



Unit 174 Newsletter May 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

We have all had quite a year. Hopefully, the worst is behind us. We have a new Board of Directors that is working very hard to keep our unit strong and well-run. Several of us had a year of virtual training, and now are getting our feet wet with new responsibilities and a different perspective.

Virtual online bridge has been a life-saver for many of us. We were able to play our favorite game any time we chose-day or night, with robots or our favorite partners, and at our favorite clubs, in the safety of our own homes. Now, with so many of us vaccinated, and social distancing protocols in place, we are all looking forward to playing face-to-face (F2F) bridge again. Several clubs in Unit 174 are already having F2F games and most are planning to open soon.

In August, our Unit 174 will be hosting our first tournament since November of 2019. Mark the dates August 12 through 15, at the Arabian Shrine Center. We hope you are making plans to attend and we look forward to seeing everyone there.

Karen Nussbaum, President, Unit 174

Board Business

Tournament chairs **Karen Nussbaum** and **Carol Lombardino** are hard at work preparing for the Awesome August Sectional, August 12-15. New location: this tournament will take place at the Arabia Shrine Center, 10510 Harwin Dr., Houston, TX 77036.

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 Alvarez, Sheila Arin, Sharngi Biswas, Major W Bradshaw, Kathleen R Burro, Lavona R Carter, Neelanjana Chakrabarty, Nirjhar Chakrabarty, Roy V Hood, Bruce D Jeffries, Marci Keller, Soren K Meyer, Phil G Motuzko, Bob J Nelms, Phyllis Nelson, Robert Nelson, Raymond Orriss, Paul G Santino, Urmi Sarkar, Helen Simonette**

RANK ADVANCEMENTS

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

Junior Master (5 Masterpoints)

Bob Canobbio, Bruce D Jeffries, Thomas Kemeny

Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

Clark King, Walter K Richeson, Barry Sanders, Beth Stuart

Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

Sandra J Judson, Smita R Shah, Pasalai N Srikant, Walt T Thome

Regional Master (100 Masterpoints)

Alan Schaefer

NABC Master (200 Masterpoints)

Mary Vaughn

Advanced NABC Master (300 Masterpoints)

Sarah P Springer

Life Master (104 in Unit 174)

Nancy R Reingold

Bronze Life Master (258 in Unit 174)

Linda K Drake

Silver Life Master (193 in Unit 174)

Rhonda Y Bryant

Ruby Life Master (163 in Unit 174)

Pamela E White

Gold Life Master (102 in Unit 174)

James D Frick, Siraj Jiwani

Diamond Life Master (45 in Unit 174)

Bill Riley

Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!

174 Unit News

EXTRA, EXTRA POINTS! READ ALL ABOUT IT

May 24-30: Silver Linings Week

Play in your usual vClub games to scoop up DOUBLE SILVER points all week long.

June 19-20: Longest Day

Play in your usual vClub games to win DOUBLE points and benefit the Alzheimer's Association.

June 24-27: Endless Summer Tournament

ACBL's online regionally-rated event will award both red and gold points.

DISTRICT 16 HAPPENINGS

I/N Games

The 99r Night club game is offered 7 days a week at 6pm. Contact **Nancy Strohmer** (nastrohmer@yahoo.com) for more information. The D16 0-20 game is offered every Monday at 4pm. Contact **Kim Brinkman** (kbrink1956@gmail.com) for more information)

D16 Lecture Series

Saturday, June 5, 12:30pm: **Thomas Rush** (U174) will present "Dynamic Defense." This lecture is part of the Beginner series.

Saturday, June 12, 12:30pm: **Helen Lauderdale** (U197) will speak on "The Later is Now--Talking About Tough Slam Hands." This lecture is designed for intermediate players.

FLM CONTINUES TO FLY18

The U174 program aimed at building and encouraging our Future Life Masters (FLM) has been soaring.

Mixer Madness: A New Adventure Begins

This concept has been created to help our Unit 99ers find new partners. All players are to come to this BBO game solo—no partner! We will match you up with a partner for this single game...if you are a good bridge-fit we hope you will arrange to play again. And the next month we will repeat the process, giving 99ers a chance to play with someone new each month.

All players must play the same convention card. We call it "FLM Basic". [Click this link](#) to see this simple convention card.

Watch for an eVite to be sent to players with 21-99 Masterpoints to join this BBO Game "FLM Mixer Madness". The eVite will arrive in your inbox around June 4th...the game will be on June 17th.

Reservations ARE REQUIRED for this game.

Attend the pre-game Zoom party to 'meet' your game partner and win a door prize....\$25 gift card for Pappas restaurants.

Apollo (0-20) Games

Every Tuesday at 3:00 we offer an Apollo game (0-20 masterpoints.). We are delighted to say that this game has made each week for two months!

NORTH AMERICAN PAIRS (NAP)

North American Pairs (NAP) club-level qualifier games begin next

month and run through August. Club-level qualifiers are invited to play in District qualifier games in January.

THE LONGEST DAY FUNDRAISERS



Clubs around the unit are planning activities June 19-24 to benefit the Alzheimer's Association. All vClub online games will award DOUBLE points on June 19-20. Each club can select one day between June 20 and June 27 to hold an upgraded face-to-face game. Game fees from Longest Day activities are donated to the Alzheimer's Association.

Past events have included "play with an expert" auctions and raffles for other goods and services. Please support your clubs in these very worthy efforts.

AUG 12-15: **AWESOME AUGUST SECTIONAL**

The Awesome August Sectional will take place Aug 12-15 in a new location: the Arabia Shrine Center, 10510 Harwin Dr., Houston, TX. Tournament chairs **Karen Nussbaum** and **Carol Lombardino** are working diligently to ensure that the event lives up to its name. Make plans to join us!

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. Information on all our clubs is available on the [Unit 174 website](#). Or, click a club name below to jump the club website.

APPLE

The Apple Clubs will resume operation at Tracy Gee Community Center beginning Friday June 4!!!

Online games

- ◆ **Open Pairs** Mon, Wed, Fri at 3:00pm
- ◆ **Limited Pairs** 299rs during special weeks only

Join us on BBO for Silver Linings Week, May 24 thru 28. We'll have daily games! Same times - 2:45 pm for 299 and 3:00 pm open!

Special Games (all at 11:45 am)

- ◆ Jun 07 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Jun 14 Club Championship
- ◆ Jun 21 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Jun 28 ACBL Educational Foundation

Guidelines for F2F play

The following conditions will be in effect to minimize the risk to players, staff and the community that uses the center:

- ◆ All players must furnish proof of vaccination. You may do that by bringing your vaccination card to the game or by sending a

photo of it to Paul. paulcuneo@sbcglobal.net or text 281-851-0422

- ◆ All players must wear a mask while inside the facility. This is a current Harris County requirement.
- ◆ Only drinks in bottles or covered containers are permitted. No food allowed at the tables during play. You're welcome to bring food and eat before the game starts.
- ◆ We'll evaluate these positions on a monthly basis and provide updates on changes at the games and on our website.

BRIDGE CLUB OF HOUSTON

BCOH welcomes **Janice Hardcastle** to the board of directors. She will be completing **Naomi Rodgers Higgins'** term and is a great addition to the club. F2F play is coming back to BCOH. Warm-up games will take place on May 18th and 21st. We will look forward to a Grand Re-opening in June. Visit the BCOH website for more information. Stay safe and see you at the tables!

Online games

- ◆ **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
199r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 10:00am; Sun at
11:50am
299r: Tue at 10:00am
- ◆ **Mentor Games** Mentor games are offered on the first and third
Monday evenings of the month. Please contact
Roxie Walker (roxie_w@hotmail.com)
if you would like to play in one of them.

CLEAR LAKE BRIDGE CLUB

Clear Lake Bridge club is re-opening on Memorial Day, May 31, with a combination of face-to-face and virtual games. Beginning May 31, all game fees (both F2F and virtual) will be \$5.00.

Check the website (www.clearlakebridgeclub.org) for UPDATED GAME SCHEDULE, as it is likely to evolve.

Online games (through 5/30)

- ◆ **Open Pairs** Mon-Fri at 10:00am
Sat 1:15pm
- ◆ **Limited Pairs** 199r: Tue, Thu at 9:45am; Sat at 1:00pm
- ◆ **Teams** Open Swiss: Sun at 2:30pm

Online games (beginning 5/31)

◆ **Open Pairs** Thu at 10:15am, Tue at 2:15pm

◆ **Limited Pairs** 99r: Mon at 9:30am
199r: Tue, Thu at 9:30am
299r: Mon at 9:45am

Face-to-face (F2F) club games (beginning 5/31)

◆ **Open Pairs** Mon, Wed, Fri at 10:00am

Sat at 1:00pm

◆ **Limited Pairs** 199r: Mon, Wed at 2:00pm
499r: Tue, Thu at 10:00am

◆ **Teams** Open Swiss: Sun at 1:00pm

Guidelines for F2F play

We would appreciate pre-registration for those who intend to return to the club for table play. Pre-registration can be done in either of two ways:

(1) Email a copy of your CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card to **Jim Ochsner** at jpochsner@aol.com

(2) Come to the club on pre-registration days: May 26 and 27 from 2:00-4:00. Bring your CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card to be added to our eligibility list.

Other information:

- ◆ Covid vaccine completed
- ◆ No food at tables
- ◆ Masks OPTIONAL

CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC

Cypress meets every Tuesday and Thursday - sign-in starts at 11:30 and the game begins at noon.

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

LONE STAR BRIDGE CLUB

We had our first game Monday, May 10, and everything went well. Our regular schedule will be the same -- Monday at noon, Thursday at 10:30am. No 299er game during the summer months.

Special games

- ◆ MAY All games in May are Grass Roots Fund charity games
- ◆ Jun 3 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Jun 7 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Jun 10 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Jun 15 North American Pairs (NAP)

- ◆ Jun 17 Unit Championship
- ◆ Jun 21 Unit Championship

Guidelines for F2F Play

- ◆ Proof of vaccination required
- ◆ Masks are strongly encouraged
- ◆ Hand sanitizer at all tables
- ◆ East-West pairs travel with their bidding boxes.
- ◆ We provide coffee and water and some individually wrapped snacks
- ◆ You may bring your own lunch to eat at the table.

The Longest Day - June 24

As part of our Alzheimer's support, LSBC will be auctioning a game, and hand analyses with these players:

- ◆ **John Erickson**
- ◆ **Jeff Kroll**
- ◆ **Thomas Rush**

Details will soon be available at the club's website:

<https://lonestarbridgeclub.org/>

WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

WBA has implemented the schedule and guidelines for face-to-face play based on the results of a member survey. [Click here to view the survey results.](#)

Online games (through 5/30)

- ◆ **Open Pairs** Mon-Fri at 10:00am
Sun at 2:30pm
Wed at 7:00pm
- ◆ **Limited Pairs** 99r: Sat at 9:45am
199r: Tue at 9:45am
299r: Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri at 9:45am; Sun at 2:20pm
749r: Mon-Fri at 3:15pm; Sat at 1:00pm
- ◆ **Open Swiss** Sun at 6:00pm
- ◆ **Mentor Game** 2nd, 4th Mondays at 7:00pm

Online games (beginning 5/31)

- ◆ **Open Pairs** Tue, Thu at 3:00pm
Sat, Sun at 10:00am
Wed at 7:00pm
- ◆ **Limited Pairs** 49r: Sun at 9:45am
99r: Sat at 9:45am
749r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 3pm
- ◆ **Mentor Game** 2nd, 4th Mondays at 7:00pm

Face-to-face (F2F) club games (beginning 5/31)

- ◆ **Open Pairs** Mon - Fri at 10:30am
Sat, Sun at 1:00pm
- ◆ **Limited Pairs** 0-5: Mon at 10:30 with Joyce Ryan
199r: Fri at 10:30am
299r: Thu at 10:30a
- ◆ **Teams** Open Swiss: Sun at 6:00pm
"8 is Enough": 3rd Friday at 7:00pm
- ◆ **Supervised Play** Tue at 2:30pm with **Tom Jahnke** and **Terry Currie**
Thu at 10:30am with **Kay Johnson**

Guidelines for F2F play

Please visit the WBA website for further information on the guidelines below.

- ◆ Vaccinations will be required to play
- ◆ Masks are optional
- ◆ No food at the tables
- ◆ Hand sanitizer will be provided



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](#).

This month we welcome back occasional columnist **Jeanne Phelps** with another installment of "The First Twenty Masterpoints" series.

THE FIRST TWENTY MASTERPOINTS

You Should Always Thank The Director

The first time I played a sanctioned bridge game was in a regional tournament. My partner and I were total newbies. We played duplicate for a couple of months at the Bear Creek Fun Bridge game out in the Katy area. They were all long-time friends, played since they were 20, and had at least a zillion masterpoints. They probably thought we were using up space but were glad for more players and that we had paid the fee. They also regularly set and doubled us.

Not daunted by our experiences, I assured my partner all would be better since we would now be playing against players with a similar experience level. Since you need a convention card at the tournament but not in Fun Bridge, we got there early and filled our first attempt in the hotel lobby using a copy printed from the ACBL website. I wish we had kept a copy so we could enjoy how little we knew then. Luckily when we walked into the main hall, we saw a banner welcoming I/N players; someone kindly explained meant new players. The good news was our first game was free, and they explained clearly what the next steps were. They also gave us each a folder with lots of bridge tips (some I even understood) and a handful of candy. Very nice.

Everything was going along fine, and then our opponents called the director. I panicked, turned red, wanted to flee - I felt so embarrassed and only remember the opponent kept saying, "I have

been harmed!". It was horrifying at the time. We had three glasses of wine that evening. The good news is I lived through it. My partner and I are still friends, and we still enjoy playing duplicate bridge together. Unfortunately, I was so embarrassed I didn't say thank you to the director for making a call and getting the game back on track. I know better now.

While I am easy to embarrass, I am also a person that likes to know how things work and can be persistent, if slow, when I am interested in something. Since then, I have taken the directors class (2xs and now monthly online). I passed it (it was an open book test) but have yet to direct a game successfully. I have dived into the rules of table etiquette, tried to understand why playing or bidding out of turn, or accidentally facing a card affects the other players, how scoring and masterpoints impact the game, and can see the negative ramifications of intimidation tactics at the table and for the game as a whole. I am still trying to put together how all the hardware and ACBL interact.

My conclusions are:

- ◆ Melody Euler does a great job simplifying a very complex topic - Duplicate Directing
- ◆ Being a director is demanding and takes focus, smarts, and dedication
- ◆ Duplicate bridge is interesting at many levels, and it has been worth it to understand it more fully.
- ◆ Also, people need to be kinder, stop airing thoughts on how the game should be played, and don't personalize playing bridge. After all, it is a group game, and you can not play unless other people want to play with you.
- ◆ Next to your partner, the director is your best friend in a bridge game.

Directors are why duplicate bridge exists. First and foremost, they set up the game! Directors go beyond all of us to understand duplicate bridge. They need to have a comprehensive understanding of duplicate bridge bidding, play, defense, rulings, table set up and movement, scoring, computers, and people. They do not get paid much and, in many cases, do it for free. They help all players calmly and equitably sort out play and bidding mistakes during a game. They ensure everyone is treated politely and welcomed, seating preferences met, problems resolved, and the game runs on time and smoothly. Directors frequently do not play in the game but spend those three hours keeping everything running smoothly, the coffee hot and the snack bowls full. Directors juggle all the bits while we sit there, wiling away our time having fun, sipping coffee, and eating snacks. Directors are amazing. They are the foundation and cement of our game.

With face-to-face bridge starting up again, we do not have the computer making sure we play in turn, play the right suit, and do not make errors scoring. All our human mistakes will be able to flow freely again. So say "please" when you call for the director. Remember, they are your friend; they are not there to judge you but instead assure equitable solutions to the problems.

Before your next game starts, sit quietly and watch a director set up and manage a game. It is a pleasure to watch - like a fine cook or conductor of a symphony. Better yet, take the Directors class and spend some time in their shoes. Directors are our friends. Please be sure to say thank you to the director for making the game possible. They are the true champions of the game.

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

The May 2021 *Bridge Bulletin* article of the month is not an article at all. Rather we have selected two hand that illustrate mistakes that are made frequently.

♠ A8			
♥ 1063			
♦ A743			
♣ KQ32			
♠ K94			
♥ KJ9874			
♦ K52			
♣ 4			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

The first hand is from "My Bridge and Yours" by Frank Stewart (p. 66). With the North hand do not open 1♦ and then rebid 2♣. That sequence suggests a two-suited hand and could land North in some number of diamonds on a 4-2 fit.

<i>North</i>	<i>South</i>
♠ AJ107	♠ K9
♥ AQ	♥ J1042
♦ AJ10865	♦ K9
♣ 5	♣ AKQJ3

The second hand was submitted by a reader to the "Dear Billy" column, written by Billy Miller (p.69). The reader and partner did not get to slam despite holding the requisite 33 HCP. The auction got derailed with responder's first bid. North opened 1♦ and South responded 1♥. Miller points out that with a good hand, most experts will bid the longest suit first.

Articles considered:

- ♦ "How's Your Imagination?" by Frank Stewart writing as Curmudgeon (p. 16). Stewart examines the concept of the auction as a dialogue and, through many examples, demonstrates how players might get to a good contract. Of particular interest:
 - ♦ Hands 6 and 12: bidding a game without a lot of points when it's likely you have a great fit with partner.
 - ♦ Hand 13: bidding a slam with no HCP, but holding the one control (void) that partner needs.
- ♦ "It's Your Call" by Sue Munday and Karen Walker (p.44). Hand 7: how to differentiate between a 4 card and 3 card limit raise when the opponents have bid 2 suits.
- ♦ "Card Play 101" by Phillip Alder (p. 48). Hand 1: Counting declarer's hand to identify a void.
- ♦ "Parrish the Thought: Adam's Bridge Maxims" by Adam Parrish (p. 49). Using a negative inference about the opening lead (what didn't LHO lead?) to figure out how to play a suit. In this case, opening leader did not lead a diamond and 4S declarer can infer that he does not have singleton diamond.

- ◆ "Chalk Talk" by Eddie Kantar (p. 57). A nice strip-and-end play example.
- ◆ "Defensive Manuevers" by Paul Ross (p.58). Think before you play. You need to get partner in to give you a club ruff. The only way is to give him a diamond ruff. If you reflexively cash the AK of diamonds, it's over for the defense.
- ◆ "Challenge of the Month" (p.59). At IMPS you need to do everything possible, that includes taking a safety play – giving up a possible trick to ensure your contract.
- ◆ "Boehm on Bridge: Deception, Part 2" by August Boehm (p. 60). Using signals as declarer to confuse the defense.
- ◆ "Test Your Play" by Eddie Kantar (p. 63). Hand 2: Keeping the "danger hand" off lead.
- ◆ "Consult with the Doctor" by Dr. James Marsh Sternberg (p.67). An examination of how position affect a weak two-bids. The example in the middle column suggests opening a "weak" two-bid in third seat, even with an opening-strength hand.

DROPPING THE OFFSIDE SINGLETON KING

The diagram shows a bridge hand with the following details:

- Board:** 8
- West (Robot):** ♠K, ♥A8653, ♦93, ♣KQ987
- North (Robot):** ♠10963, ♥KJ4, ♦AK86, ♣43
- East (Robot):** ♠J875, ♥87, ♦Q104, ♣J652
- South (texashen):** ♠AQ42, ♥Q102, ♦J752, ♣A10
- Bidding:** West 1♥, North Pass, East Pass, South 1NT
- Contract:** 1NT South
- Score:** NS: 0, EW: 0

The auction

- ◆ West bids 1♥.
- ◆ North passes. If the hearts and clubs were reversed, North could make a take out double.
- ◆ East passes, showing less than six points.
- ◆ South bids 1N, a balancing notrump, showing 11-15 HCP and a heart stop.

We are declaring 1N. West makes a passive lead of the ♦9. If we were sitting West, we would have led the ♣9, the top of an interior sequence. Unfortunately, the poor lead doesn't help us.

We don't have a good source of tricks. Missing five diamonds to the Q T, the proper approach is to play the AK and hope the Q drops. We do so, but the ♦Q does not drop and East makes the obvious club switch. We duck East's ♣6. West wins and, being uncooperative, persists with another club. We win our ace.

We still don't have seven tricks, so we play the ♥Q (we would like to keep entries in dummy). West rises with the ♥A, and plays two more

club tricks. The second club is won by East, who foolishly failed to unblock the jack.

After winning the ♣J, East returns the ♠8.

We would normally either finesse the ♠Q, or even let the ♠8 ride to the ♠T. Not this time. East, who denied six points when he passed partner's opening bid, has already shown up with the ♦Q and the ♣J. So, East cannot hold the ♠K; West must have it. Putting in the ♠Q is a losing play.

We know from the bidding that West has five hearts, and from the play that he has five clubs. So, the ♠K is either singleton or doubleton. The opening lead was a high(ish) diamond, suggesting a doubleton. Going up with the ♠A is an easy play, and the ♠K comes down.

Now we take: two spades, two hearts, three diamonds and one club for a total of 8 tricks, including a valuable overtrick, and a 100% board.



Jeff Kroll & Sam Khayatt
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