

From Hospice to Home: An Inspirational Journey

by Connie Robertson



(continued...)

Traveling would be impossible and I was forced to make the heartbreaking decision to drop out of the GNT team and the NAP partnership.

In 2014, three major surgeries brought me to Fort Collins, CO to be near my daughter Marty Osecky and son-in-law Dan. I left behind the magnificent beauty of the mountains and a great non-sanctioned bridge group in Winter Park, CO that extensively studied and was highly competitive.

In January 2015, I could drive again so it was time to start looking for bridge partners. Director Burke Snowdon set me up with Martha Lee who was nice enough to play with this “new kid on the block.” At a sectional later that month, Burney Tate needed a partner. We placed and continued playing weekly for years. In March, Robyn Leming ask me to play in the GNT “and if we win we go to nationals.” I thought “not a chance.” We won and went to nationals. It was a great learning experience.

Last October, during the Colorado Springs tournament, my health took a sharp downturn winning the Swiss teams in spite of it. The situation looked hopeless so I joined hospice care. Just before Christmas my daughter Marty walked in and said, “you are coming home with me.” Her constant care saved my life. Friends circled the wagons. What amazing friends they were. Sharon Stuart, Diane Adams and Dawn Foltz came to visit and encouraged me to play. I was on heavy pain pills and I resisted until three wonderful “A” players, Mary Ellen Nickodemos, Liz Varra, and Fiona Freeseaman came to prove that the medication should not be a factor. I returned to the bridge table still facing several health issues that tried to block my play.

One day I mentioned to Dawn Foltz, my mentor, that I needed 1.08 gold points to achieve life master status as I was grandfathered in at 300 points. Facing an uncertain future, it was important to reach my goal but I lacked the confidence that I could travel to Denver for the regionals. Dawn was determined to help me make the trip. She arranged for transportation with my partner, Earl Edwards, and the

other half of the Swiss team, Diane Adams and Robyn Leming. They gave me a room for rest during the break and showered me with food and water to keep me going. The encouragement of other friends was priceless. We were second. Just enough for me to make life master.

“I” did not achieve that status. Since 2015, I was surrounded by wonderful friends and outstanding bridge players who helped me gain the needed masterpoints. Now a few months later I have been kicked out of hospice and feel that I have some life ahead. It does not include travel, another GNT success or a NAP opportunity, but I look forward to the next level as I enjoy this amazing bridge experience that we share here in Ft Collins, CO. There are a few tournaments close enough to play so on to Cheyenne and my 90th birthday in September.