

## ***The Great Lakes Section Of The American Bridge Association***

The sixth geographic division of the American Bridge Association came into being during the 1964 Summer Nationals hosted by Buffalo, New York. Extensive discussions had been held at the 1963 Summer Nationals hosted by Philadelphia, PA. Underlying reasons for this administrative decision were: increased membership, geographic proximity and political acumen.

This geographic entity encompassed all of Michigan, upstate New York, Western Pennsylvania, and the most of the state of Ohio.

Cities with viable clubs were alphabetically: Buffalo, New York; Columbus, Ohio; Detroit, Michigan; Pittsburg, Pennsylvania and Youngstown, Ohio.

Expansion efforts included Akron, Ohio and Toledo, Ohio.

The Great Lakes Section was so named for its proximity to the Great Lakes of the United States.

### **Great Lakes Vice Presidents**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Tenure</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Selection</b>
1. Pauline Taylor	1964	Detroit	Appointed
2. Dan Scrivens	1964	Dayton	Appointed
3. Dan Scrivens	1967	Dayton	Elected
4. Elizabeth Alexander	1969	Pittsburg	Elected
5. Anita Smith Troy	1973	Dayton	Elected
6. Elizabeth Alexander	1974	Pittsburg	Appointed
7. Thelma Woodson	1976	Detroit	Elected
8. Taylor C. Cox	1980	Detroit	Elected
9. Thelma Woodson	1983	Detroit	Elected
10. Edith Morgan	1984	Cleveland	Elected
11. Robert Rucker	1989	Dayton	Elected
12. Edith Morgan	1991	Cleveland	Elected
13. A. Vernet Wills	1995	Detroit	Elected
14. Mary Sirmons	1999	Pittsburg	Elected
15. Arthur Wills	2003	Detroit	Elected
16. James Hunter	2005	Cleveland	Elected
17. Barbara Hutson	2008	Detroit	Elected
18. Barbara Adams	2012	Youngstown	Elected
19.			
20.			

## ***Chronological Listing of Nationals Hosted by Cities Within the Great Lakes Section***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Host City</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Chairpersons</b>
1964	Buffalo, NY	Summer Nationals	Rita Reddick
1967	Pittsburg, PA	Summer Nationals	Elizabeth Alexander
1969	Columbus, OH	Spring Nationals	The Beattys
1971	Cleveland, OH	Spring Nationals	Art Wills
1974	Dayton, OH	Summer Nationals	Anita Smith Troy
1974	Detroit, MI	Summer Nationals	Thelma Woodson
1975	Cleveland, OH	Spring Nationals	Edith Morgan
1978	Pittsburg, PA	Spring Nationals	Mary Sirmons
1983	Cleveland, OH	Summer Nationals	Edith Morgan
1985	Detroit, MI	Summer Nationals	Thelma Woodson
1988	Columbus, OH	Spring Nationals	Dr. M. Stinson
1993	Detroit, MI	Summer Nationals	A. Vern Wills
1999	Detroit, MI	Summer Nationals	Evelyn King
2007	Detroit, MI	Summer Nationals	Wanda McWills
2009	Cleveland, OH	Summer Nationals	Al Freeman

## ***The Great Lakes Section Top Players 2013***

1	Naomi Ballard	14	Sara Seals
2	Heywood Ballard	15	Georgia Doggett
3	Berrye Thompson	16	Sarah Groves
4	Barbara Hutson	17	Reuben Russell
5	Taylor C. Cox	18	Thelma Woodson
6	Wanda McWills	19	Gwen Gresham
7	Leola Rucker	20	Dolores Taylor
8	James Hunter	21	Edith Cox
9	Allie Raines	22	Barbara Adams
10	Al Freeman	23	Geraldean Jones
11	Helen Anderson	24	James Irwin
12	J.T. McGhee	25	Fred Jefferson
13	Barbara Gooden	26	Joann Miller

## ***All Time Great Lakes Grand Masters***

**Art Wills  
Naomi Ballard  
Woody Ballard  
Sylvia Christian**

Other notables of the region, included Zenobia Allen, long time top female player The Guatemalan, William "Bill" Friend, whom the "BILL FRIEND RACE" is named after. He is also the father of Colonel Bob Friend. He tutored many Detroiters and was for many years the top ABA player.

Included in the Great Lakes luminaries are John Stevens, founder of the Detroit Bridge league "nee" The Wolverine Bridge Club in 1937, his wife Georgia Stevens, National ABA secretary and Beatrice White, first certified female National Director.

No one can forget the impact of Pauline Taylor who strode on the ABA national scene in the late 40's; becoming the first female president of the ABA in 1969. Earnest Sweeney became Logistics chairman as well as caddy Master while his wife Vera handled supplies for the Association.

## ***Member City Grade "A" Dates***

Each city had an established date to host its Grade A.

- |   |                         |                |
|---|-------------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Early April             | Dayton, OH     |
| 2 | Fourth of July          | Cleveland, OH  |
| 3 | Labor Day               | Buffalo, NY    |
| 4 | Third September Weekend | Columbus, OH   |
| 5 | First October Weekend   | Detroit, MI    |
| 6 | Fourth October Weekend  | Pittsburg, PA  |
| 7 | Rotating Date           | Youngstown, OH |

## ***Finances***

At its inception, the Great Lakes had no treasury. Each member city sponsored the Sectional and kept profits for its own treasury. 1967 saw Buffalo suffer a deficit of 400 dollars. This created a **Financial Crisis** for them. A treasury was established in 1975 to create an emergency fund and to publish a quarterly news letter. This news letter was later named The Great Lakes Flagship by Taylor Cox. The Columbus players gave a major boost to the Great Lakes treasury by donating Sectional profits to the treasury. In 1985, the section made a decision

to create a Sectional scholarship of \$800.00 which was presented to a Great Lakes college student annually.

The practice of providing housing for the Sectional Secretary was initiated by Anita Troy and later the expenses of the Sectional Vice-President were added. Transportation and housing to national tournaments were subsidized by the national organization. As national funds have decreased, Sections have been asked to assume partial responsibility for its Vice-Presidential expenses.

### ***Buffalo***

Buffalo had long been a part of the Eastern Section but with its close proximity To Pittsburg, Ohio and Detroit, it was deemed feasible to include it in the Great Lakes Section. Also its geographical position was adjacent to Lake Erie where the Great Lakes section was formed.

Buffalo has been a major player in the Great Lakes Section since its inception. When and after its formation major personalities were:

Marvin Morris	Cleveland Fleming	Dr. Katherine Treanor
Mrs. Ryland Melford	Rita Reddick	Garnett Wallace
Dr. Ryland Melford	Samuel Reddick	Bessie Fuggitt
Thelma Daughtry	Irving Hills	Sue Jackson
James Patterson	Bill Bascom	Carolyn Daughtry

A major addition was the recruitment of Dr. Katherine Treanor, chemistry Professor at Cannasius College. Her creative idea of using college dorms and food services for Grade "A,s" and Sectionals enhanced the Section's treasury substantially. The membership was enhanced by the chartering of the Humboldt Club which produced the inimitable Cleveland Fleming.

### ***Cleveland Congress of Bridge Clubs***

The Cleveland Congress of Bridge Clubs located on Lake Erie was a part of the Eastern Section according to data printed in "DEFINING MOMENTS". The Congress was organized in 1956.

### ***The Premier Bridge Club***

In that same document, it is reported that the Premier Club was organized in 1932 by Lewis Hall which predates the 1933 establishment of the American Bridge Association. Meetings were held in individual homes. Charter members included:

Benn Hardin  
Lee Gleason  
John Early  
Walter Wills Jr.

Gasper Zuber  
Elma Cheeks  
The Smith Sisters

Lewis Hall  
Dr. Tarter  
George Hall  
Dr. I.B. Scott

The 1942 Summer Nationals were hosted by the Premier Club.

### ***The McGhee Club***

Miss Jessie McGhee, an early Cleveland organizer formed the McGhee Club in 1954 as well as Jessie's Pips. Theopolis Taylor served as its first president while James Cleveland was the director.

### ***The Burke Players***

The Burke Players were organized by music aficionado and brilliant wordsmith Judge Lillian Burke. This club went on to become the largest club in the Cleveland area.

### ***The Woodmere Bridge Club***

Research leaves little documentation re: the Woodmere Bridge Club except It met in Orange Community Center and had 36 members in 1987. Its more renown members were Creola Alexander, Charles and Iola Frye, Susie Rice and Azalea Young.

### ***Major Contributors from Cleveland***

Prominent contributors from Cleveland Congress of Bridge Clubs:

Al Freeman  
Georgia Doggett  
Mary Kemp  
Norma Fleming  
Calvin Vinson  
Sara Seals

Edith Morgan  
Dr. Rhoza Simmons, author  
Judge Lillian Burke  
George Hall organizer  
Herbert Kerr, historian  
Oliver Bailey

Elvie Perdue  
James Perdue  
Christine Bufford  
Marvin Bufford  
Mildred Dorsey  
Oscar Safford

Individuals serving in National capacities were:

Arthur Reid Chairman of the Board,

Judge Lillian Burke appointed Board Member and Chairman of the 1977-78 National Constitutional Committee

Edith Morgan, eight years as Sectional VP, 6 years as Awards Committee Chair

Gwendolyn Gresham, Convention Manager

Jim Hunter, Constitution Committee Chair and Section Vice President

## ***Columbus, Ohio***

Little information is found regarding Columbus' early beginnings.

There were two clubs but no record of a unit. The clubs were the Buckeyes and the Little Bucks.

Columbus hosted the ABA's first Spring National which began on Wednesday during Easter vacation and concluded with a single session open pair on the Sunday afternoon following Easter Sunday.

This supplanted the GREAT LAKES Sectional schedule. The chief sponsor of this Spring National was Otto Beatty and his wife Myrna who became editor of the Great Lakes newsletter under Pauline Taylor.

Prominent players from the environs:

Phyllis Heard  
Wilson Heard  
David Glass  
Maurice Crouch

Otto Beatty  
Myrna Beatty  
Charles Pyant  
Kathryn Pyant  
Virginia Clarke

Harold Cochran  
Margaret Cochran  
Dr. Marie Stinson  
Zelpha Garrett

Transplants to the area were Lawrence Berkley and Sandra Stevenson

Not enough accolades can be extended to both of the Heards, who served as convention managers and whose task was to provide services to the players at the most economical rate. Columbus was a major contributor to the successes of Pauline Taylor, Geri Wilson and Thelma Woodson, as well as a major contributor to the sectional treasury.

## ***Columbus Contributions at the National Level***

For a period of time, Wilson Heard was, the national convention manager. His wife Phyllis succeeded him upon his death in 1988. He was the chief advocate for Columbus hosting the 1988 Spring Nationals to commemorate the first ABA Spring National. Dwight Galley oversaw the ABA's first Pro-Am Game with pre-registration and an entry fee of \$2.00. Breakfast was served and more than 50 tables were in play. Identity tags were provided by Phyllis Hoard's High School Art Department. A presidential reception for all ABA presidents was also catered by the high schools culinary department.

The Local Tournament Chairman was Dr. Marie Stinson and Virginia Clarke was the National Publicity Chairman. Both print and electronic interviews were conducted highlighting ABA's individual and organizational accomplishments.

## ***Dayton, Ohio***

Arthur Wills extensively details Dayton's history in the ABA's official history **DEFINING MOMENTS**. Credit is given to Dan Scrivens of Xenia, Ohio for the now defunct Air City Club in the early 40's. However the modern nucleus is centered in the city of Dayton. Katie Gibbs was it's first president. Prominent members were:

Dan Scrivens	Sandra Stevenson	Anita Smith Troy
Colonel Robert Friend	Milton Haley	Sam Lucas
Anna Friend	Bessie Haley	Beverly Lucas
Arthur Kidd	Robert Canty	James Caslin
Susie Kidd	Bobbie Canty	Violet Caslin
James Marcellus	Peggy Jones	Alma McKnight
Marjorie Marcellus	Ralph Smith	Robert Rucker
Sue Austin	Ted Griffin	Edward Bibb
Forest Tellis	Ella Anderson	Robert Whatley
	Barbara Vinzant	

## ***Contributions of Daytonites***

Dan Scrivens served as the second Great Lakes Sectional VP with Anita Troy serving as Sectional Secretary. Sam Lucas was selected as National Tournament Chairman during the Jacqueline Shepphard's administration. He introduced the concept of second chance Knock-out to increase guaranteed player participation and revenue. Anita Troy was appointed Sectional VP under Pauline Taylor and elected VP following Betty Alexander, thus making her the third Great Lakes VP. She chaired the 1974 Spring Nationals in Dayton as well as the 1977 Summer Nationals in Los Angeles. She was later elected Western section VP, National VP, National Secretary and appointed Convention Manager.

## ***Detroit***

Detroit has long been a center of bridge creativity and innovation since the organization of the Gogginettes by **Lyda** Goggings who then hosted the 1941 Summer Nationals. Shortly before this venture was the 1937 chartering of the Detroit Bridge League, nee (The Wolverine Bridge Club) by John Stevens. The Democratic club on East Warren was the first playing site. More playing sites were in dominantly Black residential districts i.e. Mt. Vernon Recreation on the North End, Mack-Mt. Elliot Recreation on the near East Side, the Birdhurst Recreation Center on Eight Mile, the Tireman Recreation Center on the near West Side and the Evans Recreation Center on the Northeast Side. Other housing sites were the Chess and Cue Club owned by John Armstrong, The Trade Leadership Council sponsored by C. L. and Marguerite Evans, the Fisher and the Highland YMCA, the Wilshire Hotel, the Tindal Recreation Center on Seven Mile and the Northwest Activity Center on Meyers at Curtis. Clearly, the City of Detroit through it's Recreation program played a major role in the development of duplicate bridge in Detroit.

### ***Our Own Home***

June of 1978, after wandering throughout Detroit, we found ourselves moving into our debt free home at 16596 James Couzens Highway. Accounts differ regarding discovery, funding and refurbishing of this facility. The funds generated from the hosting of the 1974 summer nationals were the major resource. Cornelius Cobbins, treasurer at the time found the facility on sale for back taxes. Vern Wills was unit president. Men of the unit i.e. Bert Johnson, Tom Cook, John Armstrong, Bert Hudson and Cornelius Cobbins donned their coveralls, picked up their spatulas, put nails in their mouths and paint in their buckets to set about the task of redecorating the building. Of course red carpeting had to be laid to satisfy the royal taste of Pauline Taylor.

### ***Dedication***

Thelma Woodson and Thomas Cook co-chaired the dedication ceremony which was attended by National President Arnold Jones and about 200 guests. According to Orville Foote, resident historian, early pioneers were:

Robert Andrews  
Ethel Andrews  
Smith Little  
Gwen Little  
Gus Reed  
Laura Reed  
Eleanor Griffin  
John Stevens

Bill Friend  
Georgia Stevens  
John Stevens  
Casper Peek Sr.  
Doctor Slaughter  
Robert Hall  
Bert Hudson  
John Armstrong  
David Griffis

Zenobia Rucker  
Samuel Ross  
Robert Cook  
William Hill  
Gladys Rodgers  
Birdie Glenn  
Robert Searcy  
Clarabelle Hudson

### ***Teachers and Recruiters***

Significant teachers of Bridge in the Unit have been:

Zenobia Allen  
Eleanor Griffin  
Laree Parker

Naomi Ballard  
Jonathan Rodgers  
Kenneth Vernon  
Thelma Woodson

Woody Ballard  
Andrew Mells  
Vern Wills



### ***Clubs in the Detroit Area***

1. The Googinettes	Lyda Goggins	1932
2. Detroit Bridge League **	John Stevens	1937
3. The Octo Regis		
4. The Life Masters	John Armstrong	
5. The Excelsiors	Herb Hayden	1954
6. The Duplicettes	Pauline Taylor	1952
7. The Kings and Queens	Arnetta DeVor	1960
8. The Kibitzers	Lois Riddle	1974
9. Majors and Minors	Dorothy Freeman	1984
10. The Renaissance	Essie Norman	1986
11. The Motown Aces	Vern Wills	1995
12. The Wolverines **	John Stevens	1937

\*\*In 1962 the Detroit Bridge League's name was changed to the Wolverines to avoid confusion with the Detroit Bridge Unit.

### ***Unit Presidents have been:***

Pauline Taylor	Vern Wills
Orville Foote	Barbara Gooden
Andrew Mells	Andrew Mells
Fannye Curtis	Kenneth Vernon
P. T. Cochran	Marvin Allen
Josephine Hayden	Evelyn King
Theodore Woodson	Kenneth Vernon
Andrew Mells	Marvin Allen
Harriet Johnson	Dr. Ellen Mayfield
"Dollar Bill" Thompson	

Growth of the unit membership centered around hosting nationals and chartering of clubs. During Theodore Woodson's tenure, a sectional was held at the posh Hilton Hotel which set attendance records in 1971. The Summer Nationals at the Cadillac-Sheraton also set national records in revenue and table count. The Awards Ball centered at Cobo Hall was also a pace – setting event. Chartered busses were available for transportation to the hall. Each table of ten was provided with a fifth of scotch, bourbon, gin, rum and mixers for the participants. Beryl Bailey of New York provided decorative balloons for each table advertising the 1975 Summer Nationals at the Waldorf-Astoria. The Unit was left with sufficient revenue to purchase a debt free bridge home.

Death and illness of key players delayed the purchase of the Bridge Home until the 1978 election of Vern Wills. Her main focus was to realize the dream of acquiring a club house. Details are chronicled elsewhere.

## ***The Motor City Duplicettes AKA The Duplicettes***

Founded in March of 1952, by Pauline Taylor ,whose goal was to involve all women in the challenge of duplicate bridge. It's membership was exclusively women. Pauline, its first president who went on to break the ABA's glass ceiling, motto was "Let us play bridge in peace and harmony together".

Charter members were:

Bertha Hennessey	Trudy Haynes	Eleanor Griffin
Laura Reed	Blanche Jones	Laree Parker
Georgia Stevens	Willa Canty	Sarah Outlaw
Clementine Bannister	Delores Bowen	Vera Sweeney
Helen Hamilton	Fannye Curtis	Josephine Hayden
Jane Finley	Clarabelle Hudson	Janet Gibson
Elizabeth Johnson	Harriet Johnson	Billie Giles
Beatrice White	Marion Griffin	Allie Raines
Laura Pillerman	Catherine Wells	Barbara Rucker

Innovative programs have been initiating the Woman of the Year award and Monthly Celebrity Pair Nights. Bertha Hennessey put a leg trophy in play to be awarded for the highest point earner.

Their presidents have been:

Pauline Taylor	Helen Hamilton	Madeline Ward
Bertha Hennessey	Josephine Hayden	Eleanor Griffin
Billie Giles	Hortense Miller	Norma Burch
Dolores Bowen	Bessie Officer	Brenda Braceful

Other members of the Duplicettes are:

Roberta McGowan	Bernice White	Ruth Cochran
Janet Kincannon	Jewell Green	Elgatha Royal
Maguerite Evans	Harriet McGou	Mary Hall

Luminaries from this club are Pauline Taylor, National President, Beatrice White, National Director, Sarah Groves, Sectional Fund Raiser, Josephine Hayden, Unit President, Dolores Bowen, National clerk and Berrye Thompson #26<sup>th</sup> top point holder.

### ***The Excelsior's (Men's Club)***

This club came into existence circa 1954 and until recently was exclusively a men's club. In 2011, the membership was opened to include women.

Early membership was comprised of:

Joseph Bell	Leroy Wilkins	John Jefferson
Herbert Hayden	Cecil McCarthy	Robert Patterson
Danny Page	Sam Barry	Timothy Johnson
Jimmy Stinson	Marshall Black	Roscoe Simmons
C. L. Evans	Albert Brown	Bert Johnson
Dr. Slaughter	Bertram Hudson	John Stubbs

Subsequent membership included:

Tom Cook	Norman Miller	Art Wills
Cornelius Cobbins	Joseph Jones	Art Davis
Joseph McCloud	J.T. McGhee	Marvin Allen
James Irwin	Max Rorex	Leroy Willis
P. T. Cochran	Walter Block	Stanley Guy
Taylor Cox	Ernest Sweeney	Dallas White
Cassius Ward	John Davis	Theodore Woodson

Former presidents have been:

Joseph Bell	Cornelius Cobbins	Joseph Jones
Herb Hayden	Paul Thompson	Theodore Woodson

Walter Forbers serves as Unit House Manager. From this array of gentlemen Taylor Cox and Art Wills have served as Sectional Vice-presidents, and National Appeals and Tournament Chairs.

In honor of Cornelius Cobbins, the Excelsiors contributed \$1000.00 to the National Scholarship fund.

### ***The Kibitzer Club***

The Kibitzer Club came into being through the efforts of Lois Riddle, Pauline Taylor and Theodore Woodson circa 1973-74. Lois' parents had been charter members of the Detroit Bridge League. At the 1974 Summer Nationals in Detroit, Lois was named National Kibitzer President. This department was dissolved by Jacqueline Sheppard in 1977. This club remains one of the more viable clubs in Detroit.

Its charter members are:

Lois Riddle  
Sue Morton

Lytle Riddle  
Alice Riddle  
Allene McCampbell

Alice Adams  
Evelyn Sublette

Later membership included:

James Atkinson  
Marjorie Atkinson  
George Blakely  
Margaret Blakely  
Julia Thomas  
Julius Lanier  
Estelle Lanier  
Celestine Drake  
Edna Frisby  
Beatrice Gilreath  
Marvin Greene  
Ruth Gully  
Edythe Hunter  
Hertha Jenkins  
Joyce Kilpatrick  
Viola Cohen  
Delyda Moultrie  
Dr. Leon Nash  
Dorothea Pullen  
Elizabeth Robinson  
Dolores Taylor  
Thadene Warren  
Minnie Woods

Ollie Banks  
Conklin Bray  
Harriet Bray  
Valadia Buckner  
Emercity Chapital  
Norma Coleman  
Bonnie Davison  
Margaret Dudley  
James Gilreath  
Dr. James Robinson  
Erma Greene  
Mozelle Hughes  
Adlene James  
Peggy Jones  
Jewell Martin  
Dorothy Bostic  
Marie Moy  
Nora Nash  
Beatrice Rivers  
Jo Ellen Tabron  
Leroy Thompson  
Vera Wilkinson  
Louise Wright

Timetta Carlise  
Eloise Carter  
Helen Clore  
Frances Polk  
Willie Cheeks  
Ferris Cheeks  
Lillian Dennis  
Judy Flowers  
Mamie Garvin  
Murtha Glover  
Mildred Guyton  
Audrey Holland  
Rachel Jefferson  
Brenda Keaton  
Jean Morton  
Ruby Warr  
Dorothy Moorner  
Verna Parks  
Cecil Robinson  
Vivian Tabron  
Margaret Thompson  
Bill Watt

Kibitzer presidents have been:

Founder Lois Riddle  
Vera Wilkerson  
Bonnie Davison

George Blakely  
Lillian Dennis  
Peggy Jones

Barbara Gooden  
Judy Flowers  
Bill Watt.

Out of this club emerged, one Unit President, Barbara Gooden, 1986-87, and one National Kibitzer President, Lois Riddle. Major achievements of the club was the establishment of a School of Social Work Scholarship at Wayne State University honoring Lois' sister Alice Roberts and the crowning of the Unit Queen Vivian Tabron at Detroit's 1985 Summer Nationals.

### ***The Kings and Queens***

This club was chartered by eight night time postal workers in 1960. Its first president was Arnetta Coleman Devor. Charter members were Edgar Brazelton, Luckett Hughes, Edgar and Thelma Butler, James McFall, James Cole, and Naomi Ballard. Eventually, they met on Friday evenings at the Fisher YMCA. Their annual picnic on Belle Isle was a gourmet treat for all who attended. Ida Woodall and Irene Smith's menu forced you to return year after year. This tradition continues but its locale has changed to the Club House. Jay Levine, a recruit of Lytle Riddle is its current director.

### ***Presidents of the Kings and Queens have been***

James McFall	Arnetta DeVor	Edgar Butler
Vern Wills	Harriet Johnson	Davene McKinney
Edith Cox	Fred Morris	Sylvia Christian
Marvin Allen	Dr. Ellen Mayfield	Sherry Griffin.

### **Membership encompasses**

Louis Allen	Naomi Ballard	Woody Ballard
Milford Barker	Ann Benning	Thonen Braceful
Edna Brown	Marvel Brown	Edith Cox
Richard Cunningham	Jean Cunningham	Arnetta DeVor
Calvin Dykes	Althea Dykes	Mattie Gist
Billie Hall	Jay Levine	Barbara Hutson
Margaret League	Barbara McKinney	David McKinney
Fred Morris	Mildred Morris	William Page
Alberta Page	Jacqueline Pearson	Rita Reddick
Smith Little	Gwen Little	Richard Richardson
Rueben Russell	Louise Stanton	"Bill" Thompson
Noah Wills	Joan Bowen	Art Wills
Vern Wills	Juanita Merritt	Robert McKinney

All Detroit Grand Masters have been members of the Kings and Queens, Three Sectional Vice Presidents Art and Vern Wills and Barbara Hutson have belonged as well as two National Directors David McKinney and Jay Levine was members. Jay Levine donated \$100,000.00 to UNCF students at Jackson Middle School who went to college.

### ***The Motown Aces***

This club was chartered in 1995 by Vern Wills and Naomi Ballard to satisfy the need for more afternoon playing time and to allay security concerns. Its nucleus was taken from students of:

Naomi Ballard  
Kenny Vernon

Vern Wills  
Thelma Woodson

Peggy Jones

Its first president was Loretta Brown, followed by Mary Moore. This club also drew membership from existing clubs. Enthusiasm ran high with the fielding of 20 or more tables most Fridays. Other presidents were: Flo Hazzard, and currently Olive Fulton. Active men in the club are, Howard Moore, Clyde Howard, Earl Campbell, Fred Russell and Alfred Hooper. Playing fees have been reasonable and hospitality assured. An offsite anniversary is sponsored each year with pre-registration required.

The membership list includes,

Jeanette Alexander	Laura Anderson	Ollie Banks
Angeline Billups	Dolly Blanchard	Johnnie Bland
Doris Blevins	Modifor Bodiford	Loretta Brown
June Campbell	Henrietta Carter	Joyce Clark
Leon Coleman	Grace Davison,	Desmon Dorsey
Helen Glover	Brett Golden	Alice Griffin
Vernetta Goree	Ruth Gibbs	Alice Haley
Jerri Harris	Ruth Harris	Gwen Hart
Sarah Hagood	Clyde Holland	Flora Hazzard
Lillian Hudson	Ava James	Olive Fulton
Gwen Lemmons	Alice James	Mamie Kitchen
Shirley Jones	Ann Lewis	Jacqueline Mansfield
Delphine Martin	Mary Moore	Karen Moseley
Helen Orr	Claudia Parker	Chrystal Parker
Florence Patterson	Cecile Picou	Clifford Pierce
Ozzie Polidor	Leila Ray	Juanita Simmons
Mary Russell	Marion Snodgrass	Barbara Tenny
Odessa Wash	Clydia Woods	Elaine Rice
	Dr. Dolores Thomas	

Elaine Rice is the Financial Secretary of the Unit and Barbara Tenny is its treasurer.

### ***The Renaissance Bridge Club***

True to its title, this club signifies astronomical beginnings and success. In keeping with the spirit and growth associated with the sponsoring of the 1985 Summer Nationals, daytime party bridge was sponsored to raise funds to host the event. The

genius behind the effort was Beatrice White and Essie Norman. Following the hosting of the 1985 Nationals a request was made to charter a daytime club. Since all evening hours were occupied, the Wolverine Bridge Club agreed that this new club could play on Monday afternoons provided the building was vacated in time for their 8:00pm play. Ruth Swint assured that constitutional requirements would be met. The three movers and shakers were Essie Norman, Beatrice White and Ruth Swint. Essie Norman became its first president, Beatrice White its first director and Jonathan Rodgers its first teacher.

***Charter Members were***

Mildred Carrington	Dorothy Wiley	Barbara Birch
Helen Howie	Gloria Smith	Marion Wilson
Charles Phipps	Phylonia Williams	Nina Lizzamore
Ruth Swint	Oris Woods	Betty Lee
Rose Kimbrough	Bernice Smith	Gertrude Carter
Helen Coleman	Bernice Black	Myrtle Dobbs
Mary Ferguson	Alice Frazier	Leola Goss
Lessie Hale	Myrtle Hill	Mozelle Idleburg
Emma Johnson	Gladys Manzo	Tinnie Norman
Josephine Sexton	Teresa Williams	Dorothy Jackson
James Jackson	Bernice Walden	

The presidents have been:

Essie Norman	Evelyn King	Mildred Carrington
Helen Dickerson	Janice Hayes	Juanita Stafford

As a memorial to her husband, Mildred Carrington donated \$900.00 to create a plaque honoring member achievements.

### ***Pontiac Majors and Minors***

October 1984 saw the formation of Pontiac's Majors and Minors with Dorothy Freeman as its main organizer. The main teacher was the Wolverine's Thelma Woodson. Members were:

Exavier Holland	Dorothy Freeman	Virginia Smoot
Barbara Haynes	Patricia Rhodes	Elizabeth Noble
Ted Buchanan	Alice Buchanan	Oneida Caudle
Retha Williams	Alice Holland	Barbara Johnson
Mary Jones	Charles Cobb	Gloria Cobb
Alice Palmer	Harriet Patton	Clara White
Johnnie Williams	Zana Turner	Robert Cobb

The club's mission was to support the F. Alberta Peterson fund by sponsoring an annual fall citrus fruit sale.

The chartering ceremony was attended by the Pontiac mayor, Pauline Taylor, Allie Raines and Beatrice White.

Officers were:

President	Dorothy Freeman
Vice-President	Virginia Smoot
Secretary	Barbara Haynes
Treasurer	Patricia Rhodes
Board member	Oneida Caudle
Board Member	Exavier Holland

### ***The Wolverine Bridge Club***

Just four years after the American Bridge Association was organized at Buckroe Beach, John Stevens created the Detroit Bridge League which became The Wolverine Bridge Club. The formation of the Detroit Bridge Unit required a name change. The Wolverines' history parallels Detroit's history until formation of the unit. All data is the same including dates, contributions, historical figures, officers and individual achievements. They have led the way with innovative ideas, political activism and financial contributions.

Pauline Taylor became the ABA's first female president, Beatrice White became the first female national director and "Bill" Friend the top point holder in the USA while Zenobia Allen was the top female player in the USA. The Wolverines donated more than \$2000.00 to repair the roof while donating over \$900.00 to help replace air-



conditioning. Library books were donated from the families of Sam Ross, Orville Foote and Andrew Mells. Two Leg trophies were donated to honor Theodore Woodson. Thelma Woodson was elected the fourth female president and twice Sectional Vice-President. She has served as teacher certification chairman as well as scholarship chairman prior to her election to the national presidency. Thelma has continually taught beginning bridge for more than 50 years. PTA parents were first students. She was the first to offer free classes to club house participants. Shortly afterward she and Kenny Vernon became a team and have remained every since. Recruitment is a constant task.

National life members from the Wolverines were, Pauline Taylor, Ernest Sweeney, Beatrice White, Orville Foote and Thelma Woodson.

Pauline Taylor  
Orville Foote

Ernest Sweeney  
Thelma Woodson

Beatrice White

National Director is Kenneth Vernon who becomes player of the nationals whenever he chooses to play.

### ***Former Presidents***

John Stevens  
Pauline Taylor  
Norman Miller  
George Cartwright  
Alfred Jones  
Thelma Woodson

Bert Hudson  
Orville Foote  
Thelma Woodson  
Lebron Simmons  
Samuel Ross  
Harriet Johnson  
Thelma Woodson

"Bill" Friend  
Andrew Mells  
Alfreda Wright  
Blaine Denning  
Essie Normal  
Wanda McWills

### ***Former Secretaries***

Gloria Stevens  
Blanche Jones  
Edna Jett  
Clementine Bannister

Laree Parker  
Essie Norman  
Willa Canty  
Willa Holland

Laura Parker  
Janet Kincannon  
Carleana Allen

## ***Pittsburgh, PA***

Pittsburgh, nestled in the picturesque Allegheny mountains is a unique locale for those who have an eye for topical beauty. Its deep ravines are paired with its snow-capped mountains while stimulating the imagination. Subsequent to Dan Scrivens tenure, Elizabeth Alexander two terms to serve as sectional vice-president.

They hosted the 1967 summer nationals as well as the 1978 spring nationals. The four clubs are/were: Point City, Centre "Y", Keystone and Hilltop. Its two sectional Vice-

Presidents have been Elizabeth Alexander and Mary Sirmons. Mary currently serves as national scholarship chairperson.

Lucille Hayes developed the National Children's Program and Dr. Alfred Bishop a brilliant technician codified our technical operations for The ABA under Thelma Woodson's tenure. This operational code is used today. James Pope was the top point earner annually.

## **Wilberforce**

The Wilberforce Community Bridge Club was chartered in 1988 with Ermin Frye, Alexander Savage, Harvey Johnson, Daisy Foster and Calvin Blunt as charter members. Calvin Blount is the current president.

## ***Youngstown, Ohio***

Youngstown's more prolific participants are not available to share their triumphs and successes. The team of Ernest and Nellie Bruce paired with Lillian Smith and Joan McDowell were the nemesis of their field no matter who the opposition. Youngstown hosted it first sectional in 1977. This began a tournament tradition that was unrivaled. More often, the chairman was Joan McDowell whose change of residence robbed Youngstown of her services.

Besides the Bruces et al other faithful players were:

Willa Belt  
Frank Oliver  
Charlotte Oliver

Theresa Chambers  
Lawrence Wesson  
Wilma Wesson

Henry Clarett  
Juanita Pinkston  
The Harveys

## **Conclusion**

No recorded history can be complete or accurate without statements from all of its component parts or the recorder's perspective. Data has been gleaned from interviews, bulletins, photographs, records, and personal memory. An attempt has been made to give credit to all who contributed to the growth and development of the Great Lakes Section.