

Barry Erlich

My first experience playing duplicate bridge took place at an ACBL regional tournament in Lake Geneva Wisconsin over 20 years ago. A desperate college friend implored me to play when his partner could not. Yes, I did tip over the bidding box; yes, the director was summoned more than once; what's a weak two I wondered! We came in dead last, took a dinner break, licked our wounds and played another session! I got the hang of it and fared better score wise. But more importantly, I realized that bridge could be more than a social activity or a way to fill time on my daily train commutes to work. I talked one of my bridge buddies from the train into playing actual duplicate bridge in local clubs after work.

Once retired, 10 years ago, I could actually play duplicate during the day and played with an assortment of partners who introduced me to the varieties and complexities of bidding conventions and play. When Merle and I were weighing the pros and cons of prospective places to winter, the availability of multiple duplicate bridge opportunities at various levels played a significant part in our decision not only to move to The Villages full time, but to move to a neighborhood that would give us access by golf cart to the various venues!

Over the past 5 years, The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club has provided me/ us with the opportunity to play and advance our knowledge of this challenging and enjoyable past time and to even teach a few sessions. I appreciate the time and effort that the Board of Directors has put in to make this all happen and would be honored to 'give back' by serving on the Board. I am in favor of continuing to offer continuing bridge education and multiple opportunities to play bridge at a variety of levels.

I was born in Brooklyn, NY, went to High School and College in Los Angeles, and Law School at the University of Illinois. Merle and I raised our family in the Chicago suburbs. I am a retired real estate litigation attorney, the father of three and the grandfather of seven.

Rocky Gilbert

I am surprised, honored and humbled to be included in the slate of nominees for the upcoming election. The question I am to consider are my reasons for seeking any of the open positions. Being that I had never considered this option until I was so nicely asked by Paul Matheson, this is really a no brainer. My husband and bridge partner, Marty, moved to The Villages four years ago from overseas and had not played bridge in 20 years (family and careers). Our first week here we played in Pat Holm's Thursday Game. Pat was so welcoming and informative and made us feel at home that first game.

I taught High School English for 15 years and then joined Berlitz Language Schools and continued with adults in The Business and Finance World. I have been on two HOA Boards and understand full well how important it is to get along with people of diverse opinions and backgrounds.

I relish working with people for a common goal and am not shy about expressing my opinion respectfully. I believe that I am fair in negotiations, that I have good communication skills.

Last of all, I am passionate about bridge and our bridge club and it is my goal to continue in the good work of my predecessors and do whatever in my power to have our club meet its future goals, Thank you for this opportunity.

Priscilla Harris

Hello, my name is Priscilla Harris and I hope that you will consider supporting me for a position on The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club.

Why did I submit my name for consideration? Although I have played Bridge for many years, I have played Duplicate Bridge for just a few years. My experience with the VDBC has been very positive; from the first evening I played (starting with the Under 50 group,) the Directors, and other club members have been welcoming and encouraging. I am enormously grateful for everything our current Directors, and all those who came before them, have done to provide us with a first class opportunity to play Duplicate Bridge. I am especially appreciative of all the effort that has gone into building the online opportunities that were made available to us during 2020-2021. I strongly feel it is time for me to give something back to this amazing community.

I am proud to be part of the second largest Bridge club in the nation. There is opportunity to recruit new members and the challenges that come with growth: finding new facilities, encouraging new directors and meeting the needs of all our members. I am willing to work hard and do my part to help our Club and advocate for you.

I am a retired CPA; prior to moving to The Villages in 2016, I had spent the last 15 years of my career at the Trinity Health System headquartered in Livonia, Michigan. I was a manager in the Tax Department. My expertise was focused on non-profit hospital systems and other exempt organizations. I have served on the Boards of a number of community service related organizations including my parish Vestry, Community Arts Council, Federated Women's Clubs, PTA, and the Junior League. I was often channeled into Treasurer and Finance positions, but also focused on mentoring, Board development and community relations.

I have enjoyed meeting many of you, both online and Face to Face. I would be honored to serve as a Director on the Board of The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club. Thank you for your consideration, I look forward to meeting many more of you in the years ahead.

Russ Pearly

My name is Russ Pearly and I am seeking a position on the Board of Directors of The Villages Bridge Club. Presently, I serve as the recorder for the bridge club so I attend most of the monthly board meeting and consequently have a good working knowledge of the manner in which the board works. In addition, in my job as recorder, I often interact directly with the board yielding not only a good working relationship with the individual members of the board but also a good knowledge of the inner workings of the board.

I have had previous experience working on a Board of Directors. I was on the Board of the township's athletic association for 10 years serving as treasurer for 4 years, secretary for 2 years, vice-president for 2 years and president for 2 years. This tenure gave me much insight on how a board works and how to deal with the public which is not dissimilar to dealing with the bridge players that our board deals with.

In the real world, I worked for one of the largest insurance companies in the country for 38 years in both the actuarial and IT departments. During this time, I interfaced with hundreds of individuals which taught me how to work well with others. I think the many lessons that I learned during my time working in the real world will help me become a productive member of our Board of Directors.

I have been involved with the game of bridge for 50-60 years. I learned to play from my mother at an early age and starting playing in my mid-teens. Unfortunately, things like school, work and raising a family got in the way but I still managed to become a life master around the age of 20. I actually didn't really play a lot of bridge until I retired and moved to The Villages. It was nice moving to a community with a bridge club as large as The Villages has.

As of right now, the game of bridge in The Villages and all around the country is hurting due to the affects of the pandemic. If elected to the board, I would strive to bring our club to where it was before the pandemic, one of the largest and best clubs in America.

Margaret Sarno

I am interested in serving on the Board of Directors, since I have been a member of The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club for 11 years. I have been active in helping the club by volunteering to help in many of the functions. I have been a reporter for the Newsletter for many years, I love taking an interest in the club members. I have the time and energy to work to help with our club.

I have experience in other clubs doing various jobs, such as treasurer, secretary, and organizer of events. Since I love the game of Bridge, I had started a couple of games in The Villages when I moved here 14 years ago. They are still very active.

Jon Williams

My wife Marilyn and I learned about The Villages in early 2009 while playing on OKBridge, a forerunner of BBO. "Golfer8" took a seat at our table, said he played golf "in paradise," then proceeded to tell us about The Villages. Golfer8 was Jack Fisher, one of our club's game directors. That conversation led to our visiting on the LifeStyle Preview in late June, buying a home, and living here full time beginning in October 2009.

Having experience as a certified director since 1986 and as manager of the Muncie, Indiana, Duplicate Bridge Club from 2005 to 2009, I was interested in serving our club. That led to becoming a director of, first, the Sunday Swiss, then the Colony Cottage combined open and limited game. When that game split to give each group its own venue, I became director of the 399er game, at which I presented pre-game mini-lessons tailored to advancing players. Later, I transferred to directing an open game.

In the fall of 2012 (shout-out to Carma Sands, who planted the seed), I developed and presented to the Board a proposal for a mentor program. That started in 2013 and I served as coordinator of the program until 2020, in addition to mentoring a number of our newer players.

For the last several years I have been the club's Director of Rulings, assisting the head director with interpretations of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. I also, with the able assistance of Pat Holmes, in 2018 prepared a comprehensive Game Director's Guide for our club.

I have served the club in various capacities going on 11 years and would be privileged to use that experience as a member of the Board of Directors.