

Unit 114 Bridge Hall of Fame

Margaret Wagar 1983	Edgar Gay 1984	Lou Bluhm 1989	Richard Freeman 1991
Jack Feagin 1996	Randy Pettit 2003	Mike Kovacich 2009	Patty Tucker 2011
Bob Heller 2011	Kevin Collins 2012	Emory Whitaker 2014	

See below for Eligibility and Induction Process



Emory Whitaker has become the 11th member of the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame with his election by the Unit 114 Board of Directors in April 2014.

Emory was born in Augusta, GA in 1942 and lived in Georgia all of his life. He earned a BS degree from Davidson College, and MA and PhD degrees in mathematics from the University of Georgia. He married his wife, Genny, 45 years ago and they have one daughter, Beth. The Whitakers moved to Macon in 1970 when Emory became a mathematics professor at Mercer University. Teaching at Mercer for the next 30 years, he served as Chairman of the Department of Mathematics and Coordinator of the Great Books Program.

Emory learned to play bridge when he was 14 years old. He immediately fell in love with the game, but did not play duplicate until 1968 when he was a graduate student at UGA. Emory became a life master in 1975.

Before Emory retired, his second favorite avocation was participation in community theater. He has been in more than 30 plays in local theaters. Some of his favorite roles have been the King in *The King and I*, Daddy Warbucks in *Annie*, and George in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*. Since retirement, Genny and he have enjoyed traveling and his theater involvement has been mostly as an audience member.

After Emory's retirement in 2000, he began playing more in regional and national tournaments, and won most of his master points since then. He has over 70 Blue Ribbon qualifications and several high overall finishes in national events, including 2nd in the 2005 Wernher Open Pairs with Sam Marks, and 4th in the 1994 IMP pairs with John Gassenheimer. Emory has represented District 7 three times in the NAP, placing overall in this event with Bob Heller in 2000 and Sam Marks in 2005. He has had good luck in instant match point games, finishing 1st in the ACBL on three occasions, twice with Joel Haywood and once with Genny.

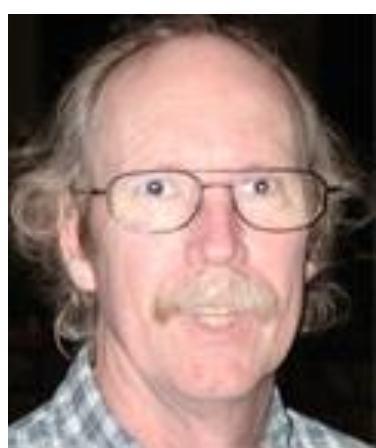
Emory has been a member of the Macon Duplicate Bridge Club for 44 years, serving as president two times. Emory has offered bridge classes in Macon on numerous occasions. He played a significant role in bringing a regional tournament to Macon in 2013, and will serve as co-chair of the MDBC-supported Callaway Gardens Regional in 2015. Emory represented his area on the Unit 114 Board for several years and served as both Vice-President and President. He was awarded Sportsman of the Year in 1984 and Player of the Year in 1994. He has represented Unit 114 on the District 7 board and is a member of both the ACBL and District 7 Good Will Committees.

Emory says, "I have loved playing duplicate bridge. As a mathematician I am fascinated by the problem-solving aspect of the game and the new situations that arise every time I play. The best part, however, has been all of the great people that I have met through bridge and the lasting friendships I have made with other players."

Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame member Mike Kovacich, a frequent partner and team mate of Emory, says "Emory is an excellent example to others as to how the game should be played. He displays the highest standards of conduct, ethics, and demeanor. Very seldom if ever does he lose his composure. A great partner."

Unit President Ken Parker says "In addition to Emory's outstanding achievements at the table, his dedicated service to the unit and district for well over 20 years has been outstanding."

As of Emory's April 2014 induction to the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame, his master point total of 10,400 has earned him the rank of Platinum Life Master.



Kevin Collins, of Dunwoody, Georgia becomes the 10th member of the Georgia State Hall of Fame with his election by the Unit 114 board in February of 2012. Kevin was born and raised in New Orleans, La. but left after high school to attend Georgia Tech in Atlanta where he earned a bachelor's degree in industrial and systems engineering. It was at Tech that Kevin learned to play bridge, often playing party bridge late into the night. During his last years at Tech, he worked the night shift on the assembly line at General Motors while attending Tech in the mornings. On mornings when he didn't have classes, he played at the duplicate bridge club with his first regular partner, Robert Shepherd.

In the late 70's, after most of his college bridge playing friends had moved, he began to play duplicate bridge almost exclusively to continue his love of the game. Working nights and playing during the morning, he was introduced to the Atlanta bridge scene. His early bridge play was mostly with pick-up partners and the exposure to different ideas and methods sparked an already growing interest. Kevin began playing tournaments in 1980 and became a Life Master in 1982. During this time he formed partnerships with Rick Haddon, Ace Allen, Chuck Whidden and Paul Romig.

After playing for a few years, Kevin began to give back to bridge serving as vice president of the DBAA for 2 years. Though not serving on the DBAA board, he often worked behind the scenes to pull together nominating committees that would recruit candidates willing to volunteer their time to serve. During the late 1980s, Kevin was asked to serve on the conduct and ethics committee by its chairperson Ellie Miller. In late 1991, he assumed the role of chairman of the Unit 114 conduct and ethics committee. At the time this was probably the most visible and influential committee in the unit, though in the recent past this committee has had its impact dramatically reduced. Kevin has held this position for the last 21 years. Kevin has also served as an Atlanta Area Representative on the Unit board in the early 2000s. In the late 1990s, he was asked by the District 7 president Bruce Reeves to replace Jerry Helms who was retiring as the chairman for the District 7 conduct and ethics committee and has held that position since then. In 2004, Bruce Reeves acting as president of the ACBL, nominated Kevin for membership on the ACBL Disciplinary Committee. He continues to serve on this committee which meets on an as-needed basis at the National Championships to hear and rule on cases involving the ACBL and its members.

Kevin has said that "While playing in the 1980s, the C&E committee was the one committee on which I hoped to be asked to serve. Being considered to be a part of these committees has been one of the major highlights of my bridge career. I have always tried to present a fair and even-handed approach to committee hearings and activities while understanding that the committee often deals with members during their worst moments."

In the mid-1980s, Kevin partnered with Patty Tucker after her move to Atlanta. They became close friends and, then after 20 years, they married in 2006. Patty, a Hall of Fame inductee herself says of Kevin, "He is kind, caring, giving and honest. Kevin is not only the best husband one could ask for, but also the best friend."

As a player, Kevin has attained the rank of Grand Life Master and has accumulated over 10,000 masterpoints with numerous regional and sectional victories. Kevin currently ranks 8th on the Unit 114 lifetime masterpoint list while being one of just two living grand life masters in Georgia and one of just seven in District 7. He has represented District 7 four times in the Grand National Teams and 3 times in the North American Pairs. In March of 2000 playing with his long-time partner he won his first National Championship. The list of Kevin's accomplishments has included many other top finishes in national events including 11 "top ten" and 20 plus "top fifteen" finishes, most of them partnering with his wife and partner Patty Tucker. Other top finishes in national events have included

- 3rd in the 2004 Mixed Board-A-Match Teams
- 4th in the 2008 Wehrner Pairs

- 5th through 8th in the 1999 Spingold,
- 5th in the 1997 Imp Pairs
- 7th in the 2001 North American Swiss
- 8th in the 2009 and 2011 Silidor Pairs and the 2010 Jacoby Swiss Teams
- 9th in the 2003 North American Teams
- 10th in the 1992 North American Teams.

Mike Kovacich, another Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame member, says of Kevin, “Besides being one of the best players in Georgia, Kevin is also one of the nicest. He is a delight to have as a teammate, in that it doesn't matter how much you screw up, Kevin never says a word. He is a class act who will be a great addition to our Hall of Fame. He has worked for years in Bridge and has agreed to do some of the non-glamorous and essentially unsatisfying but necessary work of taking care of our discipline process in District 7.”

Sam Marks adds, “Kevin is one of my favorite partners and teammates. In addition to being the best player in GA, he is an absolute pleasure to play with. Kevin is always pleasant to partners and opponents.”

When not playing bridge, Kevin spends his spare time playing his guitar, running and enjoying time with his wife Patty and his dog Tate.

With his induction in 2012, Kevin Collins becomes the 10th member of the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame in 2012.



Bob Heller, of Decatur, became the ninth member of the Georgia State Bridge Hall of Fame with his election by the Unit 114 Board of Directors in August 2011.

Born in Milwaukee, Bob left the Midwest after his senior year to study at Duke University in 1968. He had a passion for reporting, working first on his high school newspaper, then on The Chronicle, a daily, at Duke. He was a political science major. After graduation, his first job was as a sportswriter in Greensboro.

He subsequently worked at The Charlotte Observer, where he heard some colleagues talking about duplicate bridge. (Bob had played “dorm bridge” and some socially). He tried a few games at the Charlotte club and joined the ACBL in 1980. Bob credits Jerry Helms with stoking his interest in the game and setting up some early partnerships. Bob became a Life Master in 1984 shortly after moving to Atlanta to work for the Journal-Constitution. He did not play a lot of tournament bridge until late in the decade; he was married to Kathleen Galligher, a non-bridge player. Kathy died from breast cancer in 1989.

Bob met Barbara Davis through mutual friends in the early '90s when she was Gatlinburg Regional chair. They were married in August 1992. The marriage brought a younger generation with it, as Amanda, then 13, moved with Barbara to Atlanta. Barbara is chiefly responsible for Bob's involvement in the administrative side of bridge.

He represented Unit 114 at a Mid-Atlantic board meeting while Barbara was conference president. He later served as MABC secretary, vice-president and president, and for many years has been coordinating Mid-Atlantic advertising and publicity.

Bob has been most active in District 7 governance as well, serving as vice-president, then president in 2008-09. He has been editor of the District 7 News since its inception in 2002 and has served as tournament coordinator since the mid-1990s. He was elected District Director in 2008, and in January 2009 became the first Unit 114 member on the ACBL board since Margaret Wagar.

Locally, Bob was Duplicate Bridge Association of Atlanta president in 2009-10 and chaired or co-chaired 45 sectionals, ending in November 2011. The three annual tournaments have averaged 900 tables over the past several years and always rank among the largest half dozen in the ACBL.

Fellow Unit 114 Board member, Ken Parker, says “Bob has served the Unit 114 Board in one capacity or another for all of the past 20 years. Taking on a

variety responsibilities, he has always distinguished himself by his working tirelessly for the benefit of the Unit and as a positive force for Georgia bridge. Bob was named to the ACBL Goodwill Committee in 1999, an honor which he richly deserved.”

He also has highly notable accomplishments at the bridge table. Bob has been District 7 North American Pairs champion three times, twice with Emory Whitaker of Macon. He has earned about 80 Blue Ribbon qualifications at regionals and perennially is among the top silver point winners at sectionals. He went over 10,000 master points at Gatlinburg in 2011, becoming a Platinum Life Master.

Emory Whitaker adds, “Bob and I have been playing together both as partners and teammates for about 20 years. We have had a lot of success, which is evidence of his very high quality of play. He is not only a fine player, but he is an excellent partner. He doesn’t criticize his partner when things go badly, but keeps things in perspective with his wonderful sense of humor. He is gracious in both victory and defeat. He encourages less experienced players and frequently partners them in local club games.” Emory goes on to say, “Bob is a dynamo in his advocacy for bridge. He has spent many long hours working at all levels to improve duplicate bridge. His bridge colleagues have recognized his skill and hard work by electing him as District Seven’s representative to the ACBL Board of Directors. Bob Heller is most deserving of his membership in the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame.”

From Mike Kovacich, a frequent teammate and partner, “Bob always exhibits a calm, courteous demeanor at the table. He has the highest ethical standards and displays all the traits that you would want in a partner while at the same time being courteous to his opponents. He has a dry sense of humor and sometimes it takes a few seconds to realize when he has told a joke until the punch line hits you.” Mike adds, “Like all bridge players he loves to win, but he refuses to compromise on ethics, goodwill, or good behavior at the table. He will be an outstanding addition to the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame.”



Patty Tucker’s success at the bridge table is well known, culminated by her victory in the 2000 North American Open Pairs with long-time partner Kevin Collins who she married in 2006. Patty has over 50 Regional championships to her credit and several top ten finishes in NABC events, including the Spingold. She has been the District 7 Grand National Teams winner four times and has twice won the District 7 North American Open Pairs. Patty is an Emerald Life Master who has appeared on many Barry Crane and Mini-McKenney lists. Atlanta’s Bob Heller adds, “But all of that pales in comparison to what Patty has accomplished away from the table, particularly as her foresight, work and enthusiasm have paved the way to a renaissance in youth bridge.”

Patty was born in Ft. Benning, Georgia and grew up in Huntsville, Alabama. The daughter of two duplicate bridge players, Mary and Don Davis, she began playing bridge at age 11 and joined the ACBL in 1965. Bridge remained a primary avocation throughout Patty’s varied career. She has worked for an architectural engineering firm, an electronic distribution firm, and later owned a collectible used book store. After her son Chase graduated from Auburn University, Patty turned her hobby into a full-time career. She is one of Atlanta’s top bridge teachers and has earned the title of ABTA Master Bridge Teacher. She is also an ACBL Certified Director and ACBL Accredited Teacher and still devotes a generous amount of her time as a bridge volunteer.

As an active bridge volunteer, Patty serves as the Unit 114 Recorder, is a member of the ACBL’s National Appeals Committee, and the ACBL’s Charity Committee. She combined her commitment to bridge volunteerism and her love for children in 2006 with the creation of Atlanta Junior Bridge, the foremost organization for youth bridge. Not only has Patty’s leadership brought bridge to thousands of kids in our area (including her grandson Jordan), but Patty has used the lessons of AJB to help organizations throughout North America to create their own local programs. Working within AJB monthly duplicate games for children, she established weekly classes, Georgia Youth Pair and Swiss Team Championships, a 9-Week Middle School Curriculum, and the first Georgia School Bridge Championship. The

ACBL's youngest Life Master learned bridge through the Atlanta Junior Bridge program and continues to play and learn through AJB.

Patty's vision led to the creation of the first ever Youth NABC in Atlanta in 2008 which she chaired. She also served as co-chair of the Washington DC Youth NABC. Patty's influence over youth bridge throughout the continent continued when she worked part-time as the first ACBL Youth Coordinator. She has continued her youth efforts as the creator of the Bridge Teachers for Youth website and as the organizer of the first Youth Bridge Symposium. Whirlwind Bridge - a company that creates and publishes bridge workbooks for students - was founded by Patty. She still serves as AJB's President and is a Trustee of the Foundation for the Preservation and Advancement of Bridge.

Not content with advancing bridge to young players, Patty created the first "Social Duplicate Bridge Game" in District 7 which fielded over 40 tables of social bridge players; the "Learn Bridge in A Day" seminar which taught over 150 adults to play bridge in a four hour session, and she worked with the ACBL and AARP in the "Bridge to Anaheim" initiative to attract AARP members to ACBL functions. Patty believes that teaching adults and children bridge offers them an opportunity for excellence which will be available to them for the rest of their lives.

No less important than her bridge and volunteer accomplishments is Patty's reputation as an ambassador for the game. She is a member of both the District 7 and ACBL Goodwill Committees. As part of organizing the first Youth NABC, Patty saw to it that the premier trophy was for Sportsmanship. Her colleagues in youth bridge recognized Patty by naming the trophy in her honor. In addition, Patty was named the Unit's Sportsman of the Year in 2000.

In February 2011, two days after Patty was inducted to the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame, Patty was honored as the ACBL Goodwill Member of the Year for 2011. Bob Heller adds, "What Patty has contributed to our game is immeasurable. At the table, she is a thoughtful and successful player whose ethics are second-to-none. Her teaching, goodwill and general demeanor works wonders among all age groups. There is no one more worthy of such recognition."

Videos from Patty's induction celebration at the 2011 Atlanta Summer SuperSectional

[Comments made by Eric Rodwell](#)

[Comments made by Randy Pettit](#)

[Comments made by Michael Kovacich](#)

[Comments made by Jack Feagin](#)

[Comments made by Richard Jeng and Patty Tucker](#)



Mike Kovacich became the seventh member of the Georgia State Unit 114 Hall of Fame with his election by the Unit 114 Board of Directors in January of 2009.

Born in Kingston, Pennsylvania, Mike lived all over the world (his father was in the Army) until the summer of 1959 when he moved to Columbus, Georgia. During his senior year in high school he started playing bridge and graduated to duplicate. He joined the ACBL in 1964, but played only occasionally and did not become a Life Master until March, 1980. He reached 1,000 points in February of 1989.

After his release from active duty with the Air Force as a JAG officer in 1972 (he remained in the active reserves, serving until 1995 and retiring in 2005 as a Lieutenant Colonel), he settled in DeKalb County, Georgia, and has resided there since. After working for a year and a half plus for DeKalb County as an Assistant Public Defender, he went into private practice either with other attorneys or on his own until closing his office in 2005. His desk sits in his home, and he handles occasional matters for old clients, but he is mostly retired at this time.

He has been married to Mae for forty years, and has three grown sons and five grandchildren.

In the early 1990s he got involved with the administrative part of bridge as well as playing with a greater frequency. He has gone from holding one Blue Ribbon qualification in July of 1992 to holding 140 at the time of his election.

Since becoming active in bridge administration, he has had continuous service on the Boards of the Mid-Atlantic, District 7, and Unit 114. He has also served on the ACBL Board of Governors since 1997 and as of January 1, 2009, has assumed the duties as Chairman of the Board of Governors of the ACBL.

He has over 13,000 masterpoints. He has finished 5/8 in the 1999 Spingold, the 2004 Vanderbilt, and the Senior KOs in 2004, 2005, and 2007, as well as a number of other overall finishes in national events. He has frequently appeared in the top 500 on the McKenney list, with his highest finish being 39th nationally. He has been the Unit 114 masterpoint leader from 2003 to 2007.

As a bridge administrator, he has served as committee chair or member of numerous committees including Bylaws, Appeals, Tournaments and Competition, Nominating, Elections, Contracts, Scheduling, and Finance. Since the 1990s he has also co-chaired the Atlanta Sectionals. He has been a member of the National Appeals Committee since 2004 and is a member of the National and District 7 Goodwill Committees.

His service as an officer of Unit 114, District 7, and the Mid-Atlantic is as follows:

- Unit 114: President (2000-2002), Vice President (1998-2000), Secretary (1996-1998)
- District 7: President (September 1997 - September 1999), Vice President (January 1995 - September 1997), Secretary (September 1993 - December 1994)
- Mid-Atlantic Bridge Conference: President (two terms) - (2000-2001 and 2002-2003), Vice President (two terms) - (1999-2000 and 2001-2002)

With his outstanding record of player accomplishments, 20 years of service to the game of bridge, Mike Kovacich is an extremely well-qualified inductee to the Georgia State Unit 114 Bridge Hall of Fame.



Randy Pettit, officially joined the bridge community's *creme de la creme*, becoming only the sixth person named to the Georgia State Unit 114 Hall of Fame. He was elected in December of 2003 and inducted with a reception and brief ceremony in his honor March 12, 2004, during an Atlanta sectional. Randy's wife, Diane, and some of their closest friends shared in the festivities, along with 250 bridge

players.

A native of New Britain, CT, Randy played his first duplicate game as a teenager. His partner was his mother and they tied for first in a club game. That was in 1962 or '63, by Randy's account, and after serving in the Marines, attending Duke University, and winning all of 37 master points, a job transfer brought him to the Atlanta area in March 1974.

He worked for Connecticut General (now Cigna) and was responsible for technical support throughout the Southeast. He dealt with financial planning and insurance for business owners, a career that lasted until 1996, when he retired.

By that time, Randy had compiled quite the bridge résumé, and the very next year, he made a one-of-a-kind journey to the top of the Barry Crane 500 list.

In the early days of the game there were two national organizations, William McKenney's American Bridge League, with roots in auction bridge, and Ely Culbertson's United States Bridge Association. They were merged in 1937, with McKenney in command, and Charles Goren was named the first winner of the McKenney Trophy for winning the most master points in a year.

There have been many different winners of the McKenney Trophy, nearly all of them professionals who play weekly on the tournament circuit with clients who can afford their fees.

The 1997 winner did not fit the mold. Randy Pettit of Marietta, GA, is neither a professional nor a client. His bridge planning was perhaps less effective, for he sometimes arrived at a tournament without partners and teammates and relied on happenstance. His bridge skills were such that the professionals

were happy to recruit him as a team member or play with him when they were unemployed.

In 1997, he attended all three national championships, 18 regional tournaments and three sectionals, far less than most of the professionals. But by the end of the year, he had accumulated 2,117 master points. A perennial contender, Paul Soloway of Mill Creek, WA, took second place. This was a remarkable performance by Pettit, who has battled attention deficit disorder all his life.

“I really had no one person to play with,” recalls Randy, “and probably had 50 partners. Until Gatlinburg, I more or less had pickup partners.” One thing led to another and, with some of the perennial bigger names cutting back a bit, Randy's total of 2,117 master points in 1997 led all of the ACBL.

“I had no plans at all to pursue it until I was seventh in October and had big tournaments at Lancaster (a regional) and St. Louis (the Fall NABC). Paul Soloway approached me in St. Louis and said, ‘congratulations, you're going to win it.’ He said St. Louis would be his final tournament that year.”

Randy's master point championship remains a rarity. Almost every year, the winner is either a full-time, world-class professional or a client, who pays top-of-the-line pros to be teammates for a year.

He has been on the boards of the Duplicate Bridge Association of Atlanta and Unit 114, and was Unit 114 President for two years from 1992 to 1994. He also has been a speaker at NABCs and Regionals and has served on appeals committees.

Randy has over 17,500 master points and 250+ Blue Ribbon qualifications. He became a Grand Life Master when he won the NABC Senior Swiss teams event in 2001. He later won a Senior Knockout championship and has two seconds and a third-place finish in other NABC events. Randy has won the Unit 114 Life Master Player of the Year award seven times.

Randy's life has undergone substantial change in the past decade. While recovering from a serious motorcycle accident, he had a “profound spiritual awakening” and embarked on a rigorous workout regimen. He remains firmly committed in both areas. Randy's greatest source of pride is his goal to make 200 blood platelet donations — and he did not make his first until 1996.



Jack Feagin, attorney-at-law, started actively playing bridge when he finished law school in 1973. He married his favorite partner Claudia in 1976. From the very beginning, Jack began volunteering and serving on the Unit 114, District 7, and MABC Boards of Directors and, also, by assisting Edgar Gay in running Atlanta bridge tournaments. With the passing of Edgar Gay in 1980, Jack became the tournament chairman and has run 27 MABC regionals and 70 sectionals for Atlanta. In addition, he was chairman for the very successful North American Bridge Championships in Atlanta in 1986, 1995 and 2005.

In 1979, Jack helped form the Duplicate Bridge Association of Atlanta, served as its first President, and is again currently serving as the DBAA President. In the late-1980s, he formed and led the Committee for an Open and Improved ACBL which helped to bring about needed changes with the ACBL Board Of Directors and management. He has also served on the ACBL Board of Governors for many years.

Jack served 3 terms as Unit 114 President between 1980 and 1991. Jack also served as a District 7 officer several times, including twice as its President. In the 1980s, he coordinated the District Grand National Teams. In 1983, he was elected Vice President of the Mid-Atlantic Bridge Association and became the President in 1985. In 1987, when the President was rotated to District 6, he was again put in as Vice President and as President in 1989. He also served for several years on the District Judiciary and National Appeals committees.

Jack was named to ACBL Goodwill Committee in 1977. In 1983, he was named Unit 114 Sportsperson of the Year.

As a player, Jack, playing mostly with his favorite partner Claudia, has won

over 35 regional events and many sectional events. In the late-70s and 80s, he was on the ACBL's top 500 master point winners list most years. Jack greatly cut back on bridge when his kids were growing up, but now is back playing tournaments on a regular basis. He, in partnership with Claudia, has won the right to represent District 7 in the Grand National Teams 5 times and the Grand North American Pairs twice. Although Jack has yet to win his first national championship event, he has come close twice with a 3rd and a 5th along with several other high overall finishes. Jack is on the ACBL Top 500 lifetime master point leaders list with over 9,000 points. At the 2008 Atlanta Labor Day Regional, Jack and Claudia topped the masterpoint leader list with 150 points by winning 4 events.

In addition to Jack's long and meritorious record of working for the betterment of bridge, Jack has been deeply involved in coaching girls' basketball for 17 years and has formed a nationally recognized girls AAU basketball program.

Jack Feagin was elected to the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame in 1996, an honor he richly deserved.



Richard Freeman, a "Quiz Kid" of radio fame in the 1940s, became the ACBL's youngest Life Master in 1952 at the age of 18, by March 2008, had claimed over 20 North American championships and two world championships with three second place finishes. Freeman graduated from high school at the age of 12 and enrolled at the University of Chicago, earning a bachelor's degree in liberal arts by the age of 15. That's where he learned to play bridge. By the age of 21, he had earned another

bachelor's degree (in business administration) and a law degree from George Washington University in DC.

In the mid-1950s, he began directing and became legendary for his speed with a pencil in the days when games were posted and scored by hand. Freeman excels in mathematics and has a photographic memory.

"Dickie will be our local star," predicted Jack Feagin in 1995. "He's a great competitor and gentleman, with a fantastic memory. I've seen him recall every play from a game 30 years ago. And people stand around in awe watching him add up score sheets in his head."

One of Freeman's teammates, Bob Hamman, disagrees with the "gentleman" part. The soft-spoken grandfather others see away from the table becomes "an acid-tongued dynamo at the bridge table." Says Hamman, "Dick has a sharp needle and knows how to use it."

He won his first North American championship in 1955 — the Men's (now Open) B-A-M Teams — playing with Edgar Kaplan, Norman Kay, Ralph Hirschberg and Al Roth. Freeman is best known, however, for his partnership with Nick Nickell and for the success their team — Bob Hamman–Bobby Wolff, Paul Soloway, Jeff Meckstroth–Eric Rodwell — enjoyed for many years: Freeman's victories include the Spingold in 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998, 1999, and 2004; the Reisinger in 1993, 1994, 1995, 2004, 2005, and 2008; the Vanderbilt in 2000, and 2003; and the Bermuda Bowl in 1995 and 2000.

Freeman says he considers bridge to be more than a game, more than a sport — "it broadens your perspective." He credits his wife, Louise, with teaching him how to win. Playing with his future wife Louise, Freeman won the Mixed Teams national championship in 1961.

You will not see Freeman competing at local bridge. He limits his bridge play to the 3 NABCs each year, along with World Bridge Championship events for which his team qualifies. Freeman enjoys crossword puzzles, poker, growing rose bushes, and is a fan of the Chicago Cubs.

Richard Freeman, a Grand Life Master with over 17,000 master points, was inducted to the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame in 1991 and to the ACBL Hall of Fame in 2001. He died June 29, 2009 at the age of 75.



Lou Bluhm of Atlanta was a bridge professional and an expert at poker and gin rummy. One of the leading American players, he was well-known for his high standard of ethics and deportment.

He placed 3rd in the World Mixed Pairs in 1978 and won the Cavendish Invitational Pairs in 1981. He was the first recipient of the ACBL's Distinguished Player Award (an award that was originated for him). He won the Reisinger in 1972, the Spingold in 1974 and 1977; the Vanderbilt in 1979 and 1989; the Blue Ribbon Pairs and Men's Teams in 1977; the Open Pairs in 1984, and the Life Master Men's Pairs in 1987. He placed 2nd in the Vanderbilt in 1978 and 1986; the Spingold in 1988, the Men's Teams in 1973 and the Grand National Open Teams and the Men's B-A-M Teams in 1983; the Men's B-A-M Teams in 1987. In total, Lou won 9 NABC titles, including all the major team events and the Blue Ribbon Pairs.

When Lou received the ACBL's Distinguished Player Award in 1989 -- an award originated just for him -- it was a fitting culmination. At that time Frank Stewart wrote "Lou Bluhm has always the perfect embodiment of expert excellence; the quiet aura of competence; the pride and determination that never let him be satisfied with second place; the constant tinkering to improve his system; the high standards of ethics and deportment."

Lou met his final opponent, pancreatic cancer, with the same stolid strength of mind he brought to bridge. Only two weeks before his death, his team reached the semifinals of the Vanderbilt Teams, where they were defending champions. By the time Lou got to Fort Worth, the decline in his elephantine build and face belied his illness; still in each match he got in his two quarters in a wheelchair, and everyone marveled at his outstanding play in what proved to be his last event.

Here's what long time partner Tom Sanders had to say about Lou:

As Lou Bluhm's long time partner and longer time friend, it is an honor and a privilege for me to be a part of this ceremony tonight.

I've thought a lot about Lou in the past 10 years. Sometimes fantasizing how things might have turned out had he not been taken from us at 50 years old in the prime of his life and with no-telling-how-many-bridge-tournaments yet to be won. Other times, like tonight, thinking about what it was that set him apart from other bridge players.

I could never imagine a more perfect partner. Have you ever had a partner who seemed to always make the right play? I remember so many times on defense thinking, Lou, if you have such-and-such card, you better play it now or they're going to make this hand. Then I'd glance down at the table and there would be that very card, just played, looking up at me, seeming to say, you knew if he had me, he was going to play me. . Yes, I suppose I did.

He played the game with aplomb and self-assurance, and with the imagination of a skillful novelist.

When things went wrong, and they invariably do, Lou was unflappable. This trait re-enforced partnership confidence and not only served him well in bridge as well as life...but later during his ordeal.

He was always known for his high standard of deportment and ethics. These outstanding characteristics are the essence of class and the epitome of the consummate expert. In 1989, he was, and remains, the only recipient of ACBL's Distinguished Player Award.

Lou was happy with his relatively simple lifestyle and moderate surroundings. Besides a few lady friends from time to time, his passion was bridge, poker and gin rummy. He made his living playing cards. His near addiction was sports. He was a true sports fan and an authority on most. It pains me he missed out on so many sport milestones that he would have enjoyed, like: the Braves of the 90s; the Atlanta Olympics; the Falcons in the Super Bowl; and, since he was a golfer, the phenomenon of Tiger Woods.

He faced the awful dilemma that fate dealt him in the Summer of 89 like it was a tough bridge match. Lou moved to Tennessee and started a series of experimental protocols designed to improve his chances. All told, he was in the hospital 7 times.

Lou didn't have medical insurance. Because of a broad spectrum of bridge

friends that contributed a significant amount of money to a special fund, he was able to afford these treatments. Many of these friends are here tonight and, once again, I want you to know Lou knew of your participation and was overwhelmed by your generosity.

Now is the time that Lou would have wanted me to acknowledge some others that were very important to him during his ordeal: Peter Weichsel and Alan Cokin for organizing the fund; Bart Bramley, his then regular partner, for his vigilance in keeping in touch almost daily and twice coming to visit Lou in Nashville; and, of course, Carol for the meals she cooked and all she did to make Lou more comfortable.

In the many hours we spent in conversation, it wasn't long before I realized his short term goal was to get to the Spring NABCs in Fort Worth to help his team defend the Vanderbilt they had won the year before.

Amazingly, considering how badly he felt some days, he not only made it to Fort Worth, but, according to his teammates, he played as magnificently as ever. Their result in gaining the semifinals can attest to that.

Sitting down in our seats on the plane to come home, I said to him, "Heard you played great, tell me about some of the hands".

He wanted no part of that, as he pulled out the hand records of some hands I'd Played, he said, "No, let's go over these hands".

Considerate and unselfish - that's the way he was.

Not many days after we got back, when he had fought it about as long and hard as was possible, he went into the hospital for the last time. A few hours before he died, as I was approaching his room, the nurse stopped me and said, "I'm worried about Mr. Bluhm. He's been in and out of consciousness all day and I haven't been able to communicate with him at all".

I said, "Let me see what I can do".

I sat down beside the bed, and, after calling his name a few times, he was lucid. I said, "Blummer, got a hand for ya"

After what seemed like an eternity, he said, "OK".

I gave him some hand and said, "Whatta ya bid?"

After an even longer pause, he finally made a bid. And then he closed his eyes and went back to sleep. And, you know what? I don't remember the hand nor his answer. But what I will always remember is ... he got it right, he made the right bid. Isn't that something? Probably the last words he uttered on this earth was a bridge bid, and true to his genius .. it was the right one.

That's a sad story. And since this is a night for joy and celebration. It is with much happiness that I present Lou Bluhm to the ACBL Bridge Hall Of Fame. In so doing his name with his picture shall be enshrined in Memphis and the memory of a great player, a loyal friend and a terrific guy shall be with us forever.

Lou Bluhm, a Grand Life Master with 13,000 master points, was inducted to the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame in 1989 and to the ACBL Hall of Fame in 2000. He died in 1990 at the age of 50.



Edgar Gay loved bridge and played, directed, and taught whenever and wherever there was a need. From community centers to senior centers to venues opened specifically for bridge, he was there. Edgar was a fixture at tournaments in the southeast and taught in numerous locations across Atlanta. He developed a structured approach for teaching bridge, with his own specific lesson plans. As a player, he became a Life Master in 1966, an accomplishment of which he was extraordinarily proud. In addition to playing and teaching bridge, he began directing tournaments and actively participated on the board of Unit 114. In the late 1960s, Edgar served a term as President of Unit 114.

Prior to Edgar's arrival on the Atlanta tournament scene, local sectional tournaments had not been very successful. Attendance was sparse and profit almost non-existent. Edgar took over as tournament chairman and

dramatically increased tournament attendance and player enjoyment. Edgar worked closely at running tournaments with a young protégé, Jack Feagin, who was obviously groomed very well to later run very successful Atlanta tournaments.

Edgar Rudolf Gay was born Edgar Frohlich in Berlin, Germany on September 21, 1923. While an excellent student of mathematics and science in school, his greatest love was football, or soccer as it is called in this country. As a high school-aged athlete, he was selected to the all-Berlin team in 1937. On November 9, 1938, during the famous Kristallnacht or night of the broken glass, his parents' store in Berlin was destroyed by Hitler youth. His cousin, historian Peter Gay writes of witnessing the destruction in his book *My German Question*. Realizing that Germany was no longer a safe place to live, the family packed what they could and left. While he and his family hoped to come directly to the United States, quotas from Germany had already been filled, so they decided to go first to Cuba and then immigrate to the USA from there. They originally planned to sail to Cuba on the SS St. Louis, but got to port sooner than expected and found passage on the Iberia. In the luckiest of turns, the Iberia delivered them safely to Cuba. The St. Louis, today known as "the ship of the damned," was not allowed to dock anywhere and returned to Germany.

Shortly thereafter, the family was able to immigrate to Georgia. They eventually settled in Atlanta, where the owner of a small grocery store allowed them to live in the back of the store at 10th and Peachtree in return for their running the store. Very proud to become American citizens and tired of having their name mispronounced, they translated their last name into English. Frohlich in German means to be happy or gay, so Edgar Frohlich became Edgar Gay. Several years later, the owner of the store died, so the family purchased the store and turned it into Gay's Men's Shop. When the store was to open they couldn't afford all the stock they needed, so, displaying a card player's moxie, they removed all the shirts and hats from their boxes, put them in display cases, and then put the boxes back up on top to make it appear they had more stock than they did.

When the United States entered World War II, Edgar joined the US Army and served in Military Intelligence. After the war, he returned to Atlanta and went to work at and later ran Gay's Men's Shops with his mother and his brother. He married Comer Hymes on February 4, 1951 and had a son named Milton and a daughter Barbara. He began playing bridge socially as a young adult, and moved quickly on to tournament bridge. Edgar also was a noted actor in the Atlanta theater scene with a rich bass voice. He played parts ranging from Curly in "Oklahoma" to the romantic Emile deBec in "South Pacific." It was very common to hear Broadway musicals playing in his house and he was a strong influence on both his children being active in musical theater. He stood about 5'6" with a big round face, a bald head, and a quick smile. His jokes and stories were legendary. Despite being born in Germany he was proud to speak without even the slightest accent, "except for southern," he would joke. An ex-athlete, he enjoyed most sports, and supported Atlanta's professional sports franchises, especially the Atlanta Hawks. As a father, he coached both boys' baseball and girls' softball, and when Druid Hills High School first organized a soccer team, he attended practices as a coach/consultant and assisted the school's first team coming in 3rd in the State. Lunch companions included head coaches from both the University of Georgia and Georgia Tech, as well as sportscasters and other local notables. Having never finished high school or gone to college, he did the Atlanta newspaper's crossword puzzles daily in ink. When asked about this once, he replied, "When you know the answer, you do it in ink."

Edgar Rudolf Gay died on January 17, 1981 in a way he couldn't have choreographed better if he had tried. He worked a tournament that night, then went with some of the other directors for a late night snack at the Varsity. He loved the onion rings. He drove home and, with his wife Comer, watched the Hawks play a game on the west coast. After his team won, he went to bed and died quietly in his sleep.

Edgar Gay was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1984, earning a spot in the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame because of his extraordinary contributions and service to Georgia bridge, more so than for his accomplishments as a player. Nonetheless, Edgar was proud of every one his lifetime total of 890.12 master points.



Margaret Wagar, a woman who distinguished herself as a player and as an administrator, was one of the all-time great players. She became Life Master #37 in 1943, the fifth woman to earn the ranking and the first Southerner. She and Kay Rhodes share one of the most remarkable achievements in ACBL history--- they won the Women's Pairs four consecutive years: 1955 through 1958. Margaret Wagar and Rhodes share another record, one of frustration. They were second in the Women's Teams for seven consecutive years, 1952 through 1958.

Wagar's impressive record spans three decades. Her 33 National titles include wins in Women's and open competition: Women's Teams in 1940, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1964 and 1965; Chicago (now the Reisinger) in 1941; Spingold in 1946 and 1948; Women's Pairs in 1944, 1955, 1956, 1957 and 1958; Master Mixed Teams in 1942, 1945, 1948, 1954 and 1964; Open Pairs in 1947 and 1948; Mixed Pairs in 1948 and 1949, and Life Master Women's Pairs in 1962. She was non-playing captain of the U.S. World Women's Teams in 1968 and 1972.

Wagar served on the ACBL Board of Directors from 1960 to 1972 and was named ACBL Honorary Member in 1979, an award given for meritorious service. During her term in office, she coined the saying "It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice."

On August 31, 1982, a dinner was held at the Cherokee Town Club in Atlanta to honor Margaret Wagar, "Pride of the South." Excerpts from several of the speakers follow:

Richard Goldberg: "She has been described as the "Epitome of a Southern Lady and the personification of graciousness. Few people know that Margaret is a culinary artist and has been known to serve grits under glass, grits and truffles, and grits almondine to name a few of her specialties. This earned Margaret the title of 'grittiest person in Atlanta'."

Carol Sanders: "To know Margaret is to love her. Her demeanor with partner makes you so confident. Comfort is the key word."

Tommy Sanders: "A catalyst that set her apart from others - kindness, consideration, courtesy, charm and humor. Does it sound as if the ledger is in balance? The ledger is not in balance; we owe you. Carol and I are grateful to honor you for just being there and being you. That's the reason we are here tonight. I'd like to toast a lady who has had a positive affect on all our lives."

Former world champion Carol Sanders considers Wagar one of her role models. "She gave me such opportunities when I first started playing bridge. She was so dear to me." Sanders tells this story about Wagar's table presence and sense of humor:

"Margaret was playing at an NABC against someone who was known to try to get a look at your hand. Margaret was having none of this, so while declarer was studying the hand, she pretended to have a coughing fit.

"She opened her purse and took out her handkerchief. Then she detached the card--- a queen --- that declarer was looking for and folded it into the handkerchief and put it in her purse.

"If he could get a look at her hand, he wouldn't find the queen there.

"Sure enough, declarer took the finesse into Margaret. She opened her purse, produced the queen and won the trick.

"She wasn't going to let him read her."

Margaret Wagar was inducted to the Georgia Bridge Hall of Fame in 1983 and to the ACBL Hall of Fame in 1999. She died in 1990 at the age of 88.

Eligibility and Induction Process

The Unit 114 Board of Directors recognizes members those whose contributions to bridge are truly exceptional. These contributions may be as a player and/or in their service to Unit 114 bridge. The unit President appoints a nominating committee which considers recommendations made by Unit 114 members, but may also independently identify players and/or persons for consideration.

If you would like to suggest someone for consideration, simply make your suggestion known to any unit board member. Induction to the Hall of Fame requires a 60% favorable vote by the nominating committee and a 75% favorable vote by the full Board of Directors.

The Hall of Fame nominating committee uses the following guidelines in deciding whether to recommend a member for induction:

- Accomplishments as a player to be considered are achievements in regional, national, and international events. Accomplishments in local tournaments and club play shall be considered, but to a much lesser degree.
- Level of service or contribution to the game of bridge within the Unit shall be considered. A person may be eligible without regard to player accomplishments if he or she has made outstanding contributions and service to the game of bridge.
- Sportsmanship and behavior as a player are to be considered, as well as personal qualities and character.
- A person must have been a member of Unit 114 for a minimum of 10 years.
- If the person to be considered for nomination is deceased, at least one full year must have elapsed before the induction vote.
- Neither age nor disability shall be part of the eligibility consideration.
- Board members are eligible for the Hall of Fame.