

10/3/19

Presidents Message for October

I tried something new this week. I finally joined the 21st Century. I signed up for Facebook. After downloading the app and following the instructions I hit go. Within minutes I had a 1000+ friends including a large contingent of people from East Bangladesh. I have absolutely no idea how they got into the mix. However, it got me to thinking

Almost three years ago I walked into a duplicate bridge club for the first time. Suddenly, I had 30 to 40 new friends that I didn't have the day before. I didn't know their names or anything about them, but we had one thing in common. We all loved bridge. I didn't know much. I had never seen a bidding box. I had no idea what a convention card was. And, what the heck was a director? The people there helped me learn. I'm sure there were times when they could have called the director but instead, they gently told me what I had done wrong and what I should do in the future. As I learned they encouraged me.

I'm afraid that I don't see as much of that kind of behavior now days. I seen some beginners treated very badly in the last few weeks. I've listened to players complain about playing with certain beginners. I've listened to several sets of beginners complain how certain people were rude to them and how it wasn't much fun to play here. I begin to wonder if we have forgotten that we were all beginners at one time.

I can tell you this from my Square-Dancing experience. Beginners are bad dancers, bad players, bad anything. It takes time to learn. If we don't give them the grace to learn through failure they will never learn. And, make no mistake; We need them. Comparing this year's statistics to last years statistics we are usually playing more bridge. However, the scary statistics is that in one year we have 7 or 8 less players playing every month. Over a 10-year period that is a death sentence.

Please take the time to nurture the new players along. Help them have fun even if they are not winning. In the long run they will get better. Remember, it's only a game.

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