



American Contract
Bridge League

Unit 174 Newsletter August 2021



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



President's Message

Just when we thought we had turned the corner on COVID-19, along came the Delta variant. The breakthrough cases made us all re-think our own behavior, as our already-vaccinated friends were affected. Just as F2F bridge was making a comeback, most of us opted to stay home. The consequences were severe. We had to cancel our Summer Sectional tournament and WBA announced it will be closing. We all hope for this pandemic to end soon. The more people that are vaccinated, the better the chances that this disease will stop spreading.

Moving forward, plans are still underway for our October Sectional and our the Lone Star Regional in January. We have nine members on our board and there is lots of work to be done. We are hoping that many of you will step up to volunteer! There are lots of slots to be filled, and it is always fun to be involved in the tournaments.

Board elections are not that far away. Working on a tournament committee is a good way to learn how things are done, and demonstrate your sincere interest in becoming a Unit board member.

If any CPAs or accountants are interested in filling the position of Treasurer, let us hear from you. **Gary Hercules** has given so much of his time, and has done a terrific job but is now ready to step down. Unit Treasurer is a volunteer position, but there are a few perks that go along with it.

Starting next month, **Jeanne Phelps** and **Linda Warren** will be at the helm of this newsletter. Good luck to these ladies and thanks for taking this on! We have been so fortunate to have had **Jeff Kroll** and **Sam Khayatt** sending out this unit newsletter for the last 41 months. A big shout out and thank you for the amazing job they have done.

Karen Nussbaum, President, Unit 174

Board Business

FALL SECTIONAL

Chairwomen Kathy McDougall and Carol Lombardino are busy planning our October Sectional! Mark your calendar for October 15-17. The tournament will be held at the Arabia Shrine Center, 10510 Harwin Dr. There will be speakers Friday and Saturday at 2:00. COVID-19 protocols for the tournament have not yet been determined.

LONE STAR REGIONAL

Plans are underway for our Lone Star Regional which will run January 24-30, 2022, at the Westchase Marriott. We need volunteers to help with Partnership, I/N, Hospitality, Awards and general set-up. There will also be speakers, not yet identified, Monday thru Saturday at 2:00 pm. COVID-19 protocols for the tournament have not yet been determined.

FUTURE LIFE MASTERS

Our Future Life Masters (FLM) program is a roaring success. Check the website for the schedule, and the FLM games are growing. Special shout out to **Kathy McDougall** and **Greg May** for their hard work on this great program.

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: **Patricia A Burroughs, Rhonda Douglas, Barbara L Hitt, Kay S Holmes, Donald L Johnson, Zelda Jones, Larry D Koenig, Larry Landers, Shelly Leitch, Chris L Manley, Charles W Medlin, Carter Nash, Kathy Orr, Kay Reiney, Ann Romagosa, Patty Romigh, James D Rozzell, Gina H Saour, Susan E Wilson**

RANK ADVANCEMENTS

Listed below are the new Unit 174 Masterpoint Milestones reported by ACBL for July, 2021. An explanation of ranks may be found [on the ACBL website](#).

Junior Master (5 Masterpoints)

Joseph E Blankenship, Curtis L Daniel, Sandra L Galbraith, Linda J Jackman, Charlotte M Sanguinetti

Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

Thomas Dilger, William L Lafuze, Helen M Schwisow, Wayne C Tyson

Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

Wolfgang G Horn

Regional Master (100 Masterpoints)

Elizabeth A Eisenach, Gail A Hoffman

NABC Master (200 Masterpoints)

Debbie Goldgar, Eugene Goldgar, Laura L Hayes, Phyllis Louderback, Patti Monroe

Advanced NABC Master (300 Masterpoints)

Mary Ellen Vail

Life Master (102 in Unit 174)

Carol M McCord

Bronze Life Master (258 in Unit 174)

Ann L Pare, Ronald C Pare

Silver Life Master (188 in Unit 174)

Phil M Bellan, David B Richard

Ruby Life Master (165 in Unit 174)

Pat A Kubicek, Betty L Schell

Gold Life Master (104 in Unit 174)

Raymond Alexanian, Steven E Bell, Kris A Digre, Kitty L Wong

Sapphire Life Master (62 in Unit 174)

Janelle Frusha

Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!

174 Unit News

FUTURE LIFE MASTERS (FLM)

FLM continues to flourish within the Unit with the Apollo (0-20 MP) game "making" every time. Then we just started the Gemini (21-49 MP) game last Thursday with that game "making" too. We will soon have our 100 game run. We are so excited! Mission Control is going somewhere with success! Please join us!

Many strides have been taken to engage our Newcomers to the game of bridge. The Mixer Madness held on July 28th engaged more of our newer players. The next Mixer Madness will take place on August 25.

WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

With sadness we report that COVID has claimed another victim. The venerable Westside Bridge Academy will close its doors at the end of the month. Table counts grew from almost 7,000 in 2000, as the Bridge & Games Studio, to over 10,000 (and ninth-largest) in 2019. However, table counts dropped dramatically in 2020 and continued to do so in 2021, to the point where the club was not sustainable.

Katie Gardner, Clear Lake Bridge Club President notes, "the loss will be felt by all who regularly played in central Houston." WBA hosted some of Houston's most competitive games, offered the community access to bridge luminaries such as Robert Todd and Barbara Seagram, and encouraged new players through its robust teaching program. We thank Bert and Katherine Onstott and Jimmy and Jennifer Breihan for their great contributions to the Houston bridge community. We wish them well in their next endeavors.

EXTRA, EXTRA POINTS!

ACBL has tentatively scheduled a BBO Silver Linings Week for September 20-26. However, per the *Bridge Bulletin*, this event may be "contingent upon when face-to-face bridge resumes on a large scale."

Club News

Below please find information reported to us by the clubs in our Unit. Please send your club's news to Jeanne Phelps at jfphelps@gmail.com. Information on all our clubs is available on the [Unit 174 website](#). Or, click a club name below to jump the club website.

BRIDGE CLUB OF HOUSTON

The Bridge Club of Houston would like to announce **Mike Linkins** has been voted in as President for the remainder of 2021. He replaces **Bill Riley** who will be missed and was so appreciated for all his dedication to the club. **Bill Farrar** will replace Mike as Secretary. We also welcome **Hugh Miller** to the board.

On September 6th, BCOH will host HOT DIGGITY DOG. Come and enjoy a free lunch, catch up with friends and play some bridge. Feel free to bring a side or dessert. There will be an open game as well as 299r. Lunch at 11am and games to begin at noon. Proof of vaccine will be required if you have not yet been checked off.

North American Pairs (NAP) games on BBO, Aug 23-29

Come out and get double points! 50% red, 50% black.

- ◆ NAP Open (Flights A, B and C): all open pairs games
- ◆ NAP Flight C (0-500) only: Tue, Thu at 9:50AM

Online games

- ◆ **Open Pairs**
 - Mon-Fri at 10:20AM
 - Sat-Sun at 12:00PM
 - Tue, Thu, Sat at 7:00PM

- ◆ **Limited Pairs**
 - 199r** Mon, Wed, Fri at 9:50AM
 - Sun at 11:50AM
 - 299r** Tue, Thu at 9:55AM

- ◆ **Mentor Games**
 - Mentor games are offered on the first and third Monday evenings of each month. Please contact **Roxie Walker** (roxie_w@hotmail.com) or 713-203-5877 if you would like to play in one of them

Face-to-Face club games

◆ **Open Pairs**

Mon at 11:55AM; Tue, Wed, Fri at 10:30AM

◆ **Limited Pairs**

199r Mon at 11:55AM; Wed at 10:30AM

CLEAR LAKE BRIDGE CLUB

EFFECTIVE AUGUST 5, Clear Lake Bridge Club is temporarily suspending ALL face-to-face club games. This action has been taken as our members have been reporting active cases of Covid-19 and Texas especially Harris and Galveston counties are reporting record-breaking cases of the Delta variant. Thankfully, no one has been seriously ill. We will watch the COVID-19 experience rates in our area and among our members and will reopen again as soon as we feel comfortable with the risk of exposure while at the club.

CONSEQUENTLY, we are reactivating our extensive Virtual Club Schedule. Beginning August 5th, we will have Open games EVERY DAY. The schedule is very similar to our previous program:

Online games (CLBC-GBC)

◆ **Open Pairs**

Mon-Fri at 10:00AM
Sat-Sun at 3:00PM

◆ **Limited Pairs**

199r Tue, Thu at 9:50AM
Tue at 2:45PM (**beginning Aug 23**)
299r Mon, Wed, Fri at 9:55AM
Thu at 2:45PM (**beginning Aug 23**)
749r Mon - Fri at 3:00PM (**beginning Aug 23**)

Special games for Future Life Masters (FLM)

- ◆ 0-20 FLM Apollo Game: Supervised play Tuesday at 3:05 PM*
- ◆ 0-49 FLM Gemini Game: Thursday at 10:00 AM
- ◆ 0-99 FLM Mixer Madness Game. Once a month by invitation. Attend SOLO and play with a new partner. Play requires using [FLM Mixer Madness Convention Card](#)

*FLM Apollo is played in the U174 game...not a CLBC Virtual Club. If you have 0-99, do a SEARCH on BBO for FLM games!

CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC

Cypress NW meets at the Meg Weekly Community Center and games are played every Tuesday and Thursday starting at noon, with sign-up beginning at 11:30.

Proof of vaccination is required to play.

Special games

- ◆ Sep 14 Charity: International Fund - Extra masterpoints, \$5 per player
- ◆ Sep 16 Charity: International Fund - Extra masterpoints, \$5 per player

FORT BEND DBC

We are open! Come play live bridge!

Open game Tuesdays at 9:00AM:

- ◆ We use BridgeMate II bridge pads.
- ◆ Hand records provided after every game
- ◆ Several upgraded games during the year
- ◆ Nice balance of friendly A, B, and C players
- ◆ Most games only \$5.00 per player
- ◆ Coffee and individually wrapped snacks

COVID-19 Protocols:

- ◆ You must be fully vaccinated; bring your shot record if you have not had it verified before
- ◆ Masks are required
- ◆ Your temperature will be checked
- ◆ Hand sanitizer throughout the playing areas

For more information:

Eric Watson

ewat2004@aol.com | 832-287-9107

Jacks Conference Center

LONE STAR BRIDGE CLUB

Our club is a member run non-profit club and we donate our profits to the church where we are fortunate to be playing - St Paul United Methodist Church in Conroe. The game fee has remained at \$5 since the beginning.

Our players participate in their charitable projects throughout the year and support St Paul with donations of non-perishable food for the Montgomery County Food Bank. This month, LSBC players came to the rescue and in one week purchased all the school supplies requested by the teachers at Sam Houston Elementary School in Conroe.

On our schedule for the rest of August are all games with extra master points. Last chance to qualify for the North American Pairs this year!

- ◆ Aug 23 North American Pairs
- ◆ Aug 26 North American Pairs
- ◆ Aug 30 Club Championship

Lessons by Jeff Kroll will begin Monday September 6th from 11:00 to 11:30 before the bridge game begins at noon. The first topic is going to be Hand Evaluation:

- ◆ Which high cards are undervalued? Which are overvalued?
- ◆ When do you add value to your high cards? When do you subtract?
- ◆ When do you count for length? For shortness? How much?
- ◆ How does the bidding affect the value of your hand?

Please join us!

KATY DUPLICATE BRIDGE

Katy meets every Wednesday - sign-in starts at 11:30 and the game begins at noon. The club meets at the Steve Radack Community Center - 18650 Clay Road., Houston, Texas 77084.

Proof of vaccination is required to play.

Special game

- ♦ Sep 15 Charity: International Fund - Extra masterpoints, \$5

WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

(adapted from the announcement of 7/30/21)

The owners have determined that WBA will be forced to close in late August. The last day will likely be August 22nd.

We cannot pay for a physical space unless players are willing to play in person, and, given the recent COVID-19 situation, it's unlikely that is going to happen in the near future.

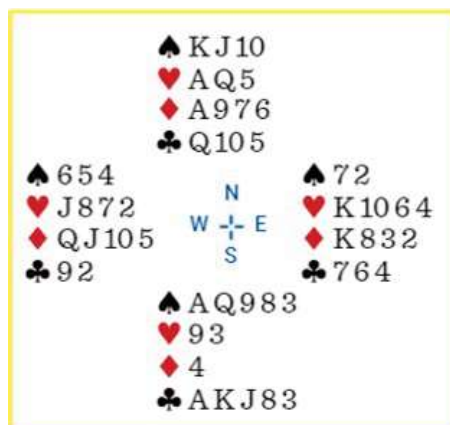
We do not plan to continue as a virtual club since Apple, BCOH, and CLBC seem to be more than meeting demand in that arena.

We thank all of you who have supported WBA since we bought the club in 2015 and are sad we cannot continue to serve you.

From the Editors

We are glad to have had 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 on the [Unit 174 website](#).

***Bridge Bulletin* ARTICLE OF THE MONTH**



	♠ KJ10	
	♥ AQ5	
	♦ A976	
	♣ Q105	
♠ 654		♠ 72
♥ J872		♥ K1064
♦ QJ105		♦ K832
♣ 92		♣ 764
	♠ AQ983	
	♥ 93	
	♦ 4	
	♣ AKJ83	

The August 2021 *Bridge Bulletin* article of the month is the "Challenge of the Month" on page 55. Opponent have been silent during the auction. We are declaring 7♠; West leads the ♦Q.

We count 12 sure tricks: five spades, two red aces, and five clubs. The most obvious play for trick 13 is the heart finesse, which has a 50% chance of success.

However, there is a 68% chance that we might not have to take the 50% chance. If trumps split 3-2 (the 68% chance), we can ruff three diamonds in our hand and use dummy's three trump to draw the opponents' trump. This line of play results in 13 tricks: three spades, two red aces, five clubs and three ruffs (also spade tricks). We are getting a sixth trick from the spade suit. Using the shorter trump holding to draw the opponents' trump is called a dummy reversal.

We begin by winning the ♦A and playing the ♠T. When both defenders follow (so, no 5-0 split), we ruff a diamond and play a spade to the jack. When both defenders follow again (now we know spades are 3-2), we do not need to take the heart finesse.

Testing spades first enables us to make use of opportunities in both spades and hearts. If the spades split 3-2, we are home free. If the spades do not split 3-2, we can fall back on the heart finesse. If we take the heart finesse first and it fails, it does not matter whether or not the spades split 3-2. We take all our chances.

Other articles considered

- ♦ "It's Your Call" by Sue Munday and Karen Walker (p. 41).
 - ♣ Deal 3: Is it mandatory for opener to make a support double if one is available? Experts disagree.
 - ♣ Deal 4: Is 3H forcing in this auction: 2S-3C-3H? Experts disagree.

 - ♦ "Card Play 101" by Phillip Alder (p.44). Rule of Seven for declarer play; planning ahead on defense.

 - ♦ "Parrish the Thought" by Adam Parrish (p.45). If a two-suited defender leads his short suit, it is likely he has two trumps. If two-suited defender does NOT lead a short suit, he likely does not have one and likely has, at most, a singleton trump.

 - ♦ "Lessons Learned" by Michael Berkowitz (p.48). Getting rid of a loser on a loser to create an entry, break communications between the defenders, and avoid an over-ruff.

 - ♦ "Mike's Bridge Lesson" by Mike Lawrence (p.52). An example of a trump coup. The first problem of Eddie Kantar's "Test Your Play" article (p. 59) also involves a trump coup.

 - ♦ "Chalk Talk" by Eddie Kantar (p.53). Plan ahead to take all the chances on Deal 2.

 - ♦ "Better Bridge with Bergen" by Marty Bergen (p.57). In this installment of the "Improve your bidding judgment" series, Bergen touts the benefits of entering the auction early and suggests criteria for a gambling 3N bid.

 - ♦ "Bidding Matters" by Karen Walker (p.58). The focus of this article is when responder should invite the 1N opener to game. When there are entries to both hands, the chances of making 3N are as follows:
 - 26 More than 70%
 - 25 Almost 60%
 - 24 About 40%

 - ♦ "Dear Billy" by Billy Miller (p.57). The second letter describes how to respond with one-bid hands.
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SLAMS: MATCHPOINTS VS. IMPS

D 9		N Robot ♠ AKQ98 ♥ 75 ♦ KJ85 ♣ 84	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>WEST</th> <th>NORTH</th> <th>EAST</th> <th>SOUTH</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>6NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass	5♦	Pass	6NT	Pass	Pass	Pass	
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Pass	5♦	Pass	6NT																				
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W Robot ♠ 1073 ♥ 9842 ♦ 9 ♣ KJ763	S texashen ♠ 6 ♥ AKQ10 ♦ AQ742 ♣ A109	E Robot ♠ J542 ♥ J63 ♦ 1063 ♣ Q52																					

6NT South
NS: 0
EW: 0

	North	South	
	1♠	2♦	<i>Game-forcing, playing 2/1</i>
<i>We are in game forcing auction, so this can't be passed</i>	3♦	3♥	<i>Natural</i>
<i>15-17 points. 13 HCP + 1 for the fifth spade in a great suit, and 1 for the fourth diamond</i>	5♦	6N	<i>It's matchpoints</i>

At matchpoints, the extra points for the notrump slam are worth the small risk that it will fail. At IMPs the extra points are not worth the risk; at IMPs, we would bid 6♦.

The play is straightforward; we take 13 tricks: three spades, four hearts (given the favorable layout), five diamonds and one club.

We would have 12 tricks without the favorable heart layout. If we are going to give up the sure (or fairly sure) small slam to go for the grand, we need there to be a 67% or better chance of success.

In this case, bidding the notrump slam instead of the diamond slam got us a 92.9% board instead of a 39.3% board.

HAIL AND FAREWELL



Jeanne Phelps

Linda Warren

As **Karen Nussbaum** mentioned in the President's Message, this is our 41st and final newsletter. We thank you all for your comments over the years and place this task in the very capable hands of **Jeanne Phelps** and **Linda Warren**.



Jeff Kroll & Sam Khayatt
texas.blue.hen@gmail.com