

BRIGHT LEAF ALERT

SPECIAL EDITION TO HIGHLIGHT THE CANDIDATES

OCT., 2021

MARY NEWMAN



My name is Mary Newman and I am a candidate for the Unit 191 Board. I am a Washington, DC, native and selected Duke University for my undergraduate experience, not realizing that Duke and Durham would become a lifelong decision as well. I learned to play “dorm bridge” the spring semester of my freshman year in 1969 and have been playing ever since. I took up duplicate more seriously in 2004 the week after I retired from Duke. Two cute anecdotes that I have never forgotten:

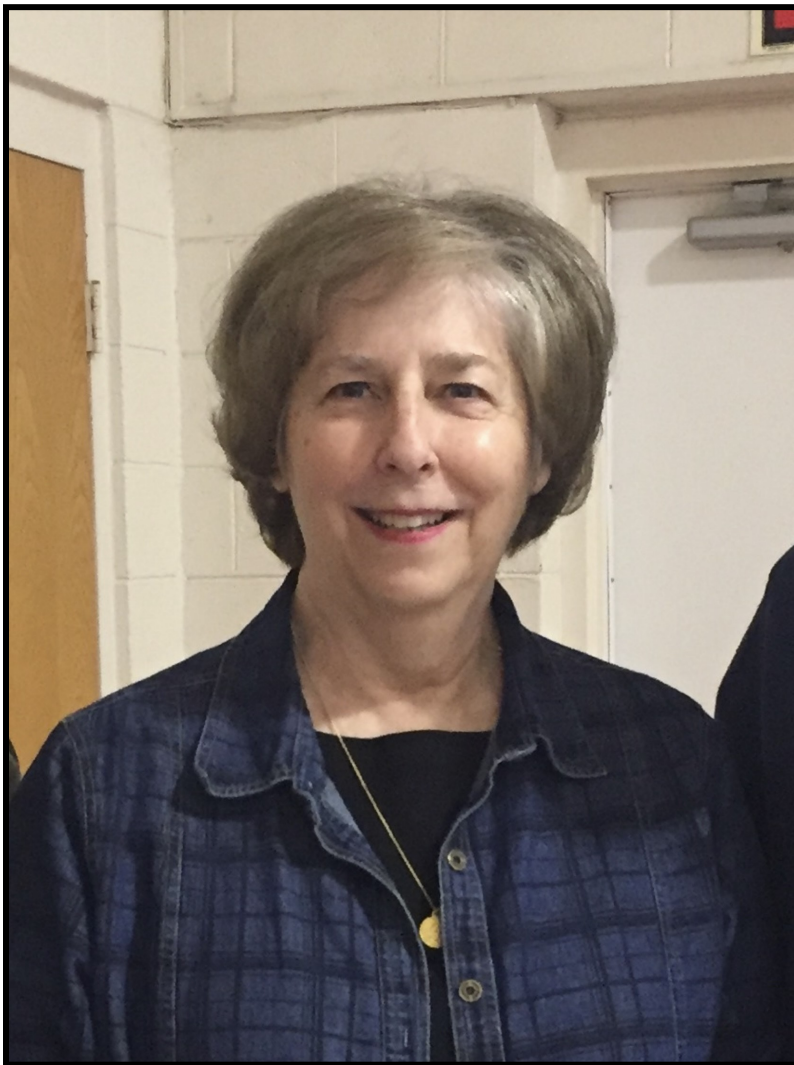
- 1) During that spring of 1969 sitting on the floor of the dorm, I was the dealer, and after shuffling and cutting, I dealt (honestly) myself a 34 point hand. Being a newbie, 1 NT bids were the highest bids I had been taught up to that point, so I opened 1 NT, followed by three passes, and everybody threw their cards in. I was shocked and was told that they didn’t play one-bids, even 1 NT.
- 2) The other was a phone call I received from my daughter when she was a Duke student taking a psychology course. She told me to keep playing bridge as she had just learned in her class that it was one of the single best things we could do to keep aging minds sharp. Heretofore, both of my daughters were very annoyed when I kept trying to teach them the very best game around. So merrily, I play bridge with you all and spades when I get together with my family. I would consider myself honored to represent your interests on the Unit Board. This is an especially trying time for many small businesses, and we will need to think creatively and proactively to make sure that the clubs within Unit 191 remain viable. It is my hope that I would be an asset to the board.

GAIL KING

My husband and I both have lived in Durham our entire lives. From a very young age I remember playing cards with my family and friends. We played a lot of Canasta, Rook, and Rummy games. When I went to college, my suite mates would not play cards with me until I let them teach me bridge. I was immediately addicted and when anyone wants to know what my major was, I always say "Bridge". I will admit I am a college drop-out (my father always blamed my playing Bridge for that) and went to work at UNC-CH until I retired after 39 years.

I continued to play "social" bridge until 2015 when a friend asked me to try Duplicate. After a couple of sessions, it was apparent we didn't know what our opponents were bidding. I started taking classes and have continued taking classes until this day. I think we are so fortunate in this area to have the best Bridge teachers. I love the game of Bridge because one never gets bored-frustrated yes-but never bored. The game is always evolving. I have met so many wonderful people with many becoming good friends. My brain has received much needed exercise and my nerves at times have been tested. As a matter of fact, once playing online when you could maybe say (okay yell) out loud what you are thinking, my husband quietly came in the room and placed a heart monitor on my desk! He has said that he wished he had a hobby that he enjoyed as much I enjoy Bridge.

Bridge and this Unit has become a large part of my life and I want to support and do whatever I can to help this great game and our Unit continue to grow.



BARBARA BUTE

I started playing bridge under duress. My sister Judy made me do it. As kids we had frittered away many summers by the pool playing Spades and Hearts, but I had always been intimidated by the obscure language of Bridge bidding, and shied away from the game. But a few years ago, my sister proclaimed that we were going to play bridge together in the Nationals in Washington, D.C. and that I'd better be ready, and besides, if you have less than 5 points, you can play for free in the Nationals! Since she's my big sister, I always try to live up to her expectations. I didn't want to humiliate myself, even for free, so I found myself some bridge lessons, forced myself to find a partner or two, and did my best to wrap my head around making bids that had nothing to do with what you actually thought you could make. Then we went to Washington and played in the Nationals, where I was more or less humiliated by not understanding inverted minors or Jacoby 2NT (you really shouldn't pass that). But by then...I was hooked.



I came to see later that there are much gentler and friendlier ways to get new players into the game. I participated in the mentor/mentee games, and then joined the mentor/mentee committee. I came to appreciate how much time and energy it takes, from many volunteers, for our bridge community to function as smoothly and efficiently as it does. While it's nice to just show up and enjoy the fruits of other people's efforts, I believe in giving back to those things which bring us joy. So that's why I'm putting my name in the ring for ACBL Board representative. Thanks, Sis.

In my non-bridge life, I am a grandmother, a practicing collaborative family law attorney, I play the saxophone in a community jazz band, and I enjoy scuba diving and underwater photography. I am in the process of being adopted by our wild and whacky foster dog, who is rapidly becoming a "foster fail".

ROSE MELTZER

I would be honored to be on the Unit 191 board and will work very hard to keep up the dignity and honor of bridge for the entire community. I was president of the unit board in Westchester, New York, District 3, and then on the District 3 board so I do have extensive experience in the tournament bridge operations.



LORI SCANGA

I would like to thank the ACBL Unit 191 Nominating Committee for the invitation to run for the Board. It is a great honor to be nominated by such an outstanding group of friends and players.

My history of playing bridge began when my older brothers and sisters taught me how to play. I played intermittently in college, but then I did not play much during my working life. I started to think about playing again, but the social bridge opportunities were not there anymore. I began to search for bridge clubs and I was fortunate to find the Triangle Bridge Club. The first time I showed up “off the street” (with zero masterpoints and no partner), I was warmly welcomed, Valerie Roberts played with me in the open game, and I was hooked. I joined ACBL that day in 2016.

I fell in love with duplicate bridge because I’m naturally competitive and I’m good at math. I



find duplicate bridge to be fascinating, challenging, and addictive! I have also noticed social and health benefits from playing bridge. I have made so many friends along the way and playing bridge feels like yoga for my brain. I have learned a tremendous amount about the play of the game from my directors, teachers, partners, and mentors. I have realized that there is so much more to bridge than the play of the cards. My goals if elected would be to help build the membership of Unit 191, to give to new players and members the opportunities that were given to me, and to contribute personally to the unit and ACBL. I welcome the opportunity to learn and contribute to the business and organizational aspects of the game as a Board member.

KAREN POPOVICH

As a young girl, I remember watching my granddad and his friends sit around the kitchen table playing Pinochle on long summer nights. I suppose that's where my fascination for competitive card play began. Much later, as an adult, a dear friend of mine, who played Goren bridge with her husband, invited me to take a 6-week bridge class through Durham Academy Nights. We learned Audrey Grant's strategy and, because we needed a fourth player, I bribed my then 13-year-old son with a \$20 bill to read Audrey's book so he could partner with her husband. Thereafter, many a summer night was spent sitting around my kitchen table *losing* rubber bridge to my son!

I first dabbled seriously in duplicate bridge about 4 years ago on an extended stay visit to Portland, Oregon to visit my daughter. On a whim, I contacted the local bridge club and asked to play. My partner, Elsie, who was much more experienced than me, kindly showed me the ropes. Despite my lack of bridge convention knowledge and my exuberance to jump to game, we played well together, and she encouraged me to seek out a club in NC when I returned home. The rest is history, so to speak.

Duplicate bridge is the perfect blend of strategy and skill, thought and discourse, competition and camaraderie, entertainment and vocation. I find it to be very mindful. When I am at the table, the distractions of my day are gone. I focus on the moment in front of me: each bid, each card and, perhaps, each cookie I eat from the snack table! Where else do I willingly give up my phone and connection to the outside world?

I feel fortunate to be part of a bridge club that feels like family. I welcome the opportunity to give back to the organization that has mentored me in spirit and play over the past few years. As a physician and mother of three, I believe I can contribute a strong sense of managerial skills, cooperation and problem solving.

That said, I believe my biggest asset as a board member would be my enthusiasm for this game and my love of meeting and encouraging people to play. Young, old, beginner or expert, there's always a seat at the table!

