sellersville. He was the first orthopedic surgeon in the area. He retired in 2015. Richard's wife passed away in 2002. He has four daughters and seven grandchildren. In addition to spending time with his family, Richard enjoys fishing, golf and travel. He also loved to hunt when he was younger and traveled out west to go hunting.

Q – How did you start playing bridge? A – Richard’s wife played bridge in college. In 1965 she began playing once a month with friends. Richard became interested and started reading about the game. He played socially five or six times a year for about 15 years and regularly read the bridge column in the newspaper. He stopped playing when his wife became ill in 1997. When he moved to Brittany Point in 2012, someone asked him about playing bridge. He enjoyed the competition, met Jean Fehnel (who also lived at Brittany Point), and started playing again. He still doesn’t like to make a mistake playing bridge. This is from his work as a surgeon where mistakes are not a good thing. Richard finds bridge to be stimulating. He also enjoys the people he competes with and the fun!

Q – What led you to play duplicate? A – After playing for a while at Brittany with Jean, they built up enough nerve to go over to the North Penn Bridge Club. They started at Line Street, and he now plays regularly with several partners from Brittany. Richard was also encouraged to play by the late Sam Matlin and has appreciated the helpful tips from our club members.

Q – What was one of your favorite memories? A – Peg Butera and Winnie Young asked him and his partner to play at a tournament. He never played in a tournament and was quite nervous. Gold points were needed, and they won the Gold Rush game by one point! It was a thrill!! Since then, he also had one 72% game. He said he rarely got nervous during surgery, but early on in his bridge career he sure got nervous trying to avoid mistakes.

From the Editor's Desk: Read more about our club members at District 4's website (www.district4.info). Click on "Our Players' Stories - **Steve Becker, Tom Kriz, Maryland Wanck, May Sakr, Carole Bishop, Prynna Paston, Jim Allen, and Luigi Lenaz** are featured.



Something to Smile About #3 - The brain is a wonderful organ. It starts working the moment you get up in the morning and does not stop until you sit at the bridge table!!

