

Meet Randi Berkson

I was born in New York and raised in Great Neck Long Island. As a youth, I watch my parents play bridge (and have “enthusiastic” discussions about the hands afterwards). My sister, Suzette Wynn, whom some of you know, moved to Phoenix, and I missed her. I decided to go to college in Arizona to be near her, but I ultimately chose U of A over ASU.



My first post high school degree was an associate degree in Nursing from Pima College, and I worked as a nurse for a while, alternating nursing with a career in pharmaceutical sales. I decided to attend U of A to get a degree in Rehabilitation from the College of Education. During that time I was a nurse in the ICU.

I met my husband, Larry (who owned Allstate Vehicles), in 1973 at the U of A, but we did not marry until 1984. We did not date when we first met, and I actually tried to set him up with my roommate (which, happily, did not work out). Larry and I would run into one another and started dating 10 years later. We both kissed a lot of frogs in those intervening years. Our marriage has given us 3 wonderful children: a daughter in San Diego who is a social worker with her Master’s Degree; another daughter, in Philadelphia, who is a teacher with her Master's Degree; and our youngest, our son, who lives here in Tucson and is working on his PhD in Optics.

At the U of A I played hearts and spades—no bridge. In 1988, my sister convinced me to take up bridge. I began by taking lessons at the JCC (taught by our own Terry Neuman) and spent years playing party bridge while the kids were in school.

I first played duplicate at Las Candelas. My sister told me to contact Barbara Rosenthal and take classes, which I did. I kept playing duplicate when we moved over to Adobe, and I also played at Streams. I was hooked.

My sister, Suzette, has been my mentor. We have even travelled to tournaments together in Canada and Oregon. I finally earned my Life Master 18 months ago, and I try to play 4 times a week. I still work—2 days a week as a school nurse—and keeping track of Covid and monitoring the situation can be pretty stressful.

Besides bridge, I play Mah Jongg and do Pilates 5 times a week. I keep pretty busy, but I am looking forward to playing with all of you at the bridge table when it is safe to do so.