



# NEWSLETTER

February 2017



## Events and News

### *President's Message*

#### **The 2017 Lone Star Regional Update**

Our LSR is now over, and some great things happened. We had the pleasure of meeting ACBL Board President **Bob Heller** and his wife **Barbara** of Knoxville TN (District 7) and showing him our special brand of Texas hospitality!

Prior to and during the LSR, much work was done by your Unit 174 Board and the volunteers who provided great support such as Partnership Desk, Hospitality, IN Coordination, Photography, etc. Be sure to thank them.

The turnout was less than the 2016 LSR. Total table count (2,922) was 135 less than 2016, and we believe that it was at least partly because we had to move the LSR to a week that did not compete with the Super Bowl, which put us in competition with five other regionals: Destin, Wilmington, Bermuda, Hawaii, and Tarrytown. Lower attendance on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, three days with the Bracketed Swiss scheduled at 2:30 and 7:30, caused late nights for those players. We were also disappointed with the lighting along the west wall of the Grand Pavilion. The Board brought in temporary lights, which helped, but not as much as we would have liked. The Board has discussed this with the hotel and we have been assured that new lighting will be installed in March. The Board will check to make sure it happens.

**Unit 174 MiniBridge:** A great attendance of 70 participated in the MiniBridge party on Saturday Night at the LSR. Several parents and grandparents told us that the very next morning, youngsters asked to play MiniBridge again.

MiniBridge continues to be successful in introducing new players to the wonderful world of bridge. Go to the Unit 174 website and click on "MiniBridge" to see some neat videos about it. Come and join the fun by playing MiniBridge, a fast, fun filled, family friendly game at one of the many opportunities to participate. The link, "Unit Playbill," lists the opportunities to play MiniBridge.

### **A Chance to Give Back to Our Unit 174**

Throughout each year, UNIT 174 looks for and needs volunteers to help with the various tournaments. Why not volunteer a day of your time to man the partnership desk or the hospitality desk? The only skill required is a friendly personality.

### **Closing**

Sadly, my health is making me not as effective as I need to be and the membership deserves. Therefore, I have formally asked the Board to allow me to step down as President. I will remain as a member of the Board. I have enjoyed serving as your President.

If you have questions, suggestions, or comments please contact any board member; we are here to serve you.

*See you at the tables!*

**Bob Armstrong, Unit 174 Ex-President**

**Bob Armstrong, [bob\\_armstrong@windstream.net](mailto:bob_armstrong@windstream.net)**

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*Here's the January report from ACBL:*

<b>NEW MEMBERS</b>
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As reported to us by the ACBL, **Mike Allen, Mr. Hunter Breihan, Mr. Taylor Defoor, Judith Edmonds, Susan Frazier, Sharon Hall, Ms. Ann Jennings, Sheryl Kotzen, Brenda Langdon, Mrs. Elizabeth Rimmer, Mr. James Rimmer, Mr. Ned Stuart, Pamela White, Mr. Jason Wong, Mrs. Alize Zoerner, and Mr. Gary Zoerner** have joined Unit 174. Please welcome these new members of our Unit as you meet them at the tables.

*Congratulations to these new Masterpoint Milestone Makers:*

**NEW JUNIOR MASTERS**

George M. Cowan, Mr. Jay Evert, Mr. Charles Li, and Dr. Kathleen Snodgrass.

**NEW CLUB MASTERS**

Mr. David Littman, Mr. Brian A. Schaffer, and Mrs. Sarah S. Stephens.

**NEW SECTIONAL MASTERS**

William C. Ferguson, Ms. Sharon Kagan, Dr. Howard J. Pollock, and Mr. Robert M. Wang.

**NEW REGIONAL MASTERS**

Abid S. Mumtaz, Mrs. Roop Prasad, and Joan D. Schouest.

**NEW NABC MASTER**

Julie B. Harrell.

**NEW SILVER LIFE MASTER**

(178 in Unit 174)

Mr. Raleigh S. Williamson.

**NEW GOLD LIFE MASTER**

(100 in Unit 174)

Mr. Charles A. Michalski.

Mr. Vern Schmidt.

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**Quote from Former Texas Governor Pat Neff on WATER:  
(from the 1920s)**

"Water is the most abundant of all created commodities. It is older than the human race. It is known to the language of every land and has followed the adventurous footsteps of man around and above the world.

"It is indestructible. Not since the Spirit moved on the face of the waters and they were gathered into the seas has there been one drop lost. It has been the one commodity of the world that has most made the human race akin.

"It alone bridges the seeming chasms between the classes and the masses. The rich and the poor, the loved and the forsaken, the learned and the ignorant, the aristocratic and the democratic meet on a common level at the water fountain, brewed in the distilleries of the skies, poured by Nature's hand from the cistern of the clouds, purified by the percolations of the ages through the hidden sands of the Earth, and brought forth by the hand of man.

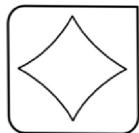
"It is, indeed, the beverage of life."

*[And that, Ladies and Gentlemen, is one of the finest pieces of writing I have ever read. -Ed.]*

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**FEEDBACK & FODDER**



**Unit 174 News and Club News**

**Grand National Teams Qualifying Events**



Unit 174 Qualifier for *Flights B and C*, **Saturday, Feb. 26**, 10 a.m.; 2 sessions; lunch provided; at Bridge Club of Houston, 1609 Spring Cypress (SH 2920), Spring TX 77388 (1 block west of I-45N at Old Town Spring exit, south side of 2920, by U-Haul).

**District Level Qualifying** for ALL flights on **Saturday-Sunday, April 8-9**, at the Houston Election Sectional, Marriott Westchase.

### **Election Sectional**

Our "Election Sectional" is **April 7-9** at the Houston Marriott Westchase, bridge rate **\$89+ and cutoff date March 17**. All sessions are at 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.; NO night sessions (except for Saturday night's Mini Bridge). The Unit 174 Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, and new board members will be announced.

**4th Annual ABA/ACBL Pairs Championship Game** at Tracy Gee Community Center's Apple II Bridge Club was yet another success! Our faithful members brought tantalizing potluck dishes for every taste. Among three sections of 33-1/2 tables, ACBL members **Ed Groner and Kitty Wong** won Flight A, and ABA members **Judith Glasco and Johnny Gills** won Flight B-C, both pairs receiving nice trophies. If you missed it this year, put it on your list of things to do for next year.

Are you familiar with our **Unit 174 Website**? It holds a world of information, including the Masterpoint list for the entire unit and links to every club's Website. We get reports of the passing of our Unit members without having to wait for the *Scorecard*. Every month we have an "Events & Classes" Newsletter. Plus way more. I have my home screen set there and recommend that you do, too. And you will notice a new photo: **Lauri Laufman** has been appointed to fill the remaining term of **Mildred Breed**, who resigned to tend to other matters. We appreciate your service, Mildred!

Be sure to check all the Websites of our Unit 174 clubs (links at [www.acblunit174.org](http://www.acblunit174.org)) for 2017 bridge classes and other learning opportunities.

### **Final Thoughts . . . .**

### **We Are So Blessed to Have Great People in Unit 174!**

Two annual awards were announced at the Lone Star Regional, and we applauded them here and echo that they are *well deserved*:

The **Goodwill Award**, given to a player who exhibits a spirit of courtesy, kindness, and tact at the bridge table, went to **Gary King!**

The **Texas Star Award**, honoring the Unit volunteer who works steadfastly at the Unit level to promote bridge and to further Unit activities, went to **Kay Johnson!**

We continue to be grateful to our Unit 174 members who serve on the district and national levels. **Dan Morse**, we are so proud of you for serving in offices of both District 16 and the ACBL for many years. We hope that you are looking forward to a few years of rest and relaxation! **Paul Cuneo** is coming along in your capable footsteps, as he began serving on the ACBL Board as the District 16 representative on January 17 after several years' service to Unit 174. A special "Thank You" to both of these members for serving above and beyond. When you see them, let them know you appreciate their service.

I put a special tribute to **Eddie Wold** in the March-April issue of the District 16 *Scorecard*, but I want to mention it here as well: What a year he has had! He was inducted into the ACBL Hall of Fame (so well deserved); he won the North American Swiss Teams (his **16th national** championship—in addition to **three world** championships)! During the year, he earned 2608 MPs, as he won the Unit 174 Mini-McKenney MP Race in the category of "Over 10,000." He will be topping the 70,000 MP mark in 2017—4th on the all-time list! As icing on that cake, he was named **ACBL's Honorary Member of the Year**, for "giving freely of his time and ability, without thought of reward and in the interests of the League as a whole." We need a word much bigger than Wow!!!!

Speaking of the Mini-McKenney, meet **Meng-Chr Tsai** (pronounced "Mencher Tsy" and he asks to be called "Mike"), who won the ACBL National Mini-McKenney Race in the 200 to 300 MP category with **406.50 MPs** earned in 2016! He also **WON** the ACBL National Ace of Clubs Race in the same category for 2016 with **242** MPs! I interviewed Mike about this fantastic feat, and I thought you might like to hear about it. Mike came to Lafayette, LA, in 1984 as a student from Taipei, Taiwan, and he became a proud U.S. citizen in 1992. He had played a form of Precision 45 years ago in Taiwan but played no bridge in this country until late 2014. He had retired from his business several years prior and decided to pick up bridge again. A friend of Mike's knew a friend of **Harry Selldin**, and the two were put together as a bridge pair. Mike did not even know how to use a bidding box, but he worked hard and learned 2/1, playing 3-4 times a week and studying hard on his own. In 2015 he won the Unit 174 Mini-McKenney 5-20 category (and 2nd in the ACBL race) with 253 MPs, and he **WON** the ACBL National Ace of

Clubs 2015 Race with 178 MPS, as he played only in area clubs and Houston tournaments, plus the Beaumont Regional for one day, mostly playing with Harry, as their partnership worked well. Then the very next year, in 2016, he earned 406.5 MPs and won the ACBL National Mini-McKenney again AND the ACBL National Ace of Clubs! (He still played only Houston clubs and tournaments, and one regional in Austin.) Mike has made LM and now has 720 MPs. "Bridge is easy," he says. "You just have to use your *brain*." He added that "People should play more by instinct, but most of the people in this country don't; they follow the books and memorize rules. Books tell us a lot, but we still need to count the cards." Away from the tables Mike (who always has a big smile on his face) loves sports. He played basketball in Taiwan and loves to watch it on TV, as well as golf. He also plays tennis 3-4 times a week. Mike earned 48 MPs at this year's LSR, and shared this nugget: "I don't judge whether players are good or not by how many masterpoints they have." That's good advice for all of us. A big CONGRATULATIONS to you, Mike!

### **Feedback on Bracketed Swiss**

Reporting on feedback received since my January newsletter editorial about **Bracketed Swiss** Events, here are some quotes from comments I've received:

"Bracketed Swiss is the best thing that ever happened!"

"I really liked your comments about the Bracketed Swiss."

"Love your thoughts on Bracketed Swiss and agree totally. But sure didn't like time changes on the Bracketed Swiss as we lost our teammates because of it."

"I do not like Bracketed Swiss at regionals, because you usually play the same teams all week." [This was the most negative comment I received.]

"We, too, love Bracketed Swiss and would hope that in the future the Sunday Swiss will be bracketed (as it was advertised for quite some time this year)."

So I'll keep gathering comments. In the meantime, please note that the cover of Friday's *Daily Bulletin* at the Regional read: "RECORD NUMBER OF TABLES IN THURSDAY'S BRACKETED SWISS!!"

For the March, and all other newsletters, please send your news, ideas, articles, comments, and suggestions, to [carolwilson@earthlink.net](mailto:carolwilson@earthlink.net), or leave a message at 281-642-4050 or 281-600-6000x2.

That's all for now! Let us hear from you.

*Carol Ann Wilson, Unit 174 Newsletter Editor*