

# Society for blind helps the elderly



RENEE MAHLER

**Q.** I have a very independent, stubborn 87-year-old mother who lives alone in her own home. Lately I have noticed that her eyesight isn't what it used to be. She refuses to go to the doctor and I am at a loss as to what to do.

**A.** The Greater Detroit Society for the Blind works throughout all of southeastern Michigan. It is concerned with anything relating to eye health, eye disease and the prevention of blindness. It has a variety of programs and services including home visits. This is probably just the organization that can help you and your mother.

Aside from its services, the Greater Detroit Society for the Blind publishes a great deal of information available to the public. The following is its "10 Signs of Vision Loss":

1. Bumping into objects.
2. Moving hesitantly or walking close to the wall.
3. Groping for objects or touching them in an uncertain way.
4. Squinting or tilting the head to see.
5. Requesting additional or different kinds of lighting.
6. Holding books or other reading material close to the face.
7. Dropping food or utensils at mealtimes.
8. Showing difficulty in making out faces or the numbers of rooms or floors.
9. Looking ungrounded or sloppy, with stains on clothing, mismatched clothing, or uncombed hair.
10. Acting confused or disoriented.

Our vision is a very precious commodity and should be attended to when there is any question of problems. Unfortunately, older adults often are afraid to see their physician, afraid of bad news.

However, many eye problems can be corrected, provided they are tended to quickly. An additional side effect of poor vision or poor hearing is that these problems tend to cause the older adult to withdraw or isolate themselves, compounding their situation.

Available to offer assistance, the Greater Detroit Society for the Blind can be reached 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday at 272-3900.

**Q.** My husband is in the hospital and will have to go to a nursing home. I have been visiting him and have chosen one for him. The problem is that they insist I sign a contract and I don't know if I really have to do that. I don't know if I want to sign a contract for anything.

**A.** Whenever a person enters a nursing home, an admission contract must be signed. The individual or their legal representative may sign. If the person has to go to the hospital and returns to the facility, a new contract needs to be signed, or if the method of payment changes (private pay to Medicaid, Medicare to private pay), a new contract may have to be signed. When looking at an admissions contract, make certain that it lists the services provided and the charges for every service. The contract must also have very specific information on who is to pay for the required services. You should always receive a copy of the signed contract.

If you are concerned with any part of the contract or with perceived legal responsibilities, consult with your attorney.

Renee Mahler is a gerontologist and the director of communications and admissions at a Rochester Hills nursing facility. She is a former member of the Michigan State Commission on Services to the Aging.

To leave a message for Mahler, from a Touch-Tone phone, call 953-2047, Ext. 1853. Send your questions to her at the Observer & Eccentric, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009.

## CLARIFICATION

Episode, one of the fashion stores spotlighted in the Observer & Eccentric's spring fashion supplement March 25, does not have

a store at Twelve Oaks Mall in Novi. Episode is at the Somerset Collection in Troy.

## Off the Cuff wants your suggestions

Get a suggestion for an individual in Off the Cuff, an occasional feature that focuses on ordinary people

with extraordinary flair for fashion? Please let us know. Call us at 644-1100, Ext. 243.

# Fire and ice is not for winners

## THE BRIDGE CROWD



WOODY BOYD

A player who stands with one foot on ice and the other in fire, on average, should have a comfortable body temperature. Practicing these kinds of extremes in duplicate bridge, though, just doesn't, on average, win many events.

I would like to believe that I have completed my tour of the peaks and valleys in my quest to play better competitively, but I'm not sure my education is yet complete. In duplicate, as my readers appreciate, it is imperative to be with the field or above, and that requires sound judgment, excellent technique and enough opportunity to do so. Anything less and you're an "also ran!"

I can't tell you how many garden-variety players have asked, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, what must I do to win over all?" Naturally, my answers to this aren't patently sanctioned, but I have a few suggestions.

- Cultivate the basic standards of the game before you try to acquire too much system sophistication. You might succeed yourself at this phase of your education, but it's better to get well-trained help.
- Play and play and read and play some more, but establish some priorities. If you are anything like me, you will find that advancement is pleasurable and playing to achieve a goal is entertaining.
- Listen to the proficient, not the imposter!
- At some stage, you will start winning. Then upgrade the competitors you are playing against. To beat the mediocre builds ego, to beat the best builds recognition.

If you have gotten this far and are truly enjoying your advancement, then I would suggest you are ready for a playing date with a professional. It's not for everyone, but for those who truly want the taste of a gifted and exhilarating experience, it is a profound and memorable moment. I have done so, and it has dramatically flavored my game.

This spring, a number of the finest players in North America are expected to attend our SOMBA Wolverine Regional to be staged May 18-23 at the Southfield Pavilion. The great Italian world master Benito Garozzo is expected, as is our own North American star Zeke Jabour. They will be available for a limited number of playing dates.

Two of our favorite local medalists with significant reputations, Steve Landen and a recent transplant, the Canadian star Mark Moulson, have been playing by appointment these last few years with readers of this column. I am told by some readers who have played with Landen and Moulson that it was eventful and worth doing again.

This bodes well for the high caliber of our local bridge and is one of the significant reasons Oakland County play is far above the average. Sometimes even the most brilliant find themselves with a foot on

ice and the other in fire, but it goes to show you that even stars of our game are human. The slam that Mark and Steve got to in a recent sectional was precarious and in considerable danger of falling. It should be emphatically stated that neither supports the theory that 24 H.C.P. slams are a sane way to gain victory, but once there declared, gave it a superb play.

Steve	W	Mark	E
1*	—	1*	—
2*	—	2*	—
3*	—	3*	—
5*	—	4*	—
E/W Vulnerable			Passed out

  

▲ 10 9 7 5 2	Mark	▲ K J 6 4 3
♥ A J 8 4	W	♥ Q 5
♦ K Q 8	E	♦ 5 3 2
♣ K	Steve	♣ 5 4 3
—	—	—
♥ 7 6 2	—	—
♦ A J 10 9 7	—	—
♣ A Q 8 7 6	—	—

W. led the ♦ 6

Mark later stated that six diamonds was heroically bold, but all his points were working and he was sure Steve was void in spades.

When the curtain came up on dummy, Steve was void in spades. The eve of doom, but maybe there was hope if the heart king, 10 or queen, 10 were with West and the clubs were no worse than 4-3.

Expecting what he predicted to find, victory, he commenced his play. (1) He won dummy's diamond king and played the exposed club king. (3) dummy's diamond eight to his ace and ruffed a low club with dummy's queen. (5), a spade ruff with his diamond nine. His heart seven to dummy's heart nine and jingle bells East had to win with his queen. (7), he ruffed East's spade return and drew the opponent's last trump. Tricks (9)-(11), his club ace, queen, eight. (12), a heart to dummy's jack and the heart ace.

You say Steve was lucky. I agree, but luck usually complements expert play.

Woody Boyd teaches local bridge classes and is a life master. He lives in Bloomfield Township. To leave a message for Boyd, from a Touch-Tone phone, call 953-2047, Ext. 1853.

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