



### **Meet Brian Gelles**

Located 70 miles east of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Johnstown is known as the “Flood City” due to the devastating events of 1889, 1936, and 1977. It is also the hometown of McKinney Duplicate Club regular, Brian Gelles. He was born and raised in Johnstown. Highlights of his teenage years were finishing in the state speech finals two years in a row, selling shoes to pay for college, and having a brief appearance in a hockey arena scene in the movie “Slap Shot” which was filmed locally.

Brian began college at the University of Pittsburgh majoring in math and computer science. During his junior year he accepted a summer internship as a programmer at Texas Instruments. He liked the Dallas area so much, he decided to stay and transferred to UTD. (Of course, this might also have had something to do with meeting his future wife Janet on his first day of work at TI.) After graduating from UTD with a BS in Applied Mathematics and Computer Science, Brian accepted a position at TI to run their summer internship program. This event launched his 30+ year career in Human Resources where he spent two decades in compensation work. After retiring from Texas Instruments Brian worked as an adjunct professor at the University of Dallas. He then joined EDS in 2000 where he served as the Senior Director of U.S. Compensation Benefits for the next 8 years.

Married to his wife Janet for 42 years, Brian started playing bridge in the 1990s. His wife Janet was already a Life Master so he had some catching up to do. Bypassing the novice level of bridge, Brian played a little party bridge “flying by the seat of his pants”. Feeling frustrated with bridge, he focused instead on raising their two children. After retirement in

2008, however, he decided to get serious about the game; he studied a book on Goren bridge, learned to play the conventions his wife preferred, and started playing duplicate with Janet. They traveled to many tournaments and especially enjoyed playing “Gold Rush” events. Incredibly, Brian progressed from beginner to Life Master in a mere 15 months! Plus, just recently he reached Gold Life Master.

Janet and Brian live in Fairview and have two children and four grandsons. While they play both bridge and pinochle, they also enjoy traveling. Since 1996 they have vacationed annually with their best friends and neighbors. They have visited all 50 states.

Janet and Brian are regular members of the McKinney Duplicate Bridge Club where you often find their names at the top of the winners list in the Tuesday and Thursday games. If you ask members about Brian, however, they will not mention his prowess at the table, but his patience, kindness, and generosity of spirit. During a recent rain downpour, for example, he dashed to his car to retrieve his umbrella so he could walk members to their cars and protect them from the deluge. That’s why Brian Gelles is one in a million—a true gentleman valued and admired by his peers.