



Unit 174 March 2023 Newsletter



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Spring Branch Duplicate Bridge Club

Star Duplicate Bridge Club

Contributors

Jack LaVigne - Card Reading

Thomas Rush - Useful Obscure Bids

Please visit the Unit 174 [Website](#) to view additional information about the activities in our Unit and at our Clubs.



**Kathy
McDougall**

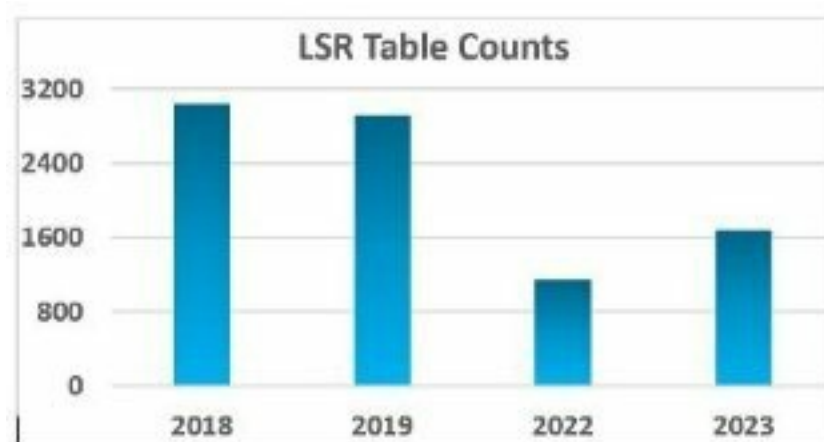
President's Message

Spring is in the air. March brings the vernal equinox, the full worm moon, March Madness and St. Patrick's Day. It's also the month our clock's jump forward for daylight savings time and we lose an hour of sleep. That's okay since everyone at the bridge table will be tired with us. More importantly, the April Election Sectional is quickly approaching. Before I touch on this I'd like to acknowledge a few noteworthy items from our recent Lone Star Regional (LSR) and touch upon our current state of affairs.

Congratulations to Jack LaVigne who is this year's district 16 Star award recipient. Many thanks to Jack for his hard work and outstanding contributions to the District as well as the Unit. This year's Goodwill award recipients are Linda Drake and Mary Ellen Vail. Congratulations and many thanks to these ladies for their continuous hard work and dedication!

Many thanks to this year's LSR Tournament Chair Karen Nussbaum for her hard work, and thanks to all the volunteers who helped make this event a success. Thank you, Ken Hudson (Partnership), Marty Hrachovy (I/N), Jane Armstrong (Hospitality), John Herzer (Event Naming), and the entire FLM team! An additional thanks goes out to all the volunteers who continuously commit their time to help make our tournaments a success.

Attendance is improving; however, the unit continues to suffer a financial loss since tournaments have resumed post-pandemic. Measures are being explored to reduce costs as well as boost tournament attendance. The chart below shows the attendance trend for the Lone Star Regional tournaments over the past several years, with 2020 and 2021 omitted due to the pandemic.



Although we are nowhere near pre-Covid attendance, we did see a 47% increase this year over last year. Even with the most optimistic speculation however, attendance is unlikely to meet the levels prior to the pandemic. This issue presents a significant challenge for the Unit Board whose primary focus, as stated in the by-laws, is to plan and run tournaments.

This focus worked well before the pandemic, but things have since changed considerably. Not only has membership dropped off and face-to-face play declined, but inflation has had a significant effect on running tournaments, with increased hotel rates/fees, food prices, printing costs, etc.

Our annual regional tournament typically brings in enough profit to fund the four sectional tournaments held throughout the year. It will be difficult to sustain this model unless we get more people to the tournaments and costs are reduced. To effectively attract more tournament attendance, the Board must shift its focus and allocate significant effort to attract new and potentially returning-players. We need the resources and time to plan and organize good tournaments. We need volunteers. We need your help. We need a continuous committed Board of Directors.

Future Life Masters (FLM), one of our board-supported programs, is having great success with new players. The program is focused on 0-99 MPs players and has contributed to tournament attendance by increasing table counts at LSR by three-fold over the prior year. This team of volunteers continues to develop more initiatives to support our local 'Beginner' bridge community; slow down the attrition of new players by engaging them, provide resources via a dedicated [FLM website](#) and assist in the development of entry-level games.

The April Election Sectional will be held at the Arabia Shrine Center April 14 - 16. The GNT finals will be held on Saturday and Sunday. The Unit will host its 175th Annual Membership Meeting on Saturday, April 15. This meeting was moved from Sunday to encourage greater attendance and ensure a quorum is achieved. The annual award presentation will occur and the election results will also be presented on Saturday, with candidates

selected to fill three board positions. Voting will take place one hour before each session of the tournament on Friday and on Saturday morning. Early online voting will be available from March 6 to April 11 at 3 pm. Information about the candidates and further voting information can be found on the [Unit webpage](#). We hope there will be a good turnout and look forward to seeing ya'll there!

Kathy McDougall
katmac432@hotmail.com



New Members and Rank Advancement



New Members

ACBL notifies us each month about the members new to our Unit and those who transferred into our Unit. Please welcome the following players to our Unit:

New Members: Bob Driskell, Najet S Guinn, Barbara Medlin, Dk K Medlin, Winnie Mohsenzadeh, Tina Obut, Dilip N Patel, Leah S Tigner

Transfers: Catherine W Brown, Mrs Alice C Larson, Renee Marver, Mr Curtis M Polk, Mr Thomas B Willing

Welcome!



Rank Advancements

Listed below are the Unit 174 Masterpoint Milestones reported by ACBL as of February 7, 2023. An explanation of ranks may be found on the [ACBL website](#).

Junior Master

Lee Emnett, Ann Fleming, Tom Fowler, Carol Ince, Fred Infortunio, Mary Johnson, Winnie Mohsenzadeh, Jeffrey Sheets, Patricia Ann Sheets, Martha Stern, Therese Tilley

Club Master

Hua Chen, Ahmet Kalkan, Marilyn Knatz, David Preng, Mariah Stopper

Sectional Master

Kyo Chen, Robert Domsalla, Maria Turner, Richard Wasser

Regional Master

Mary Ann Boerner, Pat Chichakli, Rathindra Dutt, Beverly Gebhart, Charles Otto, Christine Spalding

NABC Master

Pushpa Bharani, Sherry Deal, Penny Dougherty, Gretchen Lindquist, Brian Schaffer

Advanced NABC Master

Marcia Chambliss, Mike Davis, Bill Farrar, Judy Farrar, Ian Fetterley,

Elizabeth Giroir, Rony Klein, Wolfie Kotzen, Mark Levy, Susan Morrow, Madhu Moza, June Poplack, Ronald Randleman, Joan Schnider, Susan Smith, Barbara Sweeney

Life Master

Joseph Baker, Martin Hrachovy, Kay Marechek, Sadashiv Pethe, Scherry Sprague, Roslyn Wallace, Debbie Zimmer

Bronze Life Master

Hasin Jinna, Rosalind Kokolis, Kay Marechek, Richard McGaughy, Scherry Sprague, Roslyn Wallace

Silver Life Master

Richard Jackson, Danuta Parzych

Ruby Life Master

Kathy Baldwin, Anne Knott, David Richard, Gary Shepley

Gold Life Master

Alfred Fortier III, Joanna Heebner, Carlos Pace

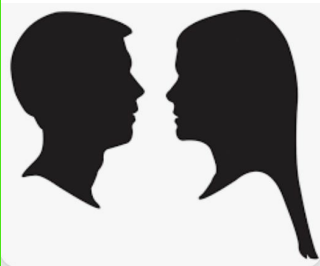
Sapphire Life Master

Hallie Eads

Platinum Life Master

Buddy Hanby

!!! Congratulations !!!



Member Profiles



**BY Penny
Grassedonio**

Norm and Joyce Gautie

As manager of the Lake Conroe Duplicate Bridge Club, I have the honor of sitting at the bridge table every Friday with some amazing bridge players and wonderful people. In selecting our first highlighted member profile, I had so many choices from which to select, I really didn't know where to begin! Everyone has a story and I am proud to have Norm and Joyce Gautier as our first club story.



Joyce and Norm Gautier played their first duplicate bridge over six decades ago in the days before zero tolerance, frequently in smoke-filled rooms. Joyce started playing in college and “taught” Norm shortly after their marriage in 1961.

After earning a whole three masterpoints, they took a couple of decades off of sanctioned games but thoroughly enjoyed their Shell bridge group that started in Wood River, Illinois. The group migrated, one by one, to Houston with Shell’s corporate relocation in the early 70s.

They pride themselves in how well they get along at the bridge tables (and otherwise). Early on, when Norm was “sharing his newfound bridge knowledge” with Joyce at the bridge table, he was quickly “taught” by Joyce that was NOT acceptable and not a component of a great partnership and - he was a quick learner.

Over the last 40 years, they played at local Houston clubs, traveled the country playing tournaments and more recently also play in online games. In addition to playing lots they taught bridge, Norm directed at multiple clubs, and they ran two clubs, one in April Sound and one in The Woodlands. Norm previously served as President of the Unit 174 Board and facilitated annual Unit Board planning meetings for over 10 years. They achieved their Gold Life Master status during the COVID pandemic.

Most recently, they play in the April Sound game held Friday’s at 10:30 am which Norm is directing. They are also frequently seen at Lone Star Bridge Club on Mondays and at Bridge Club of Houston on many occasions. Their interest in online bridge continues but they say they the Club games are much more enjoyable and hope the clubs will thrive over time.

Norm retired from Shell Oil in 1993, where he served as Controller and Treasurer the last 10+ years of his 31 year career.

Joyce continues with her art passion, specializing in abstract paintings (check out her art at joycegautier.com).

Both enjoyed a number of volunteer opportunities. In recent years , they served as mediators at Dispute Resolution Center of Montgomery County.

The Gautiers reside in The Woodlands with their cat “Dixie”. They are the proud parents of two children, have five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren with one on the way.



Unit News

Coming Tournaments

Date	City	State	Unit	Category	Type
Feb. 27 – March 5	<u>San Miguel de Allende</u>	GJ	173	Regional	Open
Mar 9-11, 2023	Beaumont	TX	201	Sectional	Open
Mar 22-25, 2023	Dallas	TX	206	Sectional	Open
Mar 24-25, 2023	Dallas	TX	0	GNT/NAP	GNT District Final
Mar 29-Apr 1, 2023	San Antonio	TX	172	Sectional	Open
Apr 4-8, 2023	Longview	TX	225	Regional	Open
Apr 12-14, 2023	Denton	Denton	183	Sectional	I/N
Apr 14-16, 2023	Houston	TX	174	Sectional	Open
Apr 15-16, 2023	Houston	TX	174	GNT/NAP	GNT District Final
Apr 22-23, 2023	Austin	TX	207	Sectional	I/N
Apr 27-30, 2023	Spring [Houston]	TX	174	Sectional	I/N

You can find tournament information by clicking [ACBL Tourneys](#).

Election Sectional

Houston Unit 174 Proudly Presents April 14 thru 16

\$1 Coffee & Soda



Note: ACBL has increased awards by 20%



2023 Election Sectional

Vote one hour prior to each session on Fri/Sat and Sunday morning

ARABIA SHRINE CENTER

10510 Harwin Dr,
Houston, TX 77036



Stratification

Stratified Open Pairs

A:3000+ X:750-3000 Y:0-750

Stratified 299'r Pairs

B:200-300 C:100-200 D:0-100

Bracketed Swiss

Brackets of 7-9 teams



Director in Charge - Kevin Perkins

Table Fees per Session

Fri & Sat: \$13 (\$4 more for lapsed members)

Sunday: \$15 (Sunday lunch included)

Table Fees are cashless (credit card only)

TownePlace Suites by Marriott

10610 Westpark Dr, Houston TX 77042
(713) 266-2210 - Room Rate: \$69 king or \$109 2 bdr studio

Springhill Suites by Marriott

5851 Rogerdale Rd, Houston, TX 77072
(832) 300-0200 - Room Rate: TBD

Covid Safety

See Unit 174 website (acblunit174.org)
for latest guidelines

Playing Schedule

Friday & Saturday, Apr 14 & 15th

Stratified Open Pairs **10 & 2:30**

Stratified 299'r Pairs (single sessions) **10 & 2:30**

Side Game (single sessions) **10 & 2:30**

0 - 50 FLM Pairs (Fri & Sat only) **10 & 2:30**

Bracketed Swiss **10 & 2:30**

Sunday, Apr 16th

Stratified Open Pairs (single sessions) **10 & TBD**

Stratified 299'r Pairs (single sessions) **10 & TBD**

Bracketed Swiss **10 & TBD**

GNT Finals: Saturday & Sunday Apr 15 & 16th

GNT Flights A & C **10 & TBD**

**Unit 174 annual meeting between Sunday Sessions
Election Results & Awards (10 min) 2:20**

Tournament Chairs

Clif Rice

clif709@aol.com
(832) 541-7607

Charles Dalton

cdinc35@att.net
(713) 861-3399

Hospitality Chair

Brenda & James Morgan

brmetze1@att.net
(832) 689-9595

Partnership Chair

Harry Selldin

hselldin@me.com
(713) 899-3163

I/N & FLM Chairs

Cindy Cox

bridgecindy5@gmail.com
(832) 985-8734

Please Be Scent-sitive

No Cologne No Perfume No Offensive Odors



Friday:

Guest Speakers - TBD Friday and Saturday






Saturday:



Click [here](#) for larger print.

Houston Unit 174 to Hold Board Election April 14-16, 2023

All members in good standing in Unit 174 will have the opportunity to vote for three members to its Board of Directors April 14-16, 2023, during the Election Sectional at the Arabia Shrine Center. The three newly elected members will be announced prior to the second session on Sunday, April 16 and join Charles Dalton, John Du Bose, Byron Fackenthal, Cliff Rice, Thomas Rush, and Sarah Springer to complete the full nine-member Board. This year's Nominating Committee consisting of Carol Irvin (chair), Dolores Aquino, Nancy Guthrie, Lauri Laufman, and Mary McDonald urges you to vote, either in person, early online, or absentee ballot.

Nile Gross	Antoun Henri	Siraj Jiwani	Dick McGaughy	Karen Nussbaum	John Eric Watson
					
<p>My wife and I moved here from New Orleans along with Katrina in 2005.</p> <p>I have a Master's degree in Applied Mathematics from the University of New Orleans and I am retired from Bell South and Allief ISD.</p> <p>I am very well organized and willing to pitch in and assist with whatever needs to be done.</p> <p>Besides playing bridge, I love playing tennis and collecting stamps. I would be grateful for your vote!</p>	<p>I was born in Khartoum, Sudan, but am of Egyptian descent. I studied Engineering and graduated from Ain Shams University in 1979.</p> <p>After graduation, I played rubber bridge with friends and then moved on to duplicate while in England. I came to Houston in 2005 and worked for Schlumberger, becoming an American citizen in 2015.</p> <p>Now retired, I play bridge almost everyday - learning each day from partners, opponents and teachers. I love bridge and want to share my enthusiasm with others.</p> <p>I'm honored to run for the Unit Board and would appreciate your vote!</p>	<p>My parents were born in Bombay and migrated to Pakistan in 1947 where I was born. With a degree in Commerce, I transferred to Houston in 1984 as an audit manager of a CPA firm. Later I was CFO of a medical corporation, before founding a company of my own. Soon to retire, I plan to do a lot of volunteer work, play tons of bridge, and learn to play the piano!</p> <p>I was hooked on bridge after the Pakistani team, led by Zia Mahmood finished 2nd place in the infamous 1981 Bermuda Bowl.</p> <p>Willing to help wherever needed, and having a few ideas for improving the bridge experience, I would appreciate your vote to join our Unit Board!</p>	<p>A native Texan, I received my BS from Texas A&M in Architectural Construction. Certified as a P.E. in 20 states and Surveyor in Texas, I had my own firm for 25 years doing engineering design of low & midrise buildings. I was also a Lt Colonel in the Army Reserves.</p> <p>I learned to play bridge in 1954 playing after school in Kansas City. My first duplicate experience was in college using travelers. After a 50 year break with family & career taking priority, I returned, soon playing 5 times a week and at tournaments.</p> <p>I believe we need to find ways to interest the younger generation that bridge is more competitive and personal than computer games without the violence.</p>	<p>The pandemic has changed everyone's life in so many ways, including bridge. The F2F numbers are much lower than before the pandemic, which has caused many clubs throughout the country to close. New clubs are slow in opening because of the economic commitment involved.</p> <p>ACBL is trying to adjust this issue by rewarding less master points for online games, and increasing master points earned at tournaments by 20%. It is a big step, but more has to happen.</p> <p>Having served on the Unit Board as VP, President and again VP, I understand the problems, and would like to continue to work toward improving and increasing the F2F game.</p>	<p>John Eric Watson joined the ACBL in 1990 and in 2010, began training as a director at Houston Bridge studio. A Silver Life Master, Eric has operated the Fort Bend County Duplicate Bridge Club since 2016, with the Sugar Land location alive and well post-pandemic.</p> <p>He has an MBA from the University of Houston in Marketing and Finance, served 3 years as an artillery officer in the US Army, and worked both as a banker and paralegal.</p> <p>With years of experience as a player, director, teacher, and club owner/manager, John Eric is well-qualified to be of service to Unit 174.</p>

Voting Information

For a ballot to be counted, a member must vote for at least one candidate, which can include a write-in candidate.

In-person voting will take place one hour before each session of the tournament on Friday, Saturday and on Sunday morning.

Early online voting will be available from March 9 until April 11 at 3pm. Go to www.acblunit174.org, click on the VOTE button on the right hand side of the page, and follow the instructions.

To vote by mail, contact the Election Judge, Paul Nimmons by March 18 via U.S. mail, e-mail, or telephone to request an Official Ballot. His contact information is 1108 Krist Dr. Houston, TX 77055; email is paulnimmons@sbcglobal.net (713) 822-1305. The ballot must be returned per provided instructions & postmarked no later than March 31 and received by the Election Judges no later than April 11 to be counted.

99er Nite Club



THE 99ER NITE CLUB

GREAT PLAY, LESSONS & LOADS OF FUN!

And...It's Only for You, New Players!

District 16 now has a BBO game just for the 0 to 99 player—
the "99er Nite Club"!

When: 6pm, 7 days a week
Where: Your Online Club*

Perks:

- ✓ More Masterpoints (cross club scoring)
- ✓ Mini-Lessons by Lynn Berg at 5:30 pm

*Check to make sure your club is participating. If your club has questions they should contact Nancy Strohmmer at: nastrohmmer@yahoo.com



199er Nite Club

199ER NITE CLUB

*Ready to Graduate from
the 0 to 99 Game?*

**D16's 199ER NITE CLUB GAME
ON BBO IS YOUR NEXT STEP!**

7 DAYS A WEEK AT 6:05 PM CST

- ✓ Recent graduates of the 0 to 99 group can play in a game with players of the same ability.
- ✓ Work during the day? Graduates continue to grow skills at a time that's "worker friendly".
- ✓ Safe environment where no sharks are allowed, because the game is limited to 199 mpts.
- ✓ Clubs benefit too and continue to receive payments for their participating players.

Clubs must be signed up to participate, just like for the 99er NITE CLUB game.

*Contact Nancy Strohmmer for details:
nastrohmmer@yahoo.com*

New Game in Town



Future Life Masters



Future Life Masters of Unit 174
www.flm174.org

SPECIAL EVENTS

**Sunday FLM 199er Games in March...
TWO of 'em!**

- ◆ **March 5th at BCOH**
4688 Louetta Rd., Spring, TX
Expert Post-Game review...great for you and partner!
- ◆ **March 19th at BAWH**
Arabia Shriners 10510 Harwin, Houston

Singletons welcome! Partners provided!
START TIME ~ 1:00

\$5.00 18-Board Game Covid Vax required

GAMES

Face-to-Face

199er Games

- Clear Lake Bridge Club WEDNESDAYS at 2:00 PM

299er Games

- Clear Lake Bridge Club MONDAYS at 2:00 PM
- Bridge Academy of West Houston THURSDAYS at 10:30

Online at BBO

- 0-20er FLM 2nd Saturdays at 9:00 AM **Mar 11**
- 0-49er FLM Tuesdays at 5:05 PM
- 0-49er D16 Mondays at 4:00 PM
- 0-300 CHOOSE HOUSTON Weekdays at 10 AM




Unit's 2023 Charity

District 16's charity games will be held on March 27, 29, 30 and 31 and will be offered by many of the clubs. This means that you can play in club games and win additional masterpoints while supporting games that contribute to the Houston Food Bank as well as augmenting the District subsidies paid to the winners of the NAP and GNT (Grassroots). The March 27 and 30 games will be "Grassroots" games. The March 29 and 31 games will be held to help support the Houston Food Bank.

Club Table Counts

Unit 174 has many ACBL-sanctioned clubs so that means many games both Face-to-Face and Online. For all of the clubs in the unit, a total of 2666 tables were played among 23 clubs during January and February 2023. The top three club table counts are:

1. Clear Lake Bridge Club - 756 tables
2. Bridge Club of Houston - 544.50 tables
3. Bridge Academy of West Houston - 333.50 tables



Club News

Below please find the information reported by some of the clubs in our Unit. Please send your club news to: unit174news@gmail.com.

The information must be received by the 22nd of the month to be included in the monthly Unit 174 Newsletter. Additional information about all of the clubs can be found on the [Unit 174 website](#). Or, click a club name to jump to their website.

Apple Clubs

Our games begin at 11:30 am sharp at the Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Dr. 77042. Please plan to arrive by 11:15. All games at \$3/person.

New Game:

A 299 game at 11:30 on the fourth Monday of each month starts March 27th. Please arrive at least 15 minutes before game time.

For information, please contact:

Monday - Apple - Susan Johnson
sisbjohnson@gmail.com - 281-536-1451

Friday - Apple II - Brigitte Sandifer
sandiferdb@gmail.com - 281-494-1464

Results and additional information [here](#).

Current requirements: All players must furnish proof of vaccination. You may bring your vaccination card to the game or send a photo of it to Susan or Brigitte. Only drinks in bottles or covered containers are permitted. No food is allowed at the tables during play. You are welcome to bring food and eat before the game starts.



Bridge Academy of West Houston



Mentor/Mentee - New date

The monthly Mentor/Mentee game will now be held on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 10:30. The next game is Tuesday, Mar 7th.

If you would like to participate, you can sign-up online

by clicking [here](#).

Mentees must have fewer than 300 masterpoints. Anyone with over 300 masterpoints, a love for the game and willingness to play is asked to sign up as a Mentor.



8 is enough Swiss Team

The Bridge Academy of West Houston is proud to announce a new Swiss Team game.

The game will be held once a month on a Sunday at 1:00 pm. The first game is on March 19th. Subsequent monthly games will be announced.

The stratifications are:

- Level 1 - 0 to 1000 masterpoints (1)
- Level 2 - 1000 to 3000 masterpoints (2)
- Level 3 - 3000+ masterpoints (3)

So for example a Level 3, two Level 2 and one Level 1 player would add up to 8 as would four Level 2 players. Another example would be to have three Level 2 and one Level 1 player. That adds up to 7 and it is OK to be less than 8.

Mini-lesson

Before each Wednesday game there is a mini-lesson beginning around 10:00 taught by Joe Quinn.

Game Schedule

Tuesday - Mentor/Mentee
Wednesdays - Invitational
Thursdays - Open & 299'er
10:30 a.m.
Sunday - Future Life Masters
1:00 p.m.
Arabia Shriners
10510 Harwin Dr.

- \$5 per person
- Coffee & Snacks provided
- Jennifer Breihan, Susan Kaplan and Catherine Brown directors

Game Calendar

Wed – Mar 1	Club Championship	Thu – Mar 16	Unit Club Championship
Thu – Mar 2	Club Championship	Sun – Mar 19	FLM & Swiss Team
Tue – Mar 7	Mentor / Mentee	Wed – Mar 22	Charity
Wed – Mar 8	Charity	Thu – Mar 23	Charity
Thu – Mar 9	Charity	Wed – Mar 29	Charity
Wed – Mar 15	Unit Club Championship	Thu – Mar 30	ACBL Grass Roots

Need a Partner?

Contact Linda or Tom Martinsen at 713-398-4907 martinsens@comcast.net
or
Joyce Ryan at (713) 301-0624 joyceRyanBridge@gmail.com

BRIDGE  HOUSTON

Bridge Club of Houston

Please consult our monthly calendar online: [BCOH Calendar](#).

BCOH: Online Choose Houston

Mentor/Mentee Games: 1st and 3rd Mondays at 7:00pm (**Protege should invite and pay for game of mentor.**) Contact Mike Linkins if you have any questions: mlinkins@swbell.net.

BCOH Open Games (Face-2-Face): *Pre-registration **is not** required for our weekly scheduled games.

Monday: 11:55am
 Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 10:30am

SAVE THE DATES:

Swiss Teams - March 21 at 10:30 a.m. (**Register at the club**)

Mentor/Mentee F2F - March 14 and 28 at 10:30 am. Please contact Judy Cupps: judy_n_al@yahoo.com by phone 713-320-5592 for March 14 sign up and Bob Zeigler at 713-829-6928 for March 28. Also contact them with any questions.

TUESDAY TIDBITS

Build a solid foundation with Julie Halperin Diamond Life Master and ACBL Teacher and enjoy a free lesson from 9:30 to 10:10. Game to follow begins at 10:30. We will set up partnerships for those who need it. Text Julie at 713-857-8004 with questions or concerns. **Lessons are open to all**

March 3 - RANK ADVANCEMENT Acknowledgement - Open game at 10:30 cake will be provided to celebrate.

March 17 - PIZZA FRIDAY Open game at 10:30 free pizza will be served for lunch.

Saturday F2F

March 4t - Open Game @ 12:00pm

******March 25******

Extra Extra read all about it!!! 299R and Open game. This will be a potluck day. Bring a favorite dish or dessert to share! Lunch will be at 11:00am with both games to follow at noon.

2/1 Game Force

Transition from Standard American to the present Standard, 2/1 Game Force. Wednesdays at 2:30-4:30 on March 8,15,22,29, and April 12 at Bridge Club of Houston. Julie Halperin, Diamond Life Master \$90 plus the cost of the Audrey Grant text. Register by texting Julie at 713-857-8004

CHOOSE HOUSTON BASIC SCHEDULE - BBO ONLINE GAMES

Online Games for all levels every day! These dates will change if the ACBL has approved special games online so please check the Bridge Club of Houston and Clear Lake Bridge Club for updates.

Playing online? **CHOOSE HOUSTON!**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9:00 AM	<i>Monthly, usually second Sat; hand review after the game →</i>					FLM 0-20	<i>flm174.org</i>
10:00 AM	300er						
10:10 AM	Open						
11:50 AM							
12:00 PM							
3:00 PM							
3:05 PM		FLM 0-50					
	<i>↓ First and third Mondays only. Visit www.bridgewebs.com/bcoh for details</i>						
7:00 PM	Mentor	Open		Open			

Check the club and FLM websites for the most up-to-date information.



Clear Lake Bridge Club

March of 2023 is not as active as February but we still have plenty happening. In addition to our regular game schedule (found on the [website](#)), we are adding another Double Session Open/749er game for Thursday mornings starting on March 2.

We are becoming familiar with our new BridgeMate® scoring devices. We are also implementing our recently-readopted policy of entering Opening Leads.

Our Breakfast, Lesson and Bridge is scheduled for Wednesday, March 8.

The Mentor/Mentee game is scheduled for Wednesday, March 15 (Beware of the Ides of March!) at 2:00 pm. Reservations are required. For more information and to submit a contact form, visit the [CLBC Mentor/Mentee site](#).

The Eight is Enough Swiss Team Game will be on the Sunday, March 12. The "B" players' upper limit has been lowered to 2000 MPs. Reservations are required.

Please come join us!

Dues are \$20/year. If you plan to play regularly at CLBC, the dues are a good deal because the table fee is lowered from \$6 to \$5.

Ronnie Martin
President

P.S.

For more information, please visit our [website](#).



CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC & KATY DBC

Cypress NW DBC meets at the Richard and Meg Weekley Community Center, 8440 Greenhouse Rd, Cypress, Tx, and games are played every Tuesday and Thursday starting at 11:30, with sign-up beginning at 11:00.

Proof of vaccination is required, and masks are optional. Coffee, tea, and snacks are provided. Games are \$3.

Katy DBC meets every Wednesday. Sign-in starts at 11:00, and the game begins at 11:30. The club meets at the Steve Radack Community Center - 18650 Clay Road, Houston, Texas 77084.

Proof of vaccination is required, and masks are optional. Coffee, tea, and snacks are provided. Regular games are \$3.

For more information, contact Jim Warren at **832/851-4745** or jwarren760@gmail.com or visit our [website](#).

Fort Bend Duplicate Bridge Club



PLAY LIVE IN PERSON BRIDGE

OPEN GAME TUESDAY MORNINGS

WE START AT OR BEFORE 9:30

PLEASE ARRIVE BY 9:15 or CALL IF YOU WILL BE LATE

- COFFEE AND LITE SNACKS
- WE USE BRIDGE MATE II BRIDGE PADS
- AT LEAST 3 UPGRADED GAMES A MONTH
- HAND RECORDS AFTER EVERY GAME
- NICE BALANCE OF FRIENDLY A, B, & C PLAYERS
- REGULAR & MOST UPGRADED GAMES ARE \$6.00

ERIC WATSON

ewat2004@aol.com

832 287 9107

JACKS CONFERENCE CENTER

3232 AUSTIN PARKWAY

SUGAR LAND, TX 77479



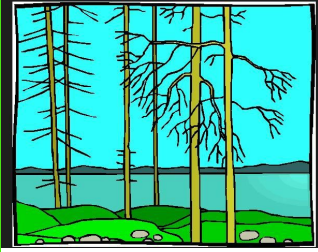
KINGWOOD DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Kingwood Duplicate Bridge Club has added a second game on Thursday starting September 8!

Both games (Wednesday and Thursday) start at 10:00 am at the Kingwood Community Center, 4102 Rustic Woods Drive, Kingwood, TX 77345. Entries are still \$2 and \$3 for upgraded games.

On Thursday morning, Bill Riley will be giving a short 20-30 minute presentation on various topics, conventions, etc., starting at 9:20 AM. A schedule of topics will be published shortly. Coffee is available.

For information, contact any of the following:
Jim Simmons at (281)913-0441 or jrsimmons2102@gmail.com.
Bill Riley at (832)289-3833 or ichibanbill@yahoo.com.
Kingwood Community Center Phone: (281)348-2570
Or Visit our [website](#).



LAKE CONROE DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

March 2023

Our Bridge Club is a very welcoming and friendly Club. We have players from all levels, so all duplicate players will feel comfortable. We would like to invite you and your bridge friends to join us every Friday. We begin playing at 10:30 am. The game fee is \$5.00. We always offer snacks, sweet and savory, and coffee and iced tea. Please bring your lunch as we have microwaves for heating and refrigerators for keeping your food cold.

Our games are played in the Fellowship Room at April Sound Church, located at 67 1/2 April Wind Dr. S, Montgomery. There is easy access from Hwy 105 into the church parking lot.

No Partner?? No worries! Call Gerry Earnest, 936-447-6958, and she will do her best to find you a partner.

Following is what's happening in March:

- March 3rd - Club Championship Game
- March 10th - Junior Fund Game - Pizza Lunch
- March 17th - Unit Club Championship Game
- March 24th - Unit Charity (Houston Food Bank) Game - March Birthday Cake
- March 31st - Club Appreciation Game

PLEASE BE AWARE OF THE ROAD CONSTRUCTION ON HWY 105. YOU MIGHT EXPERIENCE SOME DELAYS.

We invite you to join us on Friday's at LCDBC and look forward to seeing all of you at the table.

Penny Grassedonio
Club Manager
832-361-4577
czthdaypig@gmail.com
[website](#)



LONE STAR BRIDGE CLUB

Lone Star Bridge Club (LSBC) in Conroe, Texas, plays at St Paul United Methodist Church, 1100 Semands Drive, Conroe; the church is located within easy access from Interstate 45. Directions to our game may be found on our [website](#).

Games are on Mondays at Noon and Thursdays at 10:30 am. All games are stratified.

Proof of Covid vaccination is required, and masks are optional.

We provide Coffee, bottled water, and only individually wrapped snacks.

Our games are always \$5.00.

Mentor/Mentee Bridge game. To enroll please contact Linda at 936-443-3600 or by email at : lindasutton0212@gmail.com.

Please join us for FREE Pizza on the first Thursday of every month!

If you would like to play and need a partner, please contact our partnership

chairperson, Sandra Maalouf, at 936-597-8756 or smaalouf@icloud.com.

For more information, contact Linda Sutton at lindasutton212@gmail.com.

Please visit our website by clicking [here](#).



PEBBLE CREEK DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Face-to-face games are held on Wednesdays at 9:30 am. For further info, contact Richard Duble at 979-324-8421 or richard.duble@yahoo.com or visit our [website](#).



SPRING BRANCH DUPLICATE CLUB

Games are now on Tuesdays and Thursdays starting at 10:30.

Location: Trini Mendenhall Sosa Community Center, 1414 Wirt Road, Houston, Texas. Located in the northeast corner of the intersection of Wirt Road and Westview in the Spring Branch area.

Regular games are \$1/person. Charity games, STaC, and other special games. Totally non-profit in accordance with County rules.

Manager & Director
Judith Hoffing
713-467-5805
hoffing2007@comcast.net
[website](#)



STAR DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Games are on Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 am and are **now \$5** per person.

Masks are no longer required or encouraged, and you must have a partner.

For more info, contact Richard Duble at 979-324-8421 or richard.duble@yahoo.com or visit our [website](#).



Contributors



Card Reading

BY Jack LaVigne

Double dummy means that the hand is declared and defended perfectly *and* that all cards are known by both the declaring and defending side.

Card reading is an attempt to play double dummy as though you can see the whole hand, either as declarer or defender.

It happens as you learn the distribution and high card location of cards from the bidding, leads and signals, and then inferring the location and distribution of the unseen cards.

Example:

Dir: E

North
 ♠ Qx
 ♥ Kx
 ♦ Axx
 ♣ Kxxxx

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	1NT	1♦
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
			All Pass

You have completed your Bracketed Swiss team match early and decide to kibitz a hand from the top bracket. The bidding is as shown above. North's 1NT is a balancing action showing approximately 11-14 HCPs. South invites with the 2NT bid and North with 12 HCPs points and a five-card suit with lots of 10's and 9's, accepts the invitation.

The opening lead is the ♥2 and dummy comes down with

North
 ♠ Qxx
 ♥ Kx
 ♦ Axx
 ♣ Kxxxx

South
 ♠ KJx
 ♥ Jxx
 ♦ Jxx
 ♣ AJxx

West wins with the ♥A and returns the ♥3.

A count of the tricks shows one heart, one diamond and two spades. If declarer assumes that the club suit comes in for five tricks, that is nine tricks.

From the opening lead and return, it looks like hearts are breaking 4-4 so declarer can afford to knock out the ♠A after winning the next five clubs and will only lose four tricks.

The play goes ♣K from North, all following suit and a low club is led toward dummy's ♣AJx.

South
 ♠ KJx
 ♥ J
 ♦ Jxx
 ♣ AJx

You mentally say, "Eight ever. Nine never," so you expect declarer to play the ♣A. You are surprised the ♣J is played and wins the trick when West shows out!

Why did declarer make this play?

The actual hand was:

North
 ♠ Qxx
 ♥ Kx

	♦ Axx	
	♣ Kxxxx	
West		East
♠ xxxxx		♠ Ax
♥ Axxx		♥ Qxxx
♦ xxx		♦ KQxx
♣ x		♣ Qxx
	South	
	♠ KJx	
	♥ Jxx	
	♦ Jxx	
	♣ AJxx	

Declarer did some card reading. From the opening lead and return, declarer places ♥Axxx in the West hand. If West held the ♣Qx, the hand's HCP would have been six and would have warranted 1♥ or possibly 1♠ response to partner's opening 1♦ bid.

Since West passed, declarer sees the §Q in the East hand and West with a stiff club.

If declarer had played the ♣A the contract would end up down two: the opponents would get one club, three hearts and then drive out the ♦A before declarer established spades.

Declarer makes three notrump by hooking the ♦J.

Summary

Card reading is an attempt to play double dummy as though you can see the whole hand. It takes experience, practice and the ability to fully concentrate on the hand before you. The benefits are well worth the effort. You will take more tricks and score better as you master this skill.

Jack LaVigne is a regular contributor to the Unit 174 Newsletter. He is Platinum Life Master, past president of Unit 174, District 16 Recorder and volunteer at the Bridge Academy of West Houston. Jack can be contacted at jacklavigne@att.net



BY **THOMAS RUSH**

Useful Obscure Bids

Over the next months, we'll look at some rare auctions that are worth discussing in regular partnerships. While I present what I believe to be "standard" meanings, each partnership will need to discuss the sequences to ensure they are on the same page; other interpretations are possible. In all honesty, most of these auctions come up very rarely, but when the opportunity presents itself, you have an easy path to the right contract that might be difficult for others to find.

Part 1: Opponents open 1 of a suit, we bid 3 of that suit.

The two relevant cases of this sequence are:

1. Opponents open in a minor, and we bid three of the minor: (1♣) - 3♣ or (1♦) - 3♦, and,
2. Opponents open in a major, and we bid three of the major: (1♥) - 3♥, or (1♠) - 3♠

Case 1 is a more common of the unusual sequences we'll cover. We know that people often open 1♣ on a three-card suit (and some open with a "short club" that could be a doubleton, or even sometimes a singleton). Even 1♦ is often only four cards can be as short as three. In these cases, it's not unusual that overcaller could have length in the minor, and might even been planning to open with a three-level preempt in opener's suit. What to do?

The "standard" meaning of overcaller's jump to 3 of opener's minor suit is: "I was going to open 3♣ (or 3♦) but was beaten to it; I see no reason not to make that call anyway." Your hand might be something like ♠K7 ♥863 ♦9

♣AJT8652. Obviously, we need to be aware of the vulnerability. We don't expect partner to do anything other than pass or raise, and with the right hand, we'd welcome a continuation of the preempt by raising us to the four- or even 5-level - suppose partner has as little as ♠A764 ♥3 ♦AT965 ♣943; 5♣ looks like a really good bet!

In any case, this bid has great preemptive value, and may take the opponents into uncharted territory - is a double by responder takeout or penalty? Discuss with your partner; if you agree about the natural meaning of a jump to three of opener's minor, I hope you'll get good use out of the bid!

Case 2 is much different - when your right hand opponent opens in one of a major, the bid almost always shows at least five cards. It's much less likely that we have seven cards in opener's suit, and even if we do, the odds that it is right to play in 3♠ when RHO has opened 1♠ are slim! So, how should we define these sequences:

(1♥) - 3♥?
(1♠) - 3♠?

Fortunately, those who have gone before us have found a useful (if rare!) meaning for these sequences. They are defined to show a hand with a long solid minor (AKQxxxx) and 8+ total tricks, but no stopper in the opener's major. The bid is saying, "Partner, I have the tricks for you if you have a stopper in opener's suit. If you do have a stopper, please bid 3NT."

Your hand might be ♠Kx ♥x ♦Ajx ♣AKQTxxx for a call of 3♥ over opener's 1♥ bid. Partner having as little as ♠Jxxx ♥QJT ♦xxxx ♣xx has an excellent chance of making 3NT.

What if advancer (your partner) doesn't have a stopper in opener's major? Simplest is he should relay to clubs at whatever level as "pass or correct" - if overcaller's solid suit is diamonds, overcaller corrects to diamonds at the same level. With no stopper, advancer's actions are like what they would be after a gambling 3NT opening.

Note that when the opponents end up in 3NT after one of these 1Major - 3Major auctions, from the defense's perspective leading dummy's solid suit might be the most effective defense, with the goal of not giving up the 9th trick!

Thomas Rush is a frequent contributor to the Unit 174 Monthly Newsletter as well as one of the Unit 174 Board Members. Thomas welcomes questions and comments and would love to hear if you have used one of these obscure bids. Please, send them to:
PlayBridgeWithThomas@gmail.com



From the Editor



Thank you to all of the people who contribute to the Newsletter. It takes a team of fellow bridge players to bring this information to you. Unit 174 runs on volunteers' energy.

If you are interested in volunteering for Unit 174 events and activities, please contact Kathy McDougall, Unit 174 Board President - katmac432@hotmail.com.

If you would like to have your club information or an article of interest published, or if you have a bridge accomplishment for which you are proud and would like to share in the Unit 174 Newsletter, please send your name, phone, email, and subject title to unit174news@gmail.com.

Evvie Gilbert
Editor
unit174news@gmail.com



