

One of the best parts of being Unit 143 president is giving out awards. Yesterday we gave out Ace of Clubs and Mini McKenney awards. Today I have the distinct pleasure of presenting our Meritorious Service Award to Tom Oppenheimer.

This award is given to someone who has served selflessly over a significant period of time. Usually we try to honor our recipient with a full regalia of praise but in this particular instance, Tom prefers a very brief synopsis of his years of service. I think he has been dreading standing before you hearing his many gifts to the Unit since the day he learned he was receiving this award. Please know that our appreciation is in no way marked by the briefness of the list I'm about to give you. I could speak quite awhile about Tom and bridge, but in respect to his preference, I will quickly give you the highlights.

Tom served 9 years on the Unit 143 Board and served as President, Treasurer and Membership Chair. Actually I think he chaired most every committee...but I bet he never chaired Hospitality. Tom did you ever chair Hospitality? (Tom shook his head no; audience provided laughter)

Tom served 10 years on the District Board and served again as President and served on the District Judiciary Committee

Tom served on the National Board Board of Governors. Tom also has served as the First Alternate to the National Board for many years after his service on the Board.

I suggest to all of you to feel free to approach Tom with any question you have on bidding, defense, ethics -- actually any aspect of bridge. No one is more generous with his time and excited to help any bridge player.

For your many gifts to Unit 143 and to the game of bridge, it's my pleasure to present to you, Tom Oppenheimer, the Meritorious Service Award with this framed certificate and gift certificate to Bass Pro Shop.

Thank you, Tom.