

Member Awards Recommendations

8/06/2016

In recognition of member accomplishments as a player and/or service to the game of bridge, Unit 114 recognizes and honors its members with the following awards:

- Hall of Fame (HOF)
- Lifetime Achievement Award (LAA)
- Sports Person of the Year (SPOTY)
- Goodwill Committee (GW)
- Sectional Player of the Year (Life Master)
- Sectional Player of the Year (Non-Life Master)

The level of prestige that each of these awards carries is represented by the order in which they appear above. Each of the above awards will be discussed in this paper, along with recommendations for improvement.

Hall of Fame:

The following is taken directly from the Unit 114 website:

Hall of Fame Eligibility and Induction Process

The Unit 114 Board of Directors recognizes unit members 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 this committee 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.

The above guidelines were developed in 2003 by a Unit 114 committee (chaired by Ken Parker) and have worked well since that time. Since 2003, using the above guidelines, the following players have been vetted and approved by the nominating committee, recommended to the full Board of Directors, approved by the full board of directors, and inducted to the HOF:

- Mike Kovacich (2009)
- Patty Tucker (2011)
- Bob Heller (2011)

- Kevin Collins (2012)
- Emory Whitaker (2014)

Prior to 2009, the most recent HOF appointment was in 2003. In 2008, a nominating committee was first appointed and took it upon themselves to nominate the above named individuals. Few nominations have been received from unit members not on the HOF Nominating Committee.

How the HOF Committee has operated in the past:

- A 5-member committee is appointed by the Unit President and a unit board member is appointed as committee chairperson.
- The other 4 committee members are past presidents. None of these past presidents may be a HOF member.
- If a HOF nomination is made which *names a HOF committee member*, the candidate is not advised of this. The unit President is advised and temporarily appoints a substitute committee member.
- The unit's Hall of Fame began in 1983 and now has 11 members. In its 33 years of existence, Emory Whitaker is the only HOF member from outside of Atlanta.
- Past HOF appointments have been made of players who have earned over 10,000 master points, with only 2 exceptions: Walter Gay and Patty Tucker, both players who made extraordinary contributions in their service to the game of bridge.
- NOTE: Walter Gay was not an expert player. His lifetime master point total was less than 900. He would have been a perfect candidate for the Lifetime Achievement Award, a recognition which began in 2014.
- The member who nominated a candidate for HOF is never identified, not even within the committee itself.
- All HOF committee nominations, vetting results, votes, and deliberations are kept strictly confidential.
- Most HOF candidates have been submitted by members of the committee.

Hall of Fame Recommendations:

1. Reduce the HOF Committee to 3 members, a board member as chairperson and 2 past presidents. The geographically reduced unit has just 5 past presidents (Ann Hedden, Sandy Barrow, Tom Wight, Emory Whitaker, and Ken Parker) and one (Emory) is not eligible to serve on the committee because he is a member of the HOF. **Board approved 4/02/16.**
2. Instead of requiring at least 3 out of 5 committee members voting in favor of presenting the HOF candidate to the full board of directors, reduce this to 2 out of 3. **Board approved 4/02/16.**
3. Due to the unit's membership being reduced to about one-third of its prior membership, consideration should be given to viewing 5,000 master points as an informal threshold. Recognize that some who reach this threshold will not have contributed sufficiently in their service to the game of bridge to receive HOF membership recognition. **Board approved 4/02/16.**
4. Assign to this committee the annual task of determining whether any of the unit's members deserves consideration for this highest of all honors. If no one is considered worthy, the committee chairperson shall so advise the board in the last board meeting of the year. **Board approved 4/02/16.**
5. Each new HOF member has his/her name added to the group plaque which will be hung in the club where that member plays and will remain there until the next HOF member is added. Additionally, the HOF member is presented with an individual plaque. **Board approved addition 8/06/16.**

Lifetime Achievement Award:

The second highest honor which may be awarded a unit member is the LAA. This high honor was instituted in 2014.

The LAA was initiated as a means of recognizing unit members who are highly accomplished players who have also made significant contributions in their service to the game of bridge over a lengthy period of time.

The LAA's first recipient (awarded posthumously) was Barbanel Borah from Eatonton. Barb was a Gold Life Master who worked tirelessly for local and unit bridge for more than 2 decades. The LAA's second recipient was Dick Myers, who also was a Gold Life Master who worked tirelessly for local and unit bridge for more than 2 decades.

Because of their similarity, the LAA and HOF are handled by the same committee which consists of one board member and 2 past presidents (since the splitting of Unit 114).

Each new LAA member has his/her name added to the group plaque which will be hung in the club where that member plays and will remain there until the next LAA member is added. Additionally, the LAA member is presented with an individual plaque. **Board approved addition 8/06/16.**

Lifetime Achievement Award Recommendations:

1. Require the LAA/HOF committee to consider the nomination of one unit member each year for consideration of the LAA by the full board of directors. If no one is considered worthy, the committee chairperson shall so advise the board in the last meeting of the year. **Board approved 4/02/16.**
2. Let the full board decide whether the candidate (if any) measures up to the standard of previous LAA recipients. **Board approved 4/02/16.**
3. Require a 75% approval by the full board to be awarded the LAA. **Board approved 4/02/16.**

Sports Person of the Year - and – Goodwill Committee:

For many years, these 2 annual awards have been handled in the same manner. Many of our members feel there is no clear distinction between them. The differences are very subtle. Both awards are “grass roots” awards, meaning that the nominations are written and submitted by unit players.

See Exhibit 1 for a statement of the requirements which have been needed in the past to be considered worthy of Goodwill Committee nomination.

Since the beginning of time for these awards, the unit secretary would send out a letter to all club managers. The letter announced that nominations were now being accepted. The club managers were asked to post the letter (including the qualifications listed in Exhibit 1) in a conspicuous place so that players would see it.

The very same process and list of qualifications have been used to solicit nominations for Sportsperson of the Year. In past years, the two awards have been handled separately with notices being sent out about 2 or 3 months apart.

With our smaller unit, the number of SPOTY nominations last year (2) for 2016 was considered to be very low.

For 2016 Goodwill, the Unit President sent an email to all players, announcing the qualifications and soliciting (inviting) written nominations. This approach resulted in our receiving 4 Goodwill nominations.

The SPOTY is given free plays at all Unit 114 tournaments for one year. The SPOTY runner-up receives free plays at one Unit 114 sectional of his/her choice. The unit treasury reimburses the tournament for these free entries.

The member who receives the Goodwill award should attend the District 7 banquet which is usually held at a regional in late spring. If he/she does attend, the unit reimburses the member for the cost of 4 entries.

In the past, unit board members had not been eligible for the SPOTY award. **On 4/02/16, the board approved removing this restriction.**

For both the Goodwill and SPOTY awards, the person who wrote the award winner's nomination shall be awarded one free play at a Unit 114 sectional. If there is more than one nomination of the same member, the Committee shall decide whose letter of nomination was the most convincing. **Board approved 4/02/16.**

If board approved changes result in significantly more Goodwill/SPOTY nominations, the Committee may reduce the list of nominees to a reasonable number to be brought to the unit board of directors. **Board approved 4/02/16.**

Sports Person of the Year and Goodwill Committee Recommendations:

1. Because these 2 awards are similar, they should both be requested with the same solicitation, one to be posted by club managers and the other emailed directly to all unit members. The email should include an explanation of the free play awarded to the writer of each winning nomination. **Board approved addition 4/02/16.**
2. The solicitation should explain that every nomination submitted will be considered by the Committee and that the committee will decide which of the nominees should be considered for the higher distinction, SPOTY. **Board approved 8/06/16.**
3. The unit board will first vote on SPOTY. All candidates for SPOTY (including the winner) who are not already Goodwill Committee members, will then be considered for the District 7 Goodwill Committee. **Board approved 8/06/16.**
4. It is possible that the same nominee could earn both awards (in the same year). This is indeed likely if the SPOTY winner has not been recognized for Goodwill in the past. **Board approved 8/06/16.**
5. Both awards should be voted upon by the full board in either the last scheduled board meeting of the calendar year or a January board meeting. **Board approved 8/06/16.**

6. The winners of both awards should be recognized at the Annual General Membership meeting at the first sectional of the new year. **Board approved 8/06/16.**
7. The SPOTY and Goodwill winner's name shall be added to a group plaque which will be hung in the winner's club for the year in which each is honored. **Board approved 8/06/16.**

Sectional Player of the Year (LM and NLM):

These are 2 awards recognizing both the Life Master and Non-Life Master who earned the greatest number of master points in Unit 114 sectionals during the calendar year. A player's rank throughout the year shall be based on their rank as of the master point total reported by the ACBL on January 7th. The current standings for these 2 master point races appear at our unit website.

Sectional Player of the Year Recommendations:

1. The winners of both awards should be recognized at the Annual General Membership meeting at the first sectional of the new year. **Board approved 8/06/16.**
2. A plaque for each should be started and it should be hung in the winner's home club. If that is not possible, the plaque should be on display in Macon. **Board approved 8/06/16.**

Additional Recommendations: Unit 114 should appoint a person responsible for making arrangements to retrieve plaques from the prior year, getting engraving updates, and arranging for the transport of the plaque to its new location.

Exhibit 1

2017 Goodwill Nominations

Unit 114 may add one member each year to the District 7 Goodwill Committee. Any Unit 114 member may nominate another Unit 114 member for this high honor.

Candidates must meet the following qualifications:

- Observes both the laws and the ethics of the game
- Plays competitively and is always fair
- Is gracious in victory as well as defeat
- Is pleasant as both a partner and an opponent
- Exhibits good manners at the table and helps others enjoy the experience
- Graciously abides by rulings of the director
- Does not give unsolicited bridge lessons at the table
- Avoids discussion of boards in the presence of new opponents
- Gives due consideration to personal appearance and conduct
- Does not become quarrelsome or angry during the game
- Genuinely promotes bridge and upholds its reputation
- Gives back to the game through mentoring newer players
- Volunteers in administration of the game
- Promotes the game by example

Nominations must include a detailed explanation of what makes their person a strong candidate, including a description of their efforts to promote bridge and their volunteer activities. Nominations should not exceed one page in length. As this is a lifetime appointment, please do not nominate anyone who is listed on the Lifetime Members list that follows.

Please email nominations no later than January 7, 2017 to the Unit President, Bob Pearson at pearsonb2@cox.net. The unit's 2017 Goodwill Member will be decided at the January 21, 2017 meeting of the Unit 114 Board of Directors.