



American Contract
Bridge League

NEWSLETTER

October 2017



Events and News

The President's Post may be found each month at the Unit 174 Website, www.acblunit174.org. Why not set our Unit 174 page as your home page and stay informed?

President's Message

Lots is happening in our Unit! The **October Fall Extravaganza** Sectional is nearly here—Oct 27-29 at the **Hilton Greenspoint**. There is plenty of parking, and we have a great schedule: 10:30 & 3:30 with Bracketed Swiss and Pairs on Friday and Saturday and the usual on Sunday starting at 10:30am with lunch included. PLUS: \$1 coffee all weekend and breakfast items at the coffee bar for \$1 to \$3.!

Gary King (on Saturday) and **Daniel Jackson** (on Friday) are our speakers; don't miss them! Whether you are novice, intermediate, or advanced, you will learn something. Also, you won't want to miss the Casino Party on Saturday from 7-10 p.m., which is sponsored by **Gary King** (Houston Card School), **Anthony Bianchi** (Remax Real Estate) and **Chuck Gillis** (Gillis, Paris & Heinrich, PLLC), all members of our Unit—thank you!!! \$5 buys \$20,000 Casino Cash and a light dinner, and a cash bar will be available. This is the Board's effort to put more "FUN" into the tournament experience—hope you will join us!! Thank you, **Dianna Gittelman** and **David Henke**, for the extra effort made for this tournament!

The **GNT** qualifiers will be held at the three full-service clubs in Unit 174: Bridge Club of Houston, Clear Lake Bridge Club, and Westside Bridge Academy. Keep an eye on the Unit 174 website for dates and further information.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! The **LONE STAR REGIONAL** is just around the corner, Jan 29-Feb 4. Make sure you get the latest copy of the flyer, updated Oct 4, 2017. The schedule was set based on what the majority of the membership wanted—Bracketed Swiss every morning and afternoon Tuesday-Saturday, Pairs games every day, and of course, KOs!

The **BIG TEXAN PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP** game is new. The event will be a two-session qualifying day on Wednesday and a two-session final on Thursday, just like the NAP district final. Many players did not like the format we used for our test event at the August Sectional, so we changed the event based on their feedback.

The HOUSTON LONE STAR REGIONAL is the “STAR” in District 16. Let's keep it that way—COME and PLAY in the Regional and help us set some new records!

VISIT OUR UNIT 174 WEBSITE—it is FULL of GREAT information: (www.acblunit174.org). Our Webmaster, **Carol Winograd**, works very hard to keep it current and full of important and interesting information we all need!

Last but far from least, I would like to thank **Ken Hudson** for serving as Acting President last month when **Bill Riley** resigned because of flooding from Harvey. Also, I would like to extend a huge “thank you” to Bill for his leadership and hard work this past year as President. We are so fortunate to have these fellas in our Unit!!!

Nancy Strohmer, Unit 174 President
nastrohmer@yahoo.com

Here's the October 1 report from ACBL for September 2017:

Each month the ACBL sends us the new members and rank advancements for our Unit. Here is the list from the October 1 report.

NEW MEMBERS

Parames Banik, Ashok K. Chhabra, Willie F. Greer, Pamela S. Johnson, Artie Lane, and Mary R. Robinson 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 MASTER

(5 MP)

Mary Ann Boerner, Nicole Cox, Suzanne D. Hanks, Jeffry Lehner, William C. McCain Jr., Pamela F. Ott, Shirley Savage, James C. Sells, Smita R. Shah, Paul Sinsheimer, and Michael S. Wei.

NEW CLUB MASTER

(20 MP)

Joy Cowan, Steven Gordon, Jim R. Nicas, Johara M. Nour, and Rupa Shah.

NEW SECTIONAL MASTER

(50 MP)

Gregory Andrews, Paul Andrews, Vera Annenkova, Barbara Fagan, Jane P. Lawson, Janet L. Manchee, Nancy L. Nichols, Brian A. Schaffer, Corbin N. Shouse, and Joan B. Slayden.

NEW REGIONAL MASTER

(100 MP)

Linda T. Buice, Jenelle W. Chamberlain, Rubin Chang, Ian W. Fetterley, R. Harold Kerr, Tekin Kunt, Carol Montague, Edith R. Purgason, Nancy R. Reingold, Joann Suthers, Gayle S. Watkins, and Sid C. Weiss.

NEW NABC MASTER

(200 MP)

Sandra Dickinson, Angela R. Hester, Abid S. Mumtaz, and Kathleen J. Pflueger.

NEW LIFE MASTER

(123 in Unit 174)

Brenda C. Metze and Lorita A. Tipton.

NEW BRONZE LIFE MASTER

(303 in Unit 174)

Bill F. Chamberlain, Jeffery L. Parker, Wes M. Peirce, and Bharat B. Shrestha.

NEW SILVER LIFE MASTER

(190 in Unit 174)

Joy E. Cogburn, Bonnie B. Keough, Daniel Leightman, Thomas S. Martinsen, Betty L. Schell, and Carol L. Winograd.

NEW RUBY LIFE MASTER

(177 in Unit 174)

Virginia W. Melville and Carol A. Wilson.

Congratulations to all!



Do you know college students interested in bridge? ACBL's college bridge program is growing, and the Collegiate Bridge Bowl is expanding to two teams per college that want to play. Scheduled are the Online Collegiate Tournament, Spring 2018 at Atlanta NABC, and Collegiate Bridge Bowl, Aug 2-4, 2018. Players can win scholarships and awards for first through fourth place teams, plus a trip to Atlanta! Starting now, teams can practice in sessions exclusive to college students on BBO. Teams will be required to participate in at least two sessions to compete in the Online Collegiate Tournament in the spring. Further info at <http://www.acbl.org/juniors/collegiate-bridgebowl/>.

FEEDBACK & FODDER

Unit 174 News and Club News

Come one and all to our Fall Extravaganza Sectional October 27-29.

Directions to Hilton Hotel North, 12400 Greenspoint Drive, Houston,

Texas, 77060: Traveling on I-45 North or South: Take the Greens Road exit and go East on Greens Road to Greenspoint Drive (2nd Stop light). Traveling East or West on Beltway 8 (Sam Houston Parkway), take the Greenspoint Drive exit and head North on Greenspoint Drive approximately 2 blocks to the hotel on the right.

Many thanks to those who served on the Unit 174 Board Nominating Committee: Karen Nimmons, Chair, and Committee Members Tom Hogle, Pat Levy, Shawn Quinn, and Rick Stell have worked hard to put together a strong slate, and the names will be announced as soon as all are confirmed.

News from Clubs

The game at **Lakeside Country Club** has been canceled, along with its sanction. This was necessary due to the awful damage to the entire property caused by Hurricane Harvey. The country club will be undergoing major repairs and renovations to both the buildings and golf course for an estimated *two years*. We continue to hear of horror stories from that awful flooding.

Spring Branch Duplicate Club celebrated its **25th anniversary** on Thursday, October 5, with 31 tables. Think of that: 25 continuous years serving the Houston bridge community. I'd bet they have some stories to tell, wouldn't you? Looking back on its history we learn that the late **Dr. Edgar Hoffing's** unbridled passion for duplicate bridge led to the establishment of the first sanctioned duplicate game held at a community center in Houston on October 7, 1992. Players demanded more, and the game grew from a weekly game to two games a week, held on Mondays and Thursdays. Today, 25 years later, **Judith Hoffing** continues her husband's dream by managing and directing SBDC at the beautiful community center located on Wirt Road at Westview. **Congratulations!** Keep up the good work!

The Ace of Clubs now meets for its Tuesday night (7 p.m.) and Sunday night (6 p.m.) games at the IHOP Restaurant located at 11225 Katy Freeway, between Kirkwood and Wilcrest. Reservations are required, 281-686-8683 (NTNTNT3).

Bridge Club of Houston will celebrate its **15th Year Anniversary** with a party on **Saturday, November 11**, with a meal at noon and game at 1 p.m. Reservations are required, and we are sure this event will fill up, so get your in early. The players at BCoH put on the best feasts ever! BCoH is a very active full-service club, with many classes and other learning experiences as well as regular celebrations for masterpoint milestone events, which are always such fun. Photos from their September 299er Tournament are posted at their Website, www.bridgeclubofhouston.com.

Westside Bridge Academy awards free plays monthly in several areas: the players both over and under 300 MPs who won the most masterpoints in the month, and the players both over and under 300 MPs who played the most times each month. They also continue to be successful with their monthly mentor games (day game on 2d Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.) and evening game on 4th Tuesday, 7 p.m.). **Tom Jahnke** is offering a special **10/26 class** on Overcalls for intermediate and advanced players. What an important part of bridge that is not always well understood by some players. I love this quote from the ACBL: *"When an opponent opens the bidding, your side is put at a disadvantage. Nonetheless, the overcall can be an effective tool, both for getting your side into the auction and for keeping the opponents from finding their best contract. It comes in a variety of guises."* The more we learn about bridge, the more we become convinced that it is a **bidder's game**. Oh yes, a Pass may be the best bid in bridge—when made at the right time—but you must get into the auction when you can. Points are not earned by fraidy-cats who pass too much. Overcalls—when made at the right time—are far better. Photos from their September 499er Tournament are posted at their Website, www.westsidebridgeacademy.com.

We hope to get news from other clubs about their events and happenings for the November issue of our Unit 174 newsletter.

Final Thoughts

Our hearts continue to go out to our many, many players who suffered major losses from the menace known as Harvey. BBC reported that 100,000 homes were affected, and 40,000 homes were reported completely lost. A team from Baylor Medical College and Rice University reported that floodwaters in Houston neighborhoods were contaminated with toxins and bacteria that can make people sick. Some of our players experienced that firsthand. And in this huge city where we cannot live without our cars, about **One Million** vehicles were lost in the flooding. We realize that both FEMA and the insurance companies are inundated, but the many reports of delays by the insurance companies are creating justified anger. Nevertheless, we are surviving it, and what a testament it is to our strength.

But back to Bridge: Conventions are fun, and bidding is fun, and it's fun to legally talk across the table, isn't it? But I see many players who start out by trying to learn as many conventions as they can, and who feel that others are disappointed in them because they don't have a lot of gadgets marked on their convention cards. I'd like to help them dispel that feeling, because mastering the fundamentals produces better results than a complicated card. One of the most basic fundamentals is COUNTING. How many bridge players do you see who don't know they have good tricks because they failed to count the suit? (Sometimes when those tricks are on the board, everybody else at the table knows it!) How many, even experienced players, don't really keep track of those important spot cards (8s and 9s especially)? A lowly deuce that is the 13th card of the suit in NT is as powerful as any Ace. Early in the hand, try to get a picture of the other three hands from the bidding. You'd be surprised how much information you have. Just turn it into knowledge remembered for the play or defense, and you'll be MPs ahead of your cohorts.

For the November, and all other newsletters, please send your news, ideas, articles, comments, and suggestions, to carolwilson@earthlink.net, or leave a message or text me at 281-642-4050 or find me at work, 281-600-6000x2.

That's all for now!

Carol Ann Wilson, Unit 174 Newsletter Editor