



American Contract  
Bridge League

# Unit 174 Newsletter October 2020



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Please visit the Unit 174 Website ([www.acblunit174.org](http://www.acblunit174.org)) to view updated information about the activities in our Unit and at our Clubs.

PresidentsMessageAnchor



## President's Message

In October of 2017 I answered the phone, and it was **Karen Nimmons**. She said: *"Jack, would you consider running for the board?"*

I had been thinking about this before her call. I was retired and had the time. I knew that being on the board was going to be work but felt that having enjoyed playing bridge in clubs and tournaments I should do something to give back to the game that I love. So, I agreed.

### What is it like being on the board?

I discovered that there was a lot to learn. The overall goal is to preserve and promote bridge, particularly clubs in the unit. There is a club connection program where the board travels to the various clubs to listen to their concerns and, of course, to play bridge.

Also, the board runs the Houston Sectional and Regional tournaments. Running tournaments amounts to creating a schedule and budget, ensuring that we have adequate supplies, interacting with ACBL for sanctions and directors and getting volunteers to work.

### What skills are required?

Most important is the desire and willingness to volunteer. Members of the board have an upbeat can-do attitude and work together as a team. It is nice to be computer savvy – able to send and receive emails, extract

attachments, organize files on your local disk and some skill with Excel and Word.

### What are the benefits?

Being a board member keeps you busy, but when you look back at what has been accomplished it leaves you with a good feeling. There is something very satisfying about working on a team and running bridge tournaments. Club connection, which gives you an opportunity to meet new friends, is so much fun!!

If you are interested in running for the 2021 board, contact a member of our nominating committee:

<b>Joe Quinn, Chair</b>	(713) 234-6393	<a href="mailto:valquinn1950@gmail.com">valquinn1950@gmail.com</a>
<b>Joe Giovannangeli</b>	(603) 630-0605	<a href="mailto:jgiovannangeli@yahoo.com">jgiovannangeli@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Tom Hogle</b>	(713) 256-7800	<a href="mailto:rodeocentral4526@gmail.com">rodeocentral4526@gmail.com</a>
<b>Thomas Rush</b>	(832) 228-7835	<a href="mailto:PlayBridgeWithThomas@gmail.com">PlayBridgeWithThomas@gmail.com</a>
<b>Ralda St. Pierre</b>	(281) 536-7689	<a href="mailto:raldastp@sbcglobal.net">raldastp@sbcglobal.net</a>

Until next month, may your trumps break 3-2.

*Jack LaVigne, President, Unit 174*  
[jacklavigne@att.net](mailto:jacklavigne@att.net)

.rBoardBusiness

## Board Business

A primary goal of the board is to attract new members. One way to this is to have instructors work with new players.

In the interest of encouraging online teachers for new bridge players the board passed the following motion:

*ABTA certified or completed Best Practices course teachers who teach beginning bridge courses on BBO or SharkBridge will be reimbursed for up to \$500 of expenses.*

This program applies to as many as four instructors.

NewMembersEtc

## New Members and Rank Advancements

ACBL notifies us each month about the members new to our Unit and about those who advanced a rank as of the 6th day of the previous month. Below are listed those players who either joined our unit or advanced a rank.

### NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome the following players to our unit: **Michael Butterfield, Sharon Degnan, Richard C Dickson, Aimee Donnel, Patricia Hazeldine, Becky A Holland, Linda Lewis, Joyce Long, Lana J Mauro, Janet W Meador-Pate, Mary Ella Price, Patricia M Stack, Bill Yonushonis**

## **RANK ADVANCEMENTS**

Listed below are the new Unit 174 Masterpoint Milestones reported by ACBL for September 2020. An explanation of ranks may be found [on the ACBL website](#).

*Junior Master* (5 Masterpoints)

Elizabeth A Caballero, Kyle Dahlem, Juanita M Goss, Lorna Mura, Cheddi Thomas

*Club Master* (20 Masterpoints)

Gulten Burdett, Alexander W Degroot, Greta Etnyre, Mahlon E First, Jean Hines, Mike E Holy, Kathleen C Hubbard, Utkarsh Koshti, Jean L Lara, Katherine G Low, Cynthia Monroe, William B Price, Bill Sharman, Sunny M Smith, Chung Tan, Kristy K Tankersley, Dorian A Venable

*Sectional Master* (50 Masterpoints)

W A Hecht, Jeanne S Phelps, Edna A Rice, Joseph E Rogers

*Regional Master* (100 Masterpoints)

Pat Baker, Mike Davis, Kay M Dildy, Joy Pruett, Joseph Tse, Susie S Way

*NABC Master* (200 Masterpoints)

Kenneth E Bond, Doreene F Boubel, Joe F Boutros, Cindy Cox, Scott Koehler, Fran K McGaha, Sadashiv G Pethe, Sarah P Springer, Cecilia Tse

*Advanced NABC Master* (300 Masterpoints)

Bonnie A Loudin, Bill Nash, Debbie L Nash

*Silver Life Master* (187 in Unit 174)

Gregory May, Bobbie Newman, Bharat B Shrestha

*Gold Life Master* (100 in Unit 174)

Joe M Everette, Kenneth B McAllister

*Sapphire Life Master* (62 in Unit 174)

June R Ardoin

*Diamond Life Master* (44 in Unit 174)

Clif Capen

*Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!*

UnitNewsAnchor

## **174 Unit News**

### **BECOME A BRIDGE TEACHER**

District 16 is excited to help teachers expand their ability to reach students. It has a program to reimburse teachers who take the ACBL's Online Teacher

Certification course. The teacher certification costs \$125 and teachers will be reimbursed once they have completed the course.

To register for the ACBL Online Teacher Certification course, go to this website <https://www.acbl.org/teach/become-a-teacher/#online>

Pre-requisites for taking the course are the ability to navigate multiple windows, share screen, set up Zoom breakouts and polls and use SharkBridge's Teaching Console.

You will be notified of a short tech prep class once you sign up for the certification course. This training will ensure that everyone satisfies the pre-requisites to make the course run smoothly.

### **LEARN BRIDGE IN A DAY!**

On November 7th from 2 – 4 pm, District 16 is offering Bridge in A Day, a virtual course to introduce new players to bridge. This course will be led by **Patty Tucker**, an NABC champion and former Honorary ACBL Member of the Year. Patty has worked with many groups to promote growth in our ranks, including the American Bridge Teachers Association, Atlanta Youth Bridge, and the Foundation for the Preservation and Advancement of Bridge.

To register for this free class, send an email with the participant's name and zip code to [bridgeinaday.d16@gmail.com](mailto:bridgeinaday.d16@gmail.com). Please invite your friends, kids, and grandkids to the class! [Click here for more information](#).

### **CLUB APPRECIATION WEEK, OCTOBER 26 - NOVEMBER 1**

Double the points! During Club Appreciation Week, ACBL will double the BBO points earned in vClub games, instead of awarding the usual 50% markup.

Come and get 'em!

### **SUPERVISED PLAY BEGINS OCTOBER 26**

Unit 174 is offering supervised play sessions at 2PM on the second and fourth Mondays beginning next Monday, October 26. The entry fee is \$3.00, the lowest allowed by BBO, and the games are restricted to Unit 174 players with 0-20 masterpoints.

We will play twelve boards and allow eight minutes per board. Table hosts will be available to answer questions about the bidding or the play. Masterpoints will be awarded in these games.

Registration for the first game opens at 12PM on Monday, October 26. Look for the Unit 174 0-20 Game or search for VACB901744, the unit host account. If you do not have a partner, sign up at the partnership desk; the director will find you a partner.

If you have any questions about this event or about setting up your BBO

account, contact **Bill Riley** ([ichicbanbill@gmail.com](mailto:ichicbanbill@gmail.com)).

## **ONLINE EXPERT TEAMS**

On Sunday evenings at 7pm, our Houston local bridge pros and experts will be playing team matches on BBO. The partnerships change each week. Mark your calendar and plan on kibitzing these great matches. It's free so we hope you will plan on watching.

Players include: **Jimmy Breihan, Ira Chorush, Timo Erkoc, Phillip Grothus, Daniel Jackson, Jack LaVigne, Bob Morris, and Vinh Tran.**

To find the game, do a player search for BBO name **Mrace** or **Devilscoop**. Then click the JOIN button in the upper right corner of the profile.

*ClubNews*

## **Club News**

Below please find information reported to us by the clubs in our Unit. Please send your club's news to Jeff Kroll at [texas.blue.hen@gmail.com](mailto:texas.blue.hen@gmail.com). Information on all our clubs is available on the [Unit 174 website](#). Check there for the most up-to-date schedules, results and other news.

Most Houston area bridge clubs are currently closed, but several have an online presence (a "virtual club" or "vClub") on Bridge Base Online (BBO). You can support your club by playing on BBO ([www.bridgebase.com](http://www.bridgebase.com)). If you play at one of the Houston virtual clubs (see list below), a majority of the table fees go to that club and you get black (Club) points.

If your club does not have an online virtual club, ACBL is offering three special daily online pairs game where you can win black (Club) points -- at 9am, 4:10pm and 6:30pm (Central time). And the majority of your table fee will be returned to your local club. Look for the ACBL SYC games on BBO.

Houston vClub schedules are listed below.

Information about face-to-face (F2F) bridge is presented below the vClub schedules.

### **APPLE DBC**

#### **Regular schedule:**

- ♦ Open Pairs      Mon, Wed, Fri at 3:00pm
- ♦ Limited Pairs    299r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 2:45pm

#### **Extra games during Club Appreciation Week:**

- ♦ Open Pairs      Tue, Thu at 3:00pm
- ♦ Limited Pairs    299r: Tue, Thu at 2:45pm

BBO Search Term: **Apple**

## **BRIDGE CLUB OF HOUSTON**

### **Regular schedule:**

- ◆ Open Pairs      Mon–Fri at 10:20am  
                         Sat, Sun at 12 noon  
                         Tue, Thu, Sat at 7:00pm
  
- ◆ Limited Pairs    99r Thu at 10:00am **NEW!**  
                         199r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 10:00am; Sun at 11:50am **NEW!**  
                         299r: Tue at 10:00am

Mentor games are offered on the first and third Monday evenings during the month. Please contact **Roxie Walker** ([roxie\\_w@hotmail.com](mailto:roxie_w@hotmail.com)) if you would like to play in one of them.

BBO Search Term: **BCOH**

## **CLEAR LAKE / GALVESTON**

The Clear Lake and Galveston clubs have combined to form an online "virtual club".

### **Regular Schedule**

- ◆ Open Pairs      Mon–Fri at 10:00am  
                         Robot: Tue, Thu at 2:15pm  
                         Sat 1:15pm
  
- ◆ Limited Pairs    99r: Mon, Fri at 9:45am  
                         199r: Tue, Thu at 9:45am; Sat at 1:00pm  
                         49r: Wed at 9:45am

The mentor game takes place at 2:00pm on the third Wednesday of each month.

### **Extra games during Club Appreciation Week:**

- ◆ Open Pairs      Sun at 1:15pm
  
- ◆ Limited Pairs    99r: Tue, Thu at 2:00pm  
                         199r: Sun at 1:00pm

BBO Search Term: **CLBC-GBC**

## WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

### Regular Schedule

- ◆ Open Pairs  
Mon–Sat at 10:15am  
Tue, Thu at 3:15pm  
Sat at 2:15pm; Sun at 2:30pm  
Wed at 7:00pm
  
- ◆ Limited Pairs  
99r: Sat at 2:05pm  
299r: Tue, Thu, Sat at 10:05am  
499r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 10:05am; Sun at 2:20pm  
0-750: Tue, Thu at 3:05pm

### Free Mini-Lesson

**Bert Onstott** gives a FREE 30-minute mini-lesson every Tuesday morning from 9:30-10:00 via Zoom. It's open to anyone, but geared to newer players. We will be continuing a series on "Card Play Technique" this week.

Bert sends out an email invitation every Tuesday morning; if you would like to participate, please send an email to [bertonstott@comcast.net](mailto:bertonstott@comcast.net) asking to be added to the invite list.

It will be over in plenty of time for you to play in the Tuesday morning 299r game.

### Mentor/Mentee Games

WBA holds Mentor/Mentee games twice a month on the second Wednesday morning at 10:15 and the fourth Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm. Both games last about two hours.

Mentees are those with less than 300 masterpoints, Mentors have over 300. If you would like to be included, let **Katherine Onstott** know (email [kjonstott@comcast.net](mailto:kjonstott@comcast.net)) and she will pair you with a suitable partner.

The entry fee is \$12 for the pair, which the Mentee is encouraged to pay. For more information, visit <http://www.westsidebridgeacademy.com/Mentor-Mentee.php>.

BBO Search Term: **WBA**

### CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC

Cypress Northwest DBC will re-open for face-to-face (F2F) bridge on Thursday, November 5. Our games start promptly at noon, are stratified, and come with a game summary at the end of the game.

Please note the following:

- ◆ Do not come to play if you're sick



- ◆ You must wear a mask all the time
- ◆ There will be hand sanitizer at each table
- ◆ We have all new cards
- ◆ No snacks or eating at the table

If you have any questions please call **Jim Warren** at 832/851-4745.

### **KATY DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB**

The following was received from **Bob Lee**:

Since the outbreak of the corona virus pandemic we have suspended meetings and I have been unusually silent. I now feel I have enough information to begin planning resuming our games.

Many members have asked "When can we resume play?" My answer is that it depends on two requirements that must be met and readily available to all, not just the privileged few.

First we must have a vaccine against this virus that is at least as effective as the flu vaccine.

Second there must be a therapeutic treatment available. That is, medical staff must know how to treat someone who has the disease.

Neither of these requirements are met today. However based on the scientific work in progress, I am confident both will be achieved by second quarter next year. So I have set a tentative resume date of Wednesday April 7, 2021. This may change based the newer facts as we get closer to this date.

I know we are all dying to resume play, but I will not be responsible for anyone dying at my club from playing bridge.

Please stay safe, social distance and wear masks until we beat this scourge. As more information becomes available I will issue additional updates.

Many thanks

**Bob Lee**

KATY DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Contact: [relee321@comcast.net](mailto:relee321@comcast.net) phone 713 557 4077

FromTheEditorsAnchor



## **From the Editors**

We are excited to have the opportunity to send out the Unit 174 Newsletter. We have worked together for several years, identifying information that from the ACBL *Bridge Bulletin* that may be useful, especially to I/N players. The last few years of these monthly summaries are available [here, on the WBA website](#).



## Bridge Bulletin ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

The October, 2020, article of the month is Problem 8 in "The Bidding Box" on page 35 because many of the questions we get have to do with slam bidding.

Counting HCP is fine when you are beginning to learn bridge, just like training wheels are fine when you are first learning to ride a bike. Experienced bidders visualize the play and count the tricks. We like the Bridge Bulletin auction.

### Problem 8

West deals. None vulnerable.

North overcalls 2♥ (weak) if possible.

West	East
♠ K 10 5	♠ Q 6 2
♥ 8	♥ A J 10
♦ A Q 8 6 4 3 2	♦ K J
♣ A 2	♣ K Q 10 6 4

West	North	East	South
1♦	(2♥)	3NT	(Pass)
4♦	(Pass)	4♥	(Pass)
4NT	(Pass)	5♥	(Pass)
6♦			

West's 1D open is followed by North's weak 2H.

East's 3N suggests to West that the diamonds are going to run. North is unlikely to hold the DK or the SA, so West can count nine tricks in NT: seven diamonds, the CA and the SK.

West's 4D is clearly looking for a slam, as it is rarely right to pull partner's 3N bid so you can play in a minor suit at the four-level. This is the time to count tricks, not HCP.

East, holding fitting diamond honors, the HA and help in the black suits, cue bids the heart control, 4H.

Having established at least second-round control in all suits, West bids 4N, asking for key cards. East's 5H shows two key cards (the HA and DK) and denies the DQ. West then bids 6D.

### Other articles

Other articles that were considered:

- ♦ "Card Play 101" by Phillip Alder (p. 40) explains how to play various 4-4 fits as declarer..
- ♦ "Reasoning with Robert" by Robert Todd (p. 42) examines finding the "least bad" bid when there is no bid that fits the situation.
- ♦ "Challenge of the Month" (p. 52) demonstrates the "scissors coup" - cutting communications between the defenders.
- ♦ "Better Bridge with Bergen" by Marty Bergen (p. 53) highlights the importance of intermediates in hand evaluation. He concludes with an example hand where the intermediate cards are too good; they block the diamond suit. Then he leaves it up to the reader to figure out how to handle the situation.

## COUNTING YOUR TRICKS DURING THE AUCTION

The image shows a bridge hand interface. At the top left, a dummy card '3' is shown in a blue box with red borders. Below it, a 'D' card is visible. The hand is divided into four sections: North (Robot), West (Robot), East (Robot), and South (texashen). Each section lists the player's cards in a specific suit. A bidding log in the top right shows the auction: West passes, North bids 3♣, East passes, and South bids 3NT. A small box in the bottom left indicates '3NT South', 'NS: 0', and 'EW: 0'.

**N Robot**  
 ♠ 10  
 ♥ A8  
 ♦ J76  
 ♣ KJ98432

**WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH**  
 Pass 3♣ Pass 1♠  
 Pass Pass Pass 3NT

**W Robot**  
 ♠ Q874  
 ♥ K10765  
 ♦ A92  
 ♣ 6

**E Robot**  
 ♠ 96  
 ♥ J942  
 ♦ KQ1043  
 ♣ 105

**S texashen**  
 ♠ AKJ532  
 ♥ Q3  
 ♦ 85  
 ♣ AQ7

3NT South  
 NS: 0  
 EW: 0

	South	North	
	1S	3C	<i>This bid denies three spades and shows six clubs and 9-11 HCP.</i>
<i>If partner has two spades, spades might be right, but he must have some red-suit points. He is short in spades and we have six out of the ten club points.</i>	3N		

We all count tricks when the dummy comes down. Counting tricks during the auction helps us be in the right contract when the dummy comes down. We have a nine-card club fit with partner and we have two of the honors. It is likely that we will pick up all six club tricks. We have the top two spade honors, so eight tricks, total. We count on partner to have something useful in a red suit. This is not by any means a guaranteed contract, but our chances are excellent.

West makes a fourth-best lead of the H6.

Normally, we would play low to see if we could with the HQ. However, we are not brave enough to do that in this situation. If East holds the HK, we will lose not only the heart, but at least four (and probably five, as eight missing cards usually split 5-3) diamond tricks. We will be down before we can get in.

We can see ten tricks (now that we know what partner has) and we take them and run. Making four. The 4S contract didn't make and, even if it did, four notrump tricks are worth more. Playing a partial spade contract is too timid; playing five of a minor when 3N, plus a possible overtrick, is available is not good bridge.

Course we dodged a bullet when a diamond wasn't led. But leading an unbid major is common against a notrump contract. Plus, it's not our fault partner didn't have a diamond stop.



*Jeff Kroll & Sam Khayatt*  
[texas.blue.hen@gmail.com](mailto:texas.blue.hen@gmail.com)

