

I was introduced to social bridge through my parents and played off and on when the situation arose. I thought I was joining a social club a few months after moving to Alabama but turns out it was a duplicate club in Athens with Ralph Boles as the director. He started an Easy Bridge class and I was hooked! That was ten years ago this month. I never thought about becoming a life master but really enjoyed the competitive and intellectual aspects of duplicate. Once the bug hits you, it is hard to turn back. I had a wonderful partner to begin with and we did very well together but she was older and didn't want to travel to tournaments and that was something I was very interested in trying. For a while I didn't play in the Huntsville Bridge Club but soon made the transition to playing in their limited games even though it is an aggravating commute from Athens. So with a new partner, June Hoelzle, and soon thereafter, teammates Joella McManus and Dianna Norman, we started traveling to regionals and sectionals. We all get along really well and we travel not only for bridge but for finding wonderful restaurants and making the trip a mini vacation. Maybe that keeps us less tense during tournaments, not sure, but we were fairly successful. Our teammates joined ACBL right before 2011 but my partner and I did not. Therefore we needed more points for Life Master. I began playing in the instant robot tournaments on BridgeBase and earned enough points along with my club and tournament points to reach Life Master in 2018. Having been very familiar with BBO, sure made the transition this past year so much easier. After Easy Bridge, I have been sort of self-taught and still play Standard American. I'm looking forward to being able to get back to tournament play once this nasty pandemic is behind us. When I first started playing in Huntsville, there were no mentoring programs, and not much in the way of classes. The club has made huge steps to improve this and now offers numerous ways to improve your play, especially for the 0-299 group. I think for us "in the middle" players, there will be more opportunities to improve our game with some upcoming mentoring and teaching. Our board has really stepped up in the past few years to address these issues and I am very appreciative.