



Unit 441 Newsletter

November 2011

A special thanks to all our military members for their sacrifices serving our country



Member Profile

This month's profile is on Esther and Reuben Rome.

Esther Kerner was born 5/19/28 in St. Paul, Minnesota. Reuben Rome was born 8/12/23 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Esther is first generation American, her parents came from Poland and Czechoslovakia. Reuben is also first generation American, his parents came from Russia and Poland.

Their parents knew each other during a time they both were living in Wisconsin when Esther was four years old. Then Reuben's parents moved to Raymond, Washington; where his father started a

business. During the war, years later, Esther's parents moved to Portland, Oregon. At that time Reuben's brothers and sister were living in Portland and the families made contact again.

In 1943 Reuben enlisted in the Army. He was sent to Providence College in Rhode Island by the service. Then he was sent over seas and was in the Battle of the Bulge. He was in a fox hole on the front lines. His thoughts while in the fox hole were how wonderful it would be to be able to sit in a chair. His feet froze from standing in ice water in the fox hole. He was hospitalized and there was talk of amputation, but his circulation returned.

When Reuben returned home after the war, the families had another get together. Esther and Reuben met again and started dating. They were married in 1947 in Portland, OR.

Reuben and his father started Chehalis Steel business, so they moved to Washington. Reuben and Esther had one boy and three girls. They bought three acres of land and built a huge house. The oldest daughter enjoyed riding, and they had the room to keep horses. The girls would pack a lunch ride off on the horses and be out for hours. This was a time in America when you didn't worry about crime. Doors

were left open and children could go out and play for hours.

Esther did a lot of gardening during these years. She planted Petunias in the spring as well as vegetables. During the summer she canned the produce from her garden. Once the children were through college they sold the big house, and moved to Olympia in 1989.

Their daughters live in Seattle, their son took over Chehalis Steel and lives close by. They have four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Esther started playing bridge when their children were in grade school. When she started playing she had to learn the suits as she had never played cards as a child. Her mother did not allow cards in the house. They both took lessons from Ham Hilpert and later from Preston.

After Reuben's retirement they would take their 5th wheel RV and travel to California in the winter. They played at bridge tournaments in Santa Rosa, Palm Springs and Phoenix. Esther got her Life Master in Phoenix. Reuben caught a scoring error. The opponents had gotten a zero on a board and this score had been put on their side. Reuben got the score corrected and they came in first and got 15 gold for the game.

A year later and again in Phoenix Reuben got his Life Master points. During the years that they worked on getting their points, friends would suggest they hire professionals to play

bridge with them. Esther did not want to earn her Life Master that way. It took longer but they both did it their way.

Upcoming Elections!

The election of five board members will be coming up this January at the Unit game.

The nominees for the five positions will be listed in the December newsletter.

Once the nominees are listed you may vote by e-mail! The election e-mail address is: unit441@yahoo.com. The board secretary, Nancy Sjoblom, will collect the e-mail votes. To insure that your vote counts, please use your ACBL player's name in your e-mail.

If you do not want to vote by e-mail, paper ballots will be provided at the January unit game.

If you are interested in running for one of the positions contact:
Sheila Smith 528-0986 or
Ginger Andersen 236-1412 or
Ann Garland 459-7333

NEWS

We'll run an article in December on 1940's history.

The January Unit Game will be held on the 8th due to the conflict with New Year's Day.

Brad will be starting EasyBridge lessons again in January! Be sure to tell all your friends, enemies, ex'es, current special people and everyone else about the classes!

Louise Mihay recently visited relatives in Michigan.

Jim Remy is back from a vacation in New York City. He learned how to use the subway and knows uptown from downtown.

Vicky Sheldon had a recent trip to Boston.

Pat and Ann Garland recently vacationed in Paris. They went up the Eiffel Tower elevator and then decided to walk down. The walk was more than they expected. At the bottom on wobbly, aching legs Pat questioned the decision to walk!

Dick Nichols and his wife recently returned from a visit to North Carolina. It takes something special to draw Dick Nichols from the bridge table. Pianist Emile Pandolfi is something special. Dick and Carolee yearned to hear Emile Pandolfi in concert, but discovered that the South Carolina resident doesn't normally travel beyond his region. Carolee--who has returned to the piano after setting it aside for many years--was more than eager to not only meet Pandolfi, but to take lessons. This year, Dick--as a surprise early two-way Christmas gift--arranged for the trip and

a week of bridge withdrawal between October 1 and 7. It was an unforgettable experience as music trumped bridge for one week in the life of Dick and Carolee.

Regenia Butler earned more master points than all others for the month of October.

Honor at the Bridge Table

East and West were in a 3 NT contract. At the end of the play, Dummy said in an authoritative tone to her partner, "You are down one. You should have played the good diamond. North had discarded her last diamond." Declarer (obviously tired and confused) stated, "I thought I made our bid" and collapsed her cards. Dummy had immediately collapsed her hand at the end of play as did North and South. Then South spoke up. "You made that bid." He then proceeded to recount the tricks.

Who was this honest South? **Rich Poppert**

Sometimes bridge is more than a game. Thanks Rich.

New Member Profile



At age 75, Dick Nichols is still passionate about life, and his numerous hobbies and career paths have been quite diverse. He was born in 1936 in Rexburg Idaho, very near to Yellowstone National Park. In 1947 the family moved to Raymond in Washington and six months later to Shelton, where he went to high school. In 1958 he graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in communications with radio and TV as a focus.

Dick describes himself as a job hopper with a low boredom threshold, which led him to several careers over a 35-year span. As a news and sports broadcaster for United Press International, he has worked at three separate radio stations: Moses Lake, Centralia and Olympia (KGY), and he likes to say, that he spent most of his career talking for a living. Dick also worked for *The Olympian* as a reporter and sports editor, and he did public relations work for Alcoa and Evergreen State College. In fact, he was the seventh staff member hired by

Evergreen in 1969 and was active before the college opened in 1971. He also did public relations work for the Tumwater Schools and Puget Power and ended his career with two terms as a Thurston County commissioner, retiring in 1998. Since then, he has been taking naps and traveling extensively with his wife Carolee, visiting over 50 countries.

Bridge came into Dick's life with Brad's classes 4 years ago, at the same time as Andy Vitalich, who was featured in last month's new member profile. Cards are nothing new to Dick. He has played all his life: cribbage, pinochle, hearts, 500 and whist to name but a few. But, in Dick's opinion, bridge is the chess of card games. He especially enjoys the strategy aspect of the game, requiring deductive reasoning. Bringing home a difficult contract is a high for him and he lauds, Brad as an excellent teacher.

Dick's first exposure to bridge occurred during a summer college class at Carolee's alma mater. He took the class so he could join her in playing party bridge and became fascinated with the game. He started buying books, studying and learning while Carolee was content to play casually and occasionally.

Eventually, Dick signed up for Brad's classes, and after the second session, he told his wife, "I don't know anything about bridge." And, he jokes, "I've been proving it every week during club games, tournaments and for-fun outings with other members." The game fits

with Dick's competitive personality and love of intellectual challenges. However, bridge is only fourth on Dick's favorites list. Music is his number one passion, even though he doesn't play himself. He always has music playing in his home. Second is reading, followed by politics. However, considering the hugeness of Dick's level of interest and commitment to things he loves, being number four is still quite significant. And he usually can be found at the Center Bridge Club table twice a week.

Family forms the core of Dick's world. He has been fortunate to be married to two wonderful women. As Dick puts it, "I got lucky with two wives." He was married for 39 years to Joyce who died in 1996 and is the mother of his two daughters, Kelli and Kerri. Presently he has been married to Carolee for fourteen years who has two children and a granddaughter. His elder daughter Kelli, aged 52, works as an adviser at the University of Washington in the bioengineering department. Younger daughter Kerri, 48, is a teacher and now runs her own music education business. She has two boys.

Besides his busy career, Dick has also been active in volunteer work-- a means of giving back to his community and trying to make a difference. He refers to former three-term Governor Dan Evans as his hero and role model, a man of integrity, and high ethical standards who didn't let abstract ideology interfere with solving problems in the public interest. "He is a great person who would have made a great U.S. president," Dick says.

"He represented the gold standard of what an elected official should be and was an inspiration for me during my time in elected office as a Tumwater City Councilman and Thurston County Commissioner. Dick has been active with the Thurston County Chamber of Commerce, Morningside, Lions Club, Salvation Army, United Way, and Girl's Soccer and assorted other activities. He was named Thurston County Citizen of the Year in 1976. He is a recipient of the Boy Scouts of America's annual Good Scout Award and he has received lifetime achievement awards from the Washington Football Coaches Association, State Athletic Director's Association, West Central District Activities Association, South Sound YMCA, and Tumwater High School.

He is a member of the Halls of Fame at St. Martin's University, Olympia High School and Timberline High School. He has received the Rotary Service Above Self Award and the West Olympia Rotary Club has named an annual scholarship in his name. Each year, 14 seniors (a boy and girl from each of the seven public high schools in the Olympia, Tumwater and North Thurston School Districts) receive \$1,000 college scholarships to honor their athletic and academic achievements and community service.

As a continuous broadcaster since 1969, mostly at KGY, Dick has been passionate about his work, not only in broadcasting the games but also in encouraging kids, and teaching young people good values through athletics.

As a bridge player, Dick can be found kibitzing and asking questions during bridge lessons, commenting on the hands and suggesting strategies for making winning contracts. And quick wittedness is definitely one of Dick's strong suits. As one example, at our last Easybridge 6 lesson Brad was instructing us on the "PANTS convention for protecting against no-trump intrusion. Dick got in the last word and a big laugh when he quipped, "Brad, I knew you'd be the guy to tell us to get our pants down."

Board News

The minutes to board meetings are available to all members on our website www.acblunit441.org

The board approved covering the cost of advertising for EasyBridge classes.

The election committee was changed Sheila Smith is the Chairperson.

We need to find someone to organize the 2012 PowWow. If you would be interested please contact one of the board members.

Bridge Article



Fred Hosea donated the following bridge article.

Here is a reasonably simple hand. You can try it with your favorite partner. Did you have the tools to bid six hearts? Good for you!

EW is vulnerable. If West doubles you might get a top board! Some NS pairs will always stop in four hearts.

The entire hand:

(void)	
AJ9762	
AK42	
753	
QJ10984	A763
5	3
J109	Q1076
KJ4	10982
	K52
	KQ1084
	53
	AQ6

The lead is the queen of spades. Do not ruff the opening lead. Toss a small club from dummy. No matter what happens next, it should not take long to draw trump and that king of spades is a great

place to park your other small club in dummy.

How soon did you claim your six heart contract? Once you've claimed you can visit the refreshment stand and relax before meeting the next tough looking opponents!

Overheard at the bridge table:
“If there are 2 ways to finesse, the adds are 3 to 1 I'll do it wrong.”

Bridge History – Part 2

The 1930's bridge scene was dominated by Ely Culbertson who did more for the growth of bridge than anyone before or after him. In 1936 he was referred to as “The Emperor of Bridge”.

Ely Culbertson (1891 to 1955) was a professional card player, born in Russia to an American father. The family lost its fortune during the Russian Revolution of 1918, and Ely moved to Paris and earned his living playing cards. In 1921 he moved on to America, and with the change of Auction Bridge to Contract Bridge, he saw his opportunity to become a leader in the game. He developed a system of assigning values to honor tricks: Ace = 1; King = $\frac{1}{2}$; A K (in the same suit) = 2; K Q (in the same suit) = 1. The honor tricks system counted only the two top cards in a suit, and with $2\frac{1}{2}$ honor tricks, bidding could be opened. The system accepted the opening of a four-card major. Ely encouraged bridge players to become teachers by giving them diplomas, and

encouraged bridge playing at local clubs, giving strength to grass roots growth of the game.

In response, the popularity of bridge soared. Over 6,000 books were written about contract bridge, and Culbertson brought order to this bedlam by formulating some basic principles which underlie every successful system to this day. He met and overcame three challenges, solidifying his position as bridge expert. The first was in England, playing against Walter Buller. This success launched the Blue Book. The second challenge was against Sidney Lenz in New York in 1932. The publicity before this match was something the bridge world has not seen repeated. The New York Times listed the coming event as “the sporting event of the year”. Over 100 reporters were on duty from the day the match started until it ended, and Hollywood made a film “Grand Slam” starring Loretta Young and Paul Lukas. Bridge was king. The third challenge was again in England against Manning-Foster. At this event Ely unveiled his new system of 4-5 NT bids, an ace asking convention, and again he prevailed. The clubs in England were so incensed with his convention that they labeled conventions as cheating and barred all artificial bids.

Culbertson wrote a number of books. His *Blue Book* of 1933 became immensely popular, and he started a magazine, *Bridge World*, which is still in publication. He devised the markings on duplicate boards for vulnerability, and

his firm was the first to develop plastic acetate-coated playing cards. Two scientists approached him with their idea, and he invested everything he could on starting the industry of KEM cards. The venture nearly bankrupted him, but with his acute business sense, he turned it into a million dollar asset. He is credited with inventing the new-suit forcing bid, jump bids, asking bids, grand slam force, limited NT bids, strong two-bid, 4-5 NT (ace asking). He was the first to treat shape as important as high-card values in formulating requirements for bids. When *The Bridge World* magazine started the ACBL Hall of Fame in 1964, Ely Culbertson was the first person elected into it.

In 1932 Ely devised the first World Championship Contract Tournament. In his advertisements he claimed, "Through this competition a dream of civilization will be realized.... people of all races and languages will be speaking the one universal language, that of Bridge".

In the 1930's there were several bridge organizations: The American Auction Bridge League (ABL), the American Whist League, the United States Bridge Association, and the American Bridge Association. The ABA was founded in 1932 by the African-American community of bridge players. The ABA is still active today. There is a club in Seattle.

Tournament bridge was hampered in growth due to these separate organizations and due to bickering

between the ABL and the USBA. The ABL gave masterpoints only at tournaments. The USBA, run by Culbertson, gave masterpoints at the Unit and Club level. The organizations would not recognize others' masterpoint systems. William McKinley created the masterpoint plan as we know it today. McKinley and Culbertson brought the bickering to an end by merging the ABL and USBA into the American Contract Bridge League in 1937, and ACBL tournament play grew in popularity. The games became big events with the men wearing tuxedos and the women in evening gowns.

Ely Culbertson was a natural showman: he knew how to build mass appeal and how to keep it. Milton Works developed a system for bidding by assigning value to honor cards, similar to the system most of us use today. This system could have undermined the Blue Book and the sales, but Milton's system was not well advertised nor used by the general bridge players for another 20 years. In 1938 Ely stopped playing bridge and turned his talents to working for world peace.

Next month will be the 1940's

Progress Report

New Sectional Master
Betsy Brezel

New Life Master
Bess Todd

IN MEMORIAM

Marvin R. "Mark" Woods, born in Detroit on March 24, 1938, died at home in Lacey on October 6, 2011. There were three things Mark loved: his God, his family and his country. He served all three faithfully and with honor.

Mark enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1955 and attended the Air Force Academy for two years. He then enlisted in the U.S. Army. By the time he retired in 1985, he had served in Vietnam, Germany and Korea and had received many decorations and military service medals. He was honored with a 21 gun salute at his funeral.

A published author, Mark wrote "Custer's Arikara Indian Interpreter," an account of his wife Dee's ancestor, a frontier trader who was fluent in Indian dialects.

An accomplished duplicate bridge player, he had achieved the rank of Silver Life Master. Whether you called him Marv or Mark, his bridge partners and opponents will always remember him for his sense of humor; he loved a good story with a surprise punch line. Mark last played at the September PowWow.

His loving wife Dee and his children mourn his passing, as does the bridge community.



Upcoming Local Tournaments

Please double check all the information below on ACBL's website.

Nationals:

11/26/11 to 12/02/11
Seattle

Regional:

None in our area

Sectional:

11/5/11 to 11/6/11
Corvallis, OR (0-300)
11/12/11 to 11/13/11
Vancouver, WA

Board Members

Alex Rajala (*President*)
Vicky Sheldon (*Vice President*)
Greg Trautman (*Treasurer*)
Nancy Sjoblom (*Secretary*)
Ginger Andersen
Fay Bronson
Darlene Kemper
Helen Miller
Jim Remy

Game Schedules

Olympia:

Brad's games:

MWF 1:00PM

Mon Evening 6PM

Sat 9:00AM and 1:00PM

Friday PM games:

6:30PM (Contact:

Kim Johnson 280-2186 or

Ed Bishop 349-7096)

Centralia:

Mon 12:00PM

Tues 6:30PM

Saturdays 6:30PM

(Contact:

Alex Rajala, 360-748-1753)

Union: Fri 10:00AM.

(Contact:

Linda Shallit, 360-275-2342)

Unit Web Site

<http://www.acblunit441.org/>

*For article information please contact Ginger at 236-1412 or email ginger8a@yahoo.com.
For new member articles please contact Betsy Brezel at betsybrezel@yahoo.com*