

## Strength of Honors



**Gail Greenberg and Jill Levin—mother and daughter World Champions. In the background is a huge needlepoint of the World Bridge Federation emblem. It was given to Honors when it opened by World Champion Kathei Wei Sender.**

Greater New York Bridge Association, past-president of the District, has served on the National Ethical Oversight Committee, the National Appeals Committee, and the Women's Trials Committee. With all of this, plus a very active role in Honors, you might think that she would start winding down, but the opposite is true. Recently she started a sister club in Westchester, New York — with her sister Alisan Harte.

Gail didn't go into the bridge business because she wanted to run a company but because the game did so much for her and so enriched her life that she wanted to "give back" by establishing a club that fosters the learning and enjoyment of the game.

How did Honors get started? Over a decade ago, with backing from national champion Jimmy Cayne, the CEO of Bear Sterns, Gail, Judy Tucker, Jill Levin, and Andrea Hayman started the club in a charming townhouse. They had a garden in the backyard where, on some evenings before the game, they barbequed dinner. It's not surprising that, by the time the lease was up three years later, they had outgrown the space. Finding a new location in the east side of Manhattan was not easy, especially since they wanted to keep the special ambiance. However, they did succeed when they moved to their new location. They changed their corporate structure and became Honors LLC. Gail remained the principal owner, and Laurie Vogel joined the team.

This is a success story, and Honors continues to grow beyond the original expectations. Twice since 1996 Honors has had to take on additional space. Not long after the move to the current location, Mike Kallman, Alan Miller and Greg Reich came on board. The well-organized club runs smoothly.

**Andrea Hayman** is the head of the Teaching Program. She first learned basic bridge in law school but didn't start playing until many years later. After spending a year teaching law, Andrea was mainly at home while her children were young, but she would get out for a session of bridge here and there. When her children were older, she planned to go back to full-time law. However, when Gail offered her a job teaching bridge, all of that changed. Law and teaching seem to be compatible; Jill Levin and Jack Greenberg, who teach supervised play, are also attorneys.



**Some teaching and directing staff in one of the classrooms. Back row: Mike Kallman and Susan Wexler. Front row: Alan Miller, Alene Friedman, and Joe Byrne.**

**H**onors bridge club is just off Park Avenue in the heart of New York's upscale East-side boutiques, department stores, hotels and spas. It's North America's largest bridge club and unlike any other public bridge club in the world. As soon as you walk into the elegant foyer you know you're in for a quality experience.

The founder, **Gail Greenberg**, is one of the jewels of the bridge world. She has won five world championships and numerous national championships. Gail probably holds the record for the longest consecutive attendance at the North American Bridge Championships — she hasn't missed a NABC since 1964! She's been an advocate of bridge in many ways. She is past-president of the



**Some of the Honors bridge staff gather round the oriental card rug in the foyer. Back: Greg, Aviv, Jill, Elliott, and Mike. Front: Carmen, Grace, Andrea, Susan, and Gail.**



**Resident nanogenerian Emmy Lou Cahn playing in the daily duplicate.**

The teaching staff is among the finest in the world. World champions Jacqui Mitchell, Lisa Berkowitz, and Jill Levin teach at Honors. The teaching staff goes out of its way to make themselves accessible to the students. “We love bridge and teaching bridge,” Andrea says.

**Mike Kallman**, a trained architect, is the office manager and also teaches and directs.

He’s been responsible for some innovative events such as the popular Duplicate and Discussion. Twelve boards are played and scored, masterpoints awarded, and then there is a discussion of the hands.

**Allan Miller** serves as the duplicate/teacher coordinator and has been affiliated with successful bridge clubs for over twenty years. He is also a professional player.

**Greg Reich**, head of the duplicate program, schedules sessions and events and is the liaison with the American Contract Bridge League. He became involved in the game as a result of a broken ankle. He couldn’t do his regular job and started playing bridge twice a day ... and then turned it into a full-time profession!

Honors is a full-service club which pays special attention to novices. It runs classes at all levels and has daily sessions of supervised play. Every day there is something special for the novices. “We’ve home grown a great number of

our regular duplicate players,” says Andrea. “We taught them as beginners and advanced beginners and then nurtured them through supervised play, beginners duplicate, and finally into the open game — and from there to their Life Master’s degree! One of their unique special events is Bridge Book Night. Pre-dealt hands are adapted from famous bridge books and an analysis is given out afterwards.

Honors offers first class conditions. A full complimentary lunch and light dinner are served complete with wine — and on china plates! No disposables in this elegant facility. There’s a soft-serve yogurt machine to provide some cool refreshment whenever you need it.

There’s cut fruit and veggies for the health conscious ... and the club is famous for the couple of thousand pounds of M&Ms they put out each year! It’s become a staple; and it’s not messy.

In the TV room, players can relax before or after sessions. The book collection invites players to borrow a book and return it at will. The club offers a boutique with bridge books and bridge paraphernalia. Betsey Jenks runs the bookstore, which offers table covers, novelty bridge supplies, bridge napkins, and more.

Betsey does an outstanding job.

On a typical day you’ll find forty-five to sixty tables in play, not counting Novice or supervised games. If you want a strong game, there are several world and national champions that regularly play in the duplicate games. You could find yourself playing against a champion from any part of the world because, when they come to New York, this is where they play. With so many tables, you have the option of choosing the section in which you’d feel the most comfortable.

The next time you’re in New York, just off Park Avenue, you can enjoy the elegance of the country’s largest bridge club. And we’re sure you’ll agree that Gail Greenberg has more than achieved her goal of providing a first-class environment for bridge players to enjoy their game.



**Andrea Hayman, Gail Greenberg, Mike Kallman, and Greg Reich.**



**Gail Greenberg and Andrea Hayman surrounded by the mighty M&M's.**



**Elliott Grubman, Greg Reich, and Ron Felton taking advantage of the frozen yogurt machine.**



**Rose Muschel, enjoying her buffet lunch before the afternoon game.**