



## ***Meet John Luebke***

You may be acquainted with superb bridge player, John Luebke, but did you know that bridge is actually John's second favorite "mind sport"? Scrabble ranks first! John has played in tournaments for over 40 years including several top 20 finishes in the national championships. He has traveled far and wide to pursue his love of Scrabble making appearances in 5 world championships at international sites such as Melbourne and London, to name a few.

John was born in Stuttgart, Arkansas where he was the youngest of three children with two older sisters. After majoring in math and attending the University of Arkansas for two years, John transferred to Georgia State University where he completed their Actuarial Program. Following college and certification boards John started his career as an actuary. (Look it up! It requires high aptitude in mathematics and statistics.)

John spent the next few decades working for several companies and lived in Arkansas, Georgia, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Delaware, Virginia and Texas. He spent his final decade working for Transamerica and was relocated to Bermuda where he resided for 8 years. It was there that he took up the game of bridge. With no active Scrabble scene, John became a student of bridge and is now on the brink of earning his Ruby Life Master status thanks to mentors in both Bermuda and Dallas.

John's advice to novice bridge players is to "focus on understanding your partner and your defensive carding. ...Conventions are helpful but if you don't have the first two [strategies], you will struggle to get better." While John plays weekly in McKinney and Denton, he also travels to compete in tournaments. His favorite tournament is the Bermuda Regional where he will play for the 8<sup>th</sup> time this year. He credits that venue with a collegial atmosphere, friendly players, very strong competition, and beautiful weather! His most unforgettable competition, however, was going with 20 players from Bermuda to play bridge in Barbados.

John resides in the Del Webb community in Aubrey and enjoys a variety of pastimes and hobbies. He is an avid Arkansas Razorbacks and Dallas Cowboys fan. He is partial to analytical games such as Sudoku and mahjongg. He seems to think in numbers according to one recent bridge partner who was flabbergasted when he remembered her ACBL number and typed it in for her after only seeing it once! (He confessed that his mother has the same ability to

remember numbers.) John is a fun and easy-going guy and the McKinney Duplicate Bridge Club is happy to claim him as one of their own.

*Submitted by Nancy Connors, McKinney Duplicate Bridge Club*