

REMEMBERING NICHOLAS STEVENS

In addition to the tournaments the club has held for its veteran members, the club has hosted one event each year since 2011 to immortalize a deceased chess player who has been influential in the promotion of chess in our community. This year's tributary double quads event was held from November 3 to 17 in memory of Nicholas "Nick" Stevens. Nick's major contribution to the enrichment of Connecticut chess can be directly attributed to his role as president and tournament director of the Hartford Chess Club in the 1970s and 1980s. The tremendous work that Mr. Stevens did for the HCC during this most prosperous period in Connecticut chess history can be compared to the work that Arkadijs Strazdins did for the NBCC for over fifty years. Without either of them, the Connecticut chess scene would probably not have thrived in our area for so long. Unfortunately, when Mr. Stevens left the helm as leader of the HCC in the 1980s, many of its members left. Fortunately, many of them joined the NBCC. Beyond the HCC, Mr. Stevens also organized many scholastic and adult chess tournaments in Connecticut, especially in his home town of Willimantic, and was a promoter of big events. A few of the major tournaments that Nick directed included the 1978 Hartford Open Chess Championship (which drew 240 players), the 1978 Connecticut State Chess Championship (which drew 140 players), and the 1976 U.S. Junior Open Chess Championship at the UConn CC (which drew 350 players). In the 1990s, Nick joined the UConn CC, where he was a member until his unexpected passing in 2000 at the age of sixty-one. Each year since Mr. Stevens' passing, Tom Hartmayer of the UConn CC has organized a memorial tournament for this gentleman who made so many remarkable contributions for the betterment of Connecticut chess.