

President's Message



Ms. Cockapoo (ancestors are a Cocker Spaniel and a Poodle) was walking into the Monterey Bridge venue. She needed to walk up several steps and go through a heavy door. With a walking cane and a cup of coffee, she was having some difficulty going up the steps.

Mr. Maltipoo (ancestors are a Maltese and a poodle) quickly moved forward and offered his help. Taking Ms. Cockapoo's coffee, and chatting, he assisted her up the steps and held the door open.

Wow, care and concern brightly shone on the entrance to the bridge venue.

Usually, the President's message is about ways to improve bridge table comportment. Here is a message that care and concern are brightly shining in the bridge community.

Let me know if you witness a caring story. We all need this type of story to remind us what care and concern can be like.

Good for Nothing award recipients:

Mr. Multipoo is receiving the 'Good for Nothing' award for care and concern.

Bruce Johnsonbaugh Judy Keilin Lisa Assoni Mark Humphrey

Recall that the 'Good for Nothing' award is not for someone who does nothing but for someone who does tasks without expectation of award or recognition.

Future events:

- Annual Unit 499 Membership meeting; March 3, 2024 in Rossmoor. A flyer will be available at most games early January. Check it out.
- Tunnel Tournament: Saturday, April 27, 2024. Marian Renvall is managing the entries.
- Vance Seminar: April 13, 2024. Topic 'Hand Evaluation.' A flyer will be available at most games in January.
- Diablo Sectional: November 9 & 10.

Have fun, play nice, bid and make all your 7NTs.

Sam Earnhardt, PMP
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...from the Editor

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Thanks to Marian Renvall for her contributions this month! Read about our newest board member and most recent recipient of a Goodwill Award. We do have some strong members on our Unit 499 team!

Perhaps, with interest, we could profile a different board member each month. Comments?

CCBC has added a new face-to-face game in Orinda on Fridays. I'm going to try to make that occasionally. Hope lots of you will, too!

See you at the tables!

Judy Keilin
Editor



Unit 499 eDeclarer

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Publisher: Mary Krouse

Submit articles to Jkeilin@pacbell.net

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Mary Krouse, Publisher

To submit a letter to the editor, send it to Judy Keilin at Jkeilin@pacbell.net

Be sure to visit the unit website for more information on our clubs and events, as well as archives of our newsletters.

diablovalleybridge.com/ccbc

Milestones and New Members

MILESTONES

NEW JUNIOR MASTERS (5)

Craig Shibata
Nancy Shibata
Dave Tong

NEW CLUB MASTERS (20)

Elizabeth Ames
Gray Cardiff
Elizabeth Johnston

NEW SECTIONAL MASTERS (50)

Richard Lin
Mark Seidemann

NEW SILVER LIFE MASTER (1000)

Kathleen Young

NEW MEMBERS

Ray Replogle
Nancy Vasko
Mengjia Wang
Charles Wolff

Let's greet these folks when you meet them at the tables or online.



LEARN NEW TRICKS

The New Year is already in its second month. If you've made a resolution, most folks have abandoned it by early February. So, don't be a quitter, especially in bridge.

A New Year, and new beginnings for all – however, time passes quickly, or for others, very slowly. Though February is the shortest month of the year, it often feels like the longest, especially in cold, drizzly climates. So, make the most of this mini-month, beginning at the bridge table. When the weather outside is frightful, skedaddle to your computer. Make your space cozy and warm, and get ready to turn up the heat at the bridge table.

Unit 499's website, www.diablovalleybridge.com has helpful information about playing bridge. Many questions are answered on this site. You'll find some interesting topics and feel more connected to others. We so need to reach out and have a comradery with our bridge friends.

Reading about the ins-and-outs of bridge, it's widely considered being one of the most difficult games to play. Bridge, as you all know, is a four-player trick-taking game where you'll be divided into two partnerships and work with a deck of cards. The goal? To win the most points after taking the most tricks and rounds. It takes only rudimentary knowledge to begin playing and enjoying bridge, but be forewarned: Experts say this is not an easy game to play, and it's even more difficult to master. But that's precisely why bridge is so popular, and why it's called "the game for a lifetime". And, that's what I love about it. Some folks are still competing well into their nineties. It darn near takes a lifetime to learn. There's always room for learning.

Trying to entice younger people to play has been a challenge. First came the television--color, I might add. Then the Internet, and some just find it just too difficult to learn and would rather play other card games. With thousands of options, it's a hard catch to make. The average age of a bridge player is NOT YOUNG.

So, we must make each game count, and enjoy the outcome. Yes, I know, I hate losing too, but there's always another day.

Well wishes to All, "The ShortCut Cook" (R)

Lisa Assoni



NEW BOARD MEMBER – SHEILA WONG



Raised in China/Hong Kong/Los Angeles, I met my husband, Jeff Johnson, in San Diego, and learned to play bridge from his parents. We raised our family in Chandler, AZ, and upon the high school graduation of our youngest son, happily moved back to California. I played bridge almost entirely online before retirement, way back in the days when BBO was owned by Fred Gitelman. I did play in a club game in Scottsdale once, with my teacher Haig Tchamitch.

I was part of the Great Resignation during the Pandemic. After moving to Pleasant Hill from Bodega Bay, I found out to my surprise that I was the winner of the Mini-McKenney award for Unit 509 in 2022, for excessive online game playing, having never played an in-person game at that unit due to distance from Bodega Bay to the clubs.

I love playing in the congenial and supportive atmosphere of the CCBC and would like to give back in whatever capacity needed as a member of the board. I have an M.S. in Accounting that may come in useful, and an M.D. that likely won't be. Looking forward to serving and meeting fellow bridge lovers.

NEW GOODWILL RECIPIENT – SAM EARNHARDT

Sam Earnhardt, was awarded a Goodwill award from District 21. He is an active unit 499 board member, has served as treasurer and is starting his third year as president.

The COVID pandemic punished the bridge community, with a large drop-off of members and closing of clubs. Sam has been the leader for the unit to encourage return of players back to Face-to-Face games. Under his leadership, reduced game fees for a Face -to-Face Unit Game was offered to all clubs, and mentorship for becoming a bridge director was offered. Special sessions for beginner bridge students are being offered. He constantly strives to increase membership and provide additional activities for newer bridge players. He implemented classes for these players to learn about the intricacies of the Swiss Team competition and the different types of scoring from pairs games. He encourages newer players to volunteer for the unit board. With his ready smile and welcoming attitude, Sam makes it easy for people to say YES!

Marian Renvall (originally published in the District 21 online newsletter – Diamond in the Ruff, and written by Anne Hollingsworth)



Play a Hand with Me

North

S 108

H 1093

D K863

C AQJ6

West

S J64

H AQJ874

D 9

C 972

East

S K53

H K62

D Q102

C 10543

South

S AQ972

H 5

D AJ754

C K8

2H P 3H 3S

P 4S P P

P

I held this South hand and the bidding proceeded 2H pass 3H to me. I don't like bidding 3S here because my suit is not very good and we might belong in Diamonds, but I couldn't think of anything else to do so I bid 3S. My partner raised to game and the opening lead was the 9 diamonds which sure looked like a singleton to me.

I liked this and immediately played 3 rounds of clubs discarding my heart. I can now determine that the hand is not splitting badly. West has 6 hearts, at least 3 clubs, 1 diamond and 2 or 3 spades. I then led a spade to my Queen which held and played the Ace and another and when they split 3-3, I claimed the rest making 6 for 98%.

There are a couple of lessons here. The bidding and the lead gave me all the information I wanted, especially about our trumps. The weak 2 shows most points in their suit and very likely not much in spades so when I led a spade to the Queen, I was giving myself only 1 chance to lose a spade instead of trying the double finesse by leading the 10 and letting it go.

Another lesson is on defense, when you have a fit in a suit, you should lead that suit instead of something else which is more likely to help the declarer. Imagine playing this hand with a heart and another heart and then having to finesse spades and diamonds. You would fear losing the lead and having another heart led before your diamonds were good. Those of you who read my columns might remember my repeating that it is good to lead the suit you or your partner has bid.

With a heart lead and another, you will probably make 4 because you will take the same spade finesse that I did but you will not play for a 3-3 split because if they were 4-2 you would go down. By the way, making 4 was worth 84% and going down was 6%.

Of course, getting the diamond lead was the worst lead for my opponents.

Jerry Weitzner

jweitzner@sbcglobal.net



CLASSES WITH CAROL

Current and Spring

At the Orinda Community Center: 925 254-2445

Bridge conventions will be offered from 10am-noon starting March 5-April 30

This course will offer several popular conventions with hands to demonstrate their usefulness.

Rusty Bridge-part II starts at 1pm-3pm from March 5 to April 30

This class was developed by Carol to give the students the chance to thoroughly review good clear bidding while putting to practice what they have learned with lots of hands to play. **Weak Two bids, 2 club opening and responses, preemptive bids**, defining what is and is not a Forcing bid and bidding in the **Balancing seat**.

Other topics, given the time, will be covered along with good leads and Stayman.

At the Lafayette Community Center: 925 284-2232

The “Diamond” Supervised class is currently running from 10am – noon and will end February 29

This class has shown to give the students much more practice with the lessons learned having taken the Diamond (**Play of the Hand**) course.

Eight hands are played each class, with a mini lesson that relates to the subject.

From March 14-May 9 The Heart course (**Defense**) Part I will be offered from 10am-noon

Beginner Bridge, The “Club” Series is currently running from 1pm - 3pm and will end February 29.

The class is for absolute beginners or those who want to learn the right way from the beginning. This course will cover how to evaluate a hand, open the bidding, responses, rebids by opener and rebids by responder. We will also cover an introduction to competitive bidding with Overcalls and Takeout doubles. There will be four hands to play that demonstrate that week’s lesson.

From March 14-May **Rusty Bridge Part I** will be offered from 10am to noon.

If one has any questions, please call the community centers for more info and if still not satisfied please don’t hesitate to visit Carol’s website at <https://carolgriffinsbridge.wordpress.com/> or call her at 925 933 3535

And don’t forget all year round she runs a **Drop-in Bridge** every Wednesday from 10-noon at Lafayette Community Center to play social bridge, meet new people, practice what you’ve learned in a class or just get help whenever you need it while you are playing by asking Carol or Debbie. There is always a mini lesson before the game.

Club News

This section is for club owners and managers who wish to submit news about their games. Please go to our website for information about all our clubs, game times, and to check on the latest results.

Diablovalleybridge.com

Overtricks by the Bay

193 Griffith Lane
Brentwood

Overtricks is thriving at its new location at the Brentwood Senior Center. Table fees have been reduced to \$4, and there is a mini-lesson before every game. If you don't have a partner, come anyway and you will be guaranteed one.

Mark Marty (thatsafire@gmail.com) or
925-487-7832)



Blackhawk Duplicate Bridge

Blackhawk Country Club
Contact Lilah Newton at
925-648-3154
lilahnewton@yahoo.com

The Blackhawk Ladies' Bridge game is held on the first and fourth Wednesdays of the month at Blackhawk Country Club. Game time is 9:30, reservations are required.

Lilah Newton

925-648-3154

lilahnewton@yahoo.com

Sharon Tarpinian

925-736-2461

enchantment-s@comcast.net

Lilah Newton



Contra Costa Bridge Center

ccbridgecenter@gmail.com • diablovalleybridge.com/ccbc

February News

CCBC continues its efforts in 2024 to provide the maximum number of games offering extra MPs to our players.

Friday, February 9 – yes, CCBC is planning to hold a few games during the year on Fridays at 11:00. These will be open games, and held during a week that we can do special games. This one is a new concept which ACBL is starting this year. It's a Pop-up Game. Regular MPs, but 50% will be **red points** (the other half black). Extra \$1. One of the few chances to win red points at a local club.

Week of **February 12** - Educational Foundation Games (extra MPs, extra \$1) - \$ goes to support ACBL's education program

Week of **February 26** - Educational Foundation Games (extra MPs, extra \$1) - \$ goes to support ACBL's education program

CCBC continues its schedule with bridge games in person in Orinda. **CCBC is now hosting games on Mondays & Wednesdays (open at 11:00), and Thursdays (999er at 10:30) at the Orinda Masonic Hall, 9 Altarinda Road.**

Thank you for your support of CCBC!

Michael Kruley



Lamorinda Bridge Club



Sessions of our Beginning Bridge Class will continue on Mondays Through the third week in March (Monday the 11th), 9:30-11:30 am

Class: 9 weeks, \$200 includes ACBL Textbook: (LBC Students may repeat a class for \$100 per course.) There will not be a class on the Presidents' Holiday February 19.

Also on Mondays from 1pm - 3pm we are presenting Single Topic Seminars:

List of special topics and expected dates (slight changes in scheduled presentation may made at the request of our students). \$20 per session, reservations recommended.

For February:

- February 5 Blackwood.
- February 12 Key Card Slam Auctions.
- February 19 No Session (Holiday)
- February 26 Review of Structure for Opening Bids, Responses and Rebids

Please note that we focus in the beginning on lower-level conventions which occur often. The higher the level of bidding the less often these actually occur at the table so it is to your competitive benefit to learn and UNDERSTAND all of these conventions and treatments over time for when they are used against you during the bidding process.

To assist in your learning process Lamorinda Bridge Club will host a Wednesday afternoon game that will feature a **selection of hands from the Monday afternoon topic** mixed in with other randomly dealt hands. This is important as often when one learns something new it may be several bridge games before you encounter it at the bridge table, and you may not even recognize it unless you practice it right away to understand it better.

Jerry will entertain special requests of topics and will reserve the right to alter the above schedule accordingly. We will send out updates on the schedule in coming months to announce possible changes.

GAME SCHEDULE:

- Tuesdays: 3:00-5:30pm, Supervised Play; 14-18+ boards with Master Points awarded; three questions allowed per player. This is a **Limited 699** Game; \$10 table fee.
- Tuesdays: 7-9:45pm **Open** Game; 18-21 boards; \$10 table fee.
Optional Potluck Supper 5:45-6:45pm, \$5.
- Wednesdays: 3-5:30pm: Supervised Play; 14-16+ boards with Master Points awarded; three questions allowed per player. This is a **Limited 699** Game; \$10 table fee. **This game will include a selection of hands from the Monday Afternoon Special Topic Seminars** mixed in with other randomly dealt hands.
- Fridays: 10am - 1:15pm, **Limited 699** Game; 18-21 boards; \$10 table fee.

We are planning to host some special **TEAM GAMES** on the third Saturday in future months as follows:

February 17: Swiss Teams

March 16: Board-A-Match (BAM)

These will be Strati- Flighted whenever possible. If you wish to play please organize a team of 4 players and register ASAP. If you wish to play but do not have a complete team please let Winnie know and hopefully she can cobble together a team. Game time 10 AM so please come earlier. \$40/team (\$10/person).

As in the past, reservations will be required for all Face-to-Face duplicate games. Wearing masks will be optional. (All games are awarded Master Points and have hand records available and posted on the results page at www.https://my.acbl.org/club-results/271973.)

Winnie Jasper & Jerry Chamberlain

Lamorinda Bridge Club

183 Corliss Drive, Moraga, CA 94556

(Home) 925-376-1125

Winnie: (Cell) 925-683-1908; winnie@wjasper.com

Jerry: (Cell) 925-766-5228; jerry@wjasper.com

Please make your Class and Game Reservations with Winnie

Please leave the equivalent of three parking spaces open in front of the house directly across the street from us. Thank you!

ROSSMOOR DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Gateway Clubhouse, Rossmoor

SPECIAL GAMES AT ROSSMOOR

Saturday, February 10, IMP PAIRS GAME

Monday-Saturday, February 19-24, EDUCATION FOUNDATION WEEK,
extra \$1.

We are happy to announce that table fees for guests have been reduced to \$8 for our 1pm games on Monday, Tuesday and Saturday.

Kit Miller



DANVILLE DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Veteran's Hall Hartz Ave, Danville

The Danville game is held every Friday at 9:30am, excluding holidays.

The game is limited to players with less than 2500 points, and meets at the Veterans Hall in Danville. Entrance to game is on Prospect Avenue.

Michael Gosnell

