



BRIDGE ON THE EDGE, INC.
A NOT FOR PROFIT BRIDGE CLUB OWNED BY ITS MEMBERS
SERVING THE ST. JOHN'S DUPLICATE BRIDGE COMMUNITY

September 2019



GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT BRIAN

During our May 2019 AGM I was given the privilege of working on your behalf with a newly elected Board of Administration for BOTE INC. Summer has been a time for relaxation and reflection upon where we are and where we should head as *BOTE*. It is not my purpose to answer those questions in this brief UPDATE; other publications and announcements from our club will do that. My purpose is to paint the context for you in which our Board of Administration is working.

Some important preliminary work has been undertaken to ensure that BOTE continues to operate in a satisfactory and effective manner. The mandate of BOTE is that we promote the development and availability of duplicate bridge for our membership. This represents, in my view, an umbrella under which our entire club-initiated activities and programs must rest!

The Constitutional Objectives of BOTE elaborate upon this statement. For me, several fundamental values stand out:

- BOTE is a member-owned not for profit club maintaining the lowest possible fees and ensuring high standards of corporate governance. While prudence demands a responsible approach to financial management and accountability, the club to date has established efficient and effective protocols to administer and safeguard its assets. Monthly reports to the Board of Administration, quarterly financial statements published to the membership, a financial report to the AGM and an annual budget are examples of this. Membership direction, Accountability and Transparency are three pedestals upon which these measures stand.
- BOTE shall support a non-discriminatory and respectful environment for all members during all club activities and programs. It is essential that each of us remain personally cognizant of this. Our membership is a varied group ranging from new comers learning the duplicate game to veteran players who have accumulated a lifetime of skill and knowledge from provincial, national and international playing experience. Each member is unique; not any one player in any given foursome has the same expectations for the play of the cards, however, we can assume that each of us shares a respect for the game and a desire for self-improvement.

The concept of a cooperative organization is a most complex one. I do not claim to be fully knowledgeable about it. However, history has demonstrated for us that from the earliest days of human society a blending of self-respect, altruism, and a desire to improve one's personal welfare have led to an understanding that some mutual commitment to common goals can safeguard a society for everyone. Working together as individuals, we can enhance our common goals and aspirations via voluntary associations with each other. Our BOTE is an example of this approach to human development and growth. Its success is directly related to its ability to understand itself and realize the importance of mutual respect and cooperation.

Our participation in the ACBL 'Longest Day' Program, the operation of our summer schedule of games, the initiation of various sub-committees to achieve direct member input into the considerations of the Board of Administration, the member feedback to the preliminary Board of Administration's planning session, and our plans to celebrate our club anniversary, are examples of our ability to work together. An effort to identify some longer term goals and establish directions for the year ahead is underway. Information about these will be included in various other communication publications and announcements as the year progresses.

In conclusion, we all know from our individual experience of life that change is inescapable. The poet T.S. Eliot wrote often of the constant exploration of living. "We shall not cease from exploring and the end of all our exploration will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time." Change is life; but the consensus by the members of a group around fundamental values and practice enables life to evolve in an organized and positive manner. Our BOTE will change and evolve; but its core values will fuel its growth.

I look forward to serving as your President during the year ahead.

Brian Shortall

SLOW PLAY



Slow play, especially habitual slow play, is a violation of law and subject to penalty. When a pair has fallen behind, it is incumbent on them to make up the time lost as quickly as possible whether at fault or not. All players are expected to make a concerted effort to catch up when they have fallen behind, regardless of the reason for their lateness. In the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary, the director should presume that a pair finishing a round late by more than two or three minutes on more than one occasion during a session is responsible for the lateness. There is a strong expectation that the director will penalize such a pair. The size of a penalty will tend to increase for subsequent instances of slow play and for chronic or egregious slow play. While warnings typically will be given before a penalty is assessed, failure to do so in no way limits the director's authority to issue a penalty. Players are expected to be aware, in a general sense, of time used and remaining in a segment in which they are playing regardless of whether a clock is in use or a time announcement has been made. An excuse of "no announcement" or "no clock immediately visible" will not be considered persuasive.



Eileen Wakeham



Eileen Wakeham has been defying the odds all her life. She earned her RN in her mid-late 40s and her Silver Life Masters at the age of 90. She raised 6 children while doing it. Want to know more? Read on.

Eileen was born (1925) and educated in Grand Falls, then known to her and her contemporaries as the “Town of Sports and Culture”, thanks to the support of the ruling Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company. She completed commercial training in Grand Falls and during World War II moved to Gander to work as secretary to a high-ranking American official. At a dance one night she met her future husband, Gerald (Jerry) Wakeham, who was working with the RAF Ferry Command on the ground. After the war many international airline companies established themselves in Gander and Jerry, now married to Eileen, went to work for Trans World Airlines (TWA). For many years Gander was known as the “Crossroads of the World,” a very cosmopolitan place by Newfoundland standards.

As the wife of a TWA employee Eileen had a pass which allowed her, and later the entire family, to fly for free anywhere in the world; if it wasn't on a TWA route, other airlines would honour the pass. This pass was critical to her future bridge career.

In Gander, Eileen learned to play bridge at an informal club started by a friend of hers. Always a card player, she took to it like a duck to water. At the outset, they played in the homes of club members and eventually established the club on a more regular basis.

In 1962, Jerry was transferred to Falls Church, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, D.C. On hearing the news the family, which by then included 5 children who had never been west of Grand Falls, was devastated at the thought of leaving Newfoundland (“we all cried”). But they soon adjusted, and Eileen did so through bridge. Each time Jerry was transferred – from Falls Church to Belleville, New Jersey, a suburb of New York City, and then to Cinnaminson, New Jersey, a suburb of Philadelphia - she joined the nearest bridge club and gained an immediate circle of friends. She also became an excellent bridge player. While living in Virginia she played in her first tournament.

Shortly after the birth of her 6th child, and by now in her 40s and living in New Jersey, Eileen applied to a medical facility within walking distance of her home to work as a secretary. The interviewers liked what they saw and she was encouraged to enroll in nurses' training at nearby Cooper University Hospital for a few months, just long enough to familiarize herself with medical terminology. So much did she enjoy it, she emerged from the program three years later as an accidental RN!



Eileen worked as a pediatric nurse until she was in her early 60s and then worked part-time as a school nurse. Often referred to as 'the Irish nurse', she could never convince anyone otherwise.

From early on she played in tournaments throughout the United States, flying for free and usually on her own. As her children grew up, she began to travel with Jerry further afield, often to tournaments abroad. When Jerry was flying on business to exotic places such as Hong Kong and Tokyo, she would phone ACBL to determine if a tournament was scheduled nearby and if the answer was yes, off she'd go. Over the next number of years she played tournaments in cities throughout the US, Europe and Asia, racking up points. Because Jerry was working with TWA, they could stay in hotels at greatly reduced rates so often one or more of the kids joined in family vacations in far away places.



Although her bridge paraphernalia - sweaters, jewelry, ashtrays and like - comes from all over, it comes especially from Las Vegas, one of her favorite places to play Black Jack. Her son Bob thinks that her skill at the bridge table transferred readily to the Black Jack table, where with her diminutive form and adept playing she turned heads and earned "more than a few bucks".

After 50 years in the United States Eileen and Jerry wanted "desperately" to return to Newfoundland, so in 2012 they moved to Kenny's Pond Retirement Residence in St. John's. Although leaving 3 adult children, grandchildren and great grandchildren in New Jersey was difficult, Bob, their eldest son, was living in Flat Rock and 2 daughters were living in Fredericton. (The entire family returned to Newfoundland on a regular basis, but Bob was the only one to return for good after he finished university in the States.) Sadly, Jerry passed away only a few months later, in 2013.

At this point Eileen was in her late 80s, bereft of her much loved husband of 65 years, and new to the city. So naturally she turned to the one thing that had allowed her successfully to adjust to so many new homes: she found herself a bridge club (2 actually, BOTE and the Ace of Clubs on Bennett Avenue) and new bridge friends.

Many of you know what comes next.

In the fall of 2015 Eileen had 960 points, 40 points short of her Silver Life Masters, and three months short of her 90th birthday. Eileen thought she couldn't achieve the first. Joan FitzGerald thought otherwise and initiated the organization of a group of A players to partner with Eileen at both BOTE and the Ace of Clubs. John Gould devised a spreadsheet, and between September and November Eileen played a total of 32 games in partnership with our best and achieved her goal. Her 90th birthday was celebrated at BOTE as well as by her family and other friends. It was a milestone in more ways than one!



What does she think of BOTE today? "It's a very well-run club and I can compare it to quite a few. They treat me like a queen."

The photos and other memorabilia in Eileen's Kenny's Pond home speak volumes. One wall is dedicated to Jerry's amateur theatrical career, which he pursued with a passion equal to Eileen's for bridge, and won a number of awards. The rest of the space is dedicated to her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and, inevitably, to her love affair with bridge.

"So many beautiful hours at the table," she says. "They've brought me such incredible joy and happiness."

Her only regret? The time she was booked for a tournament in Cairo at which Omar Sharif was scheduled to play, and she had to cancel at the last minute. "I lament it to this day."

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TOURNOI RÉGIONAL MONTRÉAL

By Janet Parsons

The hotel is nice, so is the price.
If you come via air, the hotel is not near.
You might think you are in France
Because of the parlance.
To economize there is no prize,
But coffee and tea are free.
So is an apple; one a day can help your play.
The ballroom air was cool and clear.
We were near a mall, where I bought a shawl.
Two nights of hospitality were pleasant and free.
Darkness and drought did not discourage; for bridge we had the courage.*
But three sessions a day - not possible to play!



**The water in the hotel was off for several hours one day. At one point the playing area went totally dark for a few minutes.*

Toronto Regional

By Roy Perry



One of the larger Canadian Regional Tournaments takes place every Easter in Toronto. This year the tournament was held in downtown Toronto at the Sheraton Centre from April 16 - 21, under the Direction of Tourney Chair David Halasi.

It was very successful this year, setting records for tables played and player attendance.

There was special attention paid to the newer players with many events scheduled especially for them. Depending on rank, you could play in 0 - 5 and 0 - 20 supervised games.

As well there were various 49er Pairs, 99er Swiss and 199er Pairs throughout the week, which included after-game hand analysis and refreshments. For all interested players there were free daily lessons and lectures.

This year, BOTE was represented by a solid team with 3 players from St. John's plus a US import.

Tom Dale, Richard Lash, Roy Perry and Barbara Rhoades are a foursome of Sapphire and Gold Life Masters, and probably have about 200 Ribbon Qualifications between them. Barbara, who is also a BOTE member, plays, teaches and Directs at her home Club, Bridge Studio of Delaware, in Wilmington. Tom, Richard and Roy all play and teach at BOTE on a regular basis. Richard and Roy are also Directors. Tom and Roy proudly wore the pitcher plant logo all week.

This Tournament is very competitive with all the best Regional players booking in from Etobicoke, Barrie, London, Mississauga, Guelph and Markham, as well as Toronto, ready to do battle. Of course, many of the regular Canadian and US Pros also flew in to play for the week. BOTE members made a fine representation, all in the IMP game categories.

On the second day, Wednesday April 17, they struck first Gold when they won the Bracketed Mid-Flight Teams 1 Event with First Place overall in A.

The next day, in the Double Elimination KOs, they held on for a third-place finish and picked up a handful of Gold.

They repeated their inaugural success again on Friday April 19, coming First overall by winning the A Division in the Second Chance Swiss Event.

Tom's wife, Dale Dale, honorary Non-Playing Team Captain, was so content with her Team's showing that she whisked her hubby off to Cuba for a few weeks in the sun to celebrate.

The Easter Tournament is held on site in the host hotel, with easy access to numerous food court concessions, a bevy of nice restaurants and shopping venues, and is highly recommended for a Spring Bridge Holiday getaway for players of all strata.

The Pirates of Penzance by Judith McIntyre



On a recent hiking trip to Cornwall, England, Marlene Greey and I found ourselves with a free evening in Penzance, famous as the setting for the Gilbert and Sullivan musical *The Pirates of Penzance*. On a free evening in a strange location there is nothing better than to find a local bridge club and have a game. A quick Google search found the Penzance Duplicate Bridge Club with contact Ann Ampleford (a lovely Cornish name). Ann said visitors would be welcome to join the Wednesday evening game in the Rugby club, starting at 6:30 sharp, so we signed ourselves up!

After a day wandering round Penzance taking in the local thrift shops, art gallery and museum, and fortified by a clotted cream tea, Marlene and I were ready to sit down and relax (!) at the bridge table. This would be our first time playing together and we had filled out an ACBL convention card to make sure we knew what each other was doing. We were not so sure we would know what the opponents were up to as they were known to bid using the ACOL system rather than Standard American. Undeterred we went along.

Ann warmly greeted us when we arrived at the club; the playing area was the bar of the rugby club, which had a wonderful mural depicting pirates, an obvious local theme. Before the game started, the Director came over to our table, welcomed us and gave us a warning about being Benjaminised. Apparently this is a variation of the ACOL system similar to our weak 2 bid. He assured us that were the bid to come up, an explanation would be forthcoming, so nothing to worry about . . . and so the play began.

We had a good evening with the Pirates, some beat us up in a very friendly manner and we managed a few tops ourselves. One kind lady even offered us a ride home, which was quickly accepted and greatly appreciated. Best of all we are not Benjaminised! We would both recommend checking to see if there is a local bridge club wherever you travel. It is a wonderful way to connect with the residents and fascinating to play with different bidding systems.



Some of the local pirates!

Tails from the Trails of Gatlinburg

BIGGEST Regional in North America
Gatlinburg April 22–28, 2019



Outside the convention center the trees were green, flowers were in bloom and the trolley service stopped at the door.

REGISTRATION DESK

The Baear Facts
(Tennessee pronunciation of bear)

Just inside you were met by the information desk and the registration desk. The welcome gift was a bear designed to hold a wine bottle. It was a tad too big and heavy to bring back in carryon luggage. The truth be told I think it would make a great paperweight! The baskets on either side were filled with candy every day.



GATLINBURG AMERICA'S
FAVORITE REGIONAL

Books, Beauty, & Beyond

Once past the registration desk there was shopping galore. Baron Barclay had a large display of bridge books, supplies, jewelry++. The tournament prices were less than the regular catalog prices and you didn't have to pay shipping!!



Other vendors showcased: jewellery, clothing, sweets and even shoes.



The Main Event Location



This picture shows half of the playing area on one side and the other side was the same size. It is a good idea to have a very specific area to meet your partner(s). I was told we'd meet by the wall...as you can see it is a big wall and it has two sides. Registration was taking place there and so it was very congested. We eventually changed the meeting location to be near the TT sign (circled in red in the picture above). Our team consisted of Louis Tousignant (Nova Scotia), Pierre Gringras (Quebec), Suzanne Viau (Quebec) and Janet Parsons (NL). Our total points for the team were approximately 4700. The advantage of a large tournament like this is you are playing against other teams that have about the same number of points. We had a rough start as Louis and I had not played together for more than a year. Pierre and Suzanne play regularly as they live near each other. About midweek Louis and I started to communicate better and it was reflected in the results. Louis attained his Ruby Life Master designation and Suzanne came within a few points of the same level.

The screen on the wall was where we got our team posting for an event. The organization was excellent, games started on time and the caddies were swift, accurate and very polite. There was a slight problem one morning and I learned a very valuable lesson: **write down the series of the boards you are playing.** Eg our boards had letters in the center that indicated which grouping we were playing such as "JM". We were treated to various items during our play. We had fruit available at several sessions and at others we were given samples of the local goodies (see picture below)



Critters

You never know who or what you will see... the rabbits were part of a display.



Lizzie was one of several service dogs. She was very shy about having her picture taken. She was very well behaved while in the playing area.



PLUS....

Besides the wonderful bridge opportunities, there were lectures by some of the top players. I attended a session conducted by Eric Rodwell and it was very informative.

GATLINBURG IS A GREAT PLACE TO PLAY BRIDGE IN THE



The Defense Detective



WHY DEFENSE?

Four people sit down to play bridge. One will be declarer (1/4), the partner will be dummy (1/4), the defense will happen the rest of the time (2/4) i.e. you will be on defense **HALF** of the time. So if you improve your defensive skills you will improve your game significantly.

The Rule of 40

In the beginning you learned that in order to open a hand you needed about 13 high card points (HCP). These points came from the honour cards:

- Ace (A) = 4 points
- King (K) = 3 points
- Queen (Q) = 2 points
- Jack (J) = 1 point

NOTE: There are 4 honour cards in 4 suits. That makes a total of 40 HCP. Hence the **Rule of 40!**

Let's say the bidding goes as follows:

<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
1H	2H

What clues can we get from this bidding?

ANSWER:

- They have about half the points → we have the other half!!
- They have most of the hearts.
- What about our holding...we can see our hand; we see the dummy when it is tabled. But the burning question is what does our partner hold?
- The first thing to consider is how many points are in our hand. Subtract that number from 20 and you get an idea of the points partner may have.

REMEMBER: When you don't have a hand with enough points to bid, you should be analysing the auction to prepare your defense.

Scent Free Means Scent Free

By Patricia O'Brien



Or at least it's supposed to. What happens when someone 'fragrantly' breaks the rule?

Here's what happened at my second favorite club, The Bridge Studio of San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, in March of this year.

During the course of a game someone (let's call her Yolanda) arrived at a table drenched in her favorite perfume. Someone (let's call her Natalie) complained directly to Yolanda, pointing out that she was violating club rules and that she herself (Natalie) was highly sensitive to scents.

The following week Yolanda returned to the club, again heavily perfumed. Natalie, in the meantime, had been advised that the proper procedure was for her to bring the violation to the attention of the game's Director. So when Yolanda arrived at her table this time, Natalie called the Director and laid her complaint.

The Director turned to address Yolanda, who took exception to what she perceived as an unwarranted interference with her rights, and raised her index finger to the Director's face as she was making her point. The Director (much respected at the Club) laid *her* index finger against Yolanda's and gently lowered it to the table. Yolanda immediately jumped up from the table and, visibly agitated, loudly proclaimed that she'd been assaulted. At which point Yolanda's husband (let's call him Jacques), who as her playing partner was sitting opposite, also jumped from his seat and threatened to call the police. All heads turned.

As Jacques glowered and Yolanda paced, both still noisily claiming assault, two playing Directors arrived at the table and conferred with the third. They advised Yolanda and Jacques that there would be consequences if they left the game and persuaded them to finish it. A huge sigh of relief was heaved throughout the room. Play resumed.

At the end of the game, players gradually drifted to the large courtyard outside the studio and to the small outdoor restaurant on one side, to chat, having more than usual to chat about. When suddenly, summoned by Jacques, a police car carrying 3 police officers, one man and two women, roared into the courtyard and ground to a halt outside the studio. Yolanda, Jacques, three Directors and the Club President emerged to meet them. Pandemonium broke out.

Much yelling, claims and counter-claims, recriminations and counter-recriminations ensued. Others jumped into the fray to contribute their version of events. Everyone gestured wildly as they spoke, mostly in Spanish, so I cannot reliably report all that was said.

The police were respectful, said little and let events play out. Eventually, the main protagonists exhausted themselves and everyone went home. No charges were laid.

What I *can* reliably report is that the police, members of a municipal force that generally deals with events like domestic disputes among the local population, were hugely entertained by the entire proceedings: A group of *gringos* (aside from Yolanda, a Mexican) having it out over a game of bridge, and with nothing more lethal at hand than a deck of cards!

Disciplinary action followed. Yolanda and Jacques, residents of San Miguel and avid bridge players, were barred from the club for 9 months. If they chose to return after that, they would be on probation for an additional two years.



We'd love to hear from you

Have a bridge story you'd like to tell? We'd love to hear from you.
Have a story you'd like to tell but having trouble getting started? We'd love to talk to you.
Need a ghost writer? We're good for that too!
It's your newsletter. Help make it better.



Barb Slattery

Dealer Coordinator &
Trainer



A set of boards arrives at your table. Where did they come from? Who created them?

We asked Barb Slattery, our quietly efficient dealer coordinator and dealer trainer of 4 years, to explain her job.

The role of dealer coordinator involves the monthly scheduling of dealers, a time-consuming process that requires coordination between Barb, the dealers and the webmaster. The training of new dealers is carried out as required.

The club currently has 18 “wonderful dealers, all dedicated, cooperative and generous with their time,” says Barb, several of whom have been dealing since BOTE was located at Riverdale. Their names appear in the Monthly Calendar section of the website. Each deals a minimum of once a month without remuneration. A single dealer is involved per game with Barb filling in as required.

Barb has been playing bridge for a number of years, at first socially, but after her husband died in 2010 she began to play duplicate at BOTE, which was then run by Joan Fitzgerald and Richard Lash in a ball club behind Elizabeth Towers. She quickly realized how little she knew and still takes lessons. She also played duplicate at the Bennett’s Ace of Clubs on Bennett Avenue. She was taught how to deal by Joan after Joan had moved to the Elks Club.

Prior to her bridge ‘career,’ she trained as a hairstylist in Ottawa and then, in search of travel and adventure, spent several years in Spain doing manicures and pedicures and learning Spanish. She returned to St. John’s to open a hair salon, which soon grew to a chain of 10 salons owned and operated by her and her husband, stretching from Clarendville to Marystown. For 31 years she taught Beauty Culture at the College of Trades and Technology, now CONA (where a surprising number of other BOTE players worked), and taught also in Toronto and Carbonear. In her ‘spare’ time she completed a Bachelor of Vocational Education at MUN. It made for a busy life, Barb concedes, but it was well worth the time and effort.

Her immediate, post-retirement volunteer life was spent as Chair of Patients Services for the Canadian Cancer Society, NL branch. This involved travelling across the Province training volunteers, cancer survivors themselves, how best to provide emotional support to those living with cancer; operating a service at the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre that provided wigs, hair alternatives and other forms of support to cancer patients; and starting the national *Look Good Feel Good Program* at the Centre which provided, and still provides, workshops in skin care and make-up. She also served a total of six years on the boards of the Hoyles Escasoni Nursing Home and its successor, the St. John’s Nursing Home Board.

Thanks to the commitment of Barb and her team of dealers we can now play bridge!

The Wonderful Dealing Machine



The dealer arrives early to deal the boards that either Rahul or the director has downloaded from the Common Game website onto a secure area on the laptop. The laptop is then connected to the dealing machine, an empty board is placed in the machine, and a deck of cards is placed in the loading slot. The machine reads which board is in the slot and deals the appropriate cards into that board. It only takes 5.5 seconds to deal a board, whereas before the machines were introduced it took a lot more time! Dealing a set of boards for a game usually takes about 30 minutes. NOTE: the dealer does not see the hands at any time during the process.

Sometimes things go wrong. The dealer may detect a problem and solve it. The dealing machine itself is quick to detect mistakes and Rahul is always available to troubleshoot. "Rahul is incredible," Barb (Slattery) says, "and can tell from the opposite side of the room when something has gone wrong and needs fixing."

If two sets of boards are required owing to a particular web movement or if the 99ers are playing that day, the machine generates two. On Tuesdays 2 separate sets of boards are dealt routinely, one for the afternoon game, one for the evening. Thursday morning games are dealt on Monday. Cards are replaced every few months as they become worn, damaged or sticky.

Life is so much easier with this marvelous machine!

