



DIAMOND IN THE RUFF

ACBL District 21 Newsletter Vol 3, Number 3 July 2020

Leaves From the Executive Branch

By Ray Yuenger, President

The Online District Board Meeting

As I mentioned in last month's column, there was a historic first at the end of May, the first meeting of the Board of District 21 ("D21") to take place online using Zoom software. To keep this mostly video meeting manageable (one speaker appeared by telephone), I asked the 21 units to have only one, not both, of their representatives attend, and we still had a total of 34 participants including members of the Executive Committee, committee chairs, and some guests.

I make digital recordings of Board meetings as a memory aid, though our Secretary Sandi Davis does a fine job of preparing the official minutes. Don't worry, I'm not going to transcribe the entire meeting, which lasted almost two and one-half hours. I would like to report here what I hope is of the most interest to the membership. That will not include the technical aspects of Zoom such as unmuting yourself, using typed chat while someone else is speaking, voting by clicking "yes"



or "no" icons, and holding up a virtual blue hand to be called on as a speaker.

District Director Report

Jackie Zayac, our District Director, reported that at ACBL headquarters, 40% of the staff has been furloughed and the remaining staff took a 20% pay cut. The ACBL has not been receiving its usual \$450,000 monthly in tournament sanction fees, but it did make about \$230,000 on an online regional and a silver points week was proving to be very popular. A loss of almost \$1 million for 2020 is projected.

The ACBL Board of Directors has been having online meetings every other week and recently had a special meeting to consider a motion to allow units and districts to hold tournaments online. The motion failed by a vote of 5 to 20. Bridge Base Online doesn't have the bandwidth to hold such events along with all the virtual club games and other ACBL games. The brick-and-mortar clubs need the financial assistance provided through virtual online clubs more than the districts and most units.

People are being prosecuted for cheating in online ACBL games. The Board just created an Online Ethical Oversight Committee.

The list of upcoming tournaments and the regional flyers will not be published in this newsletter since the ACBL has decided to not provide tournament directors for the rest of 2020.

A motion to reorganize the ACBL into 13 regions from 25 districts passed its first reading. This reorganization won't take effect until the motion is approved after a second reading.

Committee Reports

The ongoing coronavirus pandemic has affected the work of some D21 committees more than others. For example, with the summer Youth Nationals being cancelled, the Youth Grant committee did not process any applications for financial assistance to compete in that tournament. The Tournament Coordinator, Richard Meffley, sent out a tournament schedule to the units and requested that notice of tournament cancellations be sent to him and to the ACBL. The ACBL determined that because the District's North American Pairs winners were unable to compete in the cancelled spring Nationals, their national competition will be next year, and there will be no NAP qualifying club, unit, or district competitions this year.

D21 Grand National Teams qualified in the Open and B flights in face-to-face competition. The competitions for flights A and C were conducted online. The finals would normally have occurred at the cancelled summer nationals. The ACBL left it up to each District to determine whether to hold a new round of GNT qualifying

events next year, but it will not entertain a district sending two sets of teams in each flight. The GNT Coordinator, Grant Vance, told this year's qualifiers that they could play at next year's nationals. The D21 Board voted to ratify this decision.

The Charity Chair, Jeff Hack, reported that he had not yet received any nominations for charities to receive D21's annual grants. Nonetheless, a motion to increase the annual grants from \$5,000 to \$6,000 was approved. Pam Hughes pointed out that about \$1,200 of this charity money is raised by charity events at regionals. The charity nomination period will be open for another month. If no nominations are made, Jeff will recommend donations to food banks. The Goodwill Chair reported that there will be D21 Goodwill awards this year so units should start thinking about whom to nominate. More information about the program will be released at the next Board meeting in September.

Part of the report by Jean Barry, the D21 Treasurer, was that this monthly Diamond in the Ruff ("DIR") newsletter represents about 35% of D21's monthly expenses. While the DIR is distributed by email and posted on the D21 website, the publisher is paid \$26 a page for preparing three versions of each edition (high resolution color, black-and-white, and color), the editor receives a \$350 monthly stipend, the mass

email to over 6,700 District members costs a half cent per email, and the Executive Editor receives no compensation. Because there are currently no sectionals, D21 is not receiving income for sectional ads. There was some discussion about how to lower the costs of the newsletter. Two possibilities are reducing its size and frequency of publication, keeping in mind that the Bylaws of D21 require publishing a periodical for D21 members. The D21 Webmaster was asked to report on how many times the newsletter is viewed on the D21 website.

The job of our Tournament Manager, Pam Hughes, lately has become disengaging from hotel contracts without incurring liquidated damages penalties. She did so successfully with the Sacramento Regional and the plan is for her to start talking to the Santa Clara Regional hotel near the end of June.

The Western Conference voted to distribute \$7,000 to each member district with D21 being one and to retain the same amount in its account. All STAC events for the balance of the year have been cancelled by the ACBL. The Western Conference website has been shut down with future STAC advertising to occur on the D21 website. The Conference Bylaws are being revised.

New Business and Board Votes

The Board unanimously approved seven technical amendments to the D21 Bylaws as proposed by the Bylaws committee.

As Treasurer, Jean Barry reported that about 40% of D21's monthly expenses

come from storing tournament supplies and leasing the van used to deliver those supplies. She brought a two-part motion: (1) to turn in the van earlier than the end of the lease in November 2020 because it would save about \$1,000 monthly and (2) to downsize our storage unit and move the supplies into a POD ("Portable On Demand Storage") with monthly storage fees being reduced from \$564 to \$175. Thereafter, the POD company would haul the POD to and from tournaments. This would eliminate labor problems, insurance problems, truck problems, and security problems in one stroke.

This proposal provoked a number of questions from unit representatives. One asked how the District could supply two sectionals on the same weekend. Jean offered that the POD proposal was intended to supply regionals only and that the D21 might be getting out of the business of supplying sectionals. Alternatively, Units might be able to pick up supplies from the POD in Oakland or we could look into D21 obtaining a second POD for sectionals. Several representatives either spoke or wrote in chat about their concerns about D21 not supplying their sectionals and how their sectional could be supplied from a POD. The President (me) assured the representatives that a vote in favor of downsizing into a POD and returning the van early would not commit D21 to ending sectional supplies. That decision would not be made until later without consultation with the units. Jean said that D21 is the only district that provides sectional supplies and that we had supplied 20 units last year. The

cost of delivery of a POD to a “local” site like Monterey would be \$129. It would be higher to deliver to Sacramento and beyond.

By the time of the vote on this motion, seven of the earlier participants had left. While the Secretary and President attempted to count and weight the votes (units have different numbers of votes depending on the size of their membership), Stu pointed out that there was only one no vote and abstentions and absences don’t count, so there was no need to weight the yes votes. The President announced that a majority favored the motion.

Bob Garrett and Katherine Ewing were announced as the President’s appointments to serve as co-chairs for the 2022 Reno nationals. They co-chaired the last Reno nationals. The Board approved the appointments.

A majority of the Board voted to ratify the recommendation of the Executive Committee to pay Pam Hughes 90% of her usual stipend of \$6,500 per regional for the cancelled Sacramento regional. The President pointed out that Pam engaged in delicate negotiations to extricate D21 from its hotel contract without paying liquidated damages and that she is currently negotiating the Monterey 2023 hotel contract. Most of her work as Tournament Manager is done before the day a tournament starts.

The President announced the formation of a committee that he will chair to study new legislation in California that clarifies who should be considered an employee rather than an independent contractor, to ensure that D21 complies with the law. Cornelia Gould and Sigrid Price have been named committee members.

Subsequent Developments

The week after the Board meeting was a hectic one. If D21 didn’t move its supplies out of its storage unit in El Sobrante by June 7, it would be subject to another monthly payment of \$564. Arrangements were being made to bring a POD to the storage facility to load the POD, but it turned out the POD wouldn’t fit on the storage premises, so other plans were made to bring the district’s supplies to a POD in Oakland.

While arrangements were being made, I got more interested in the details of POD storage and learned some discouraging facts. While the supplies in a POD would be stored in a climate-controlled warehouse, we would need to provide 48 hours notice to have access to the POD’s contents. There are three sizes of PODs, but only the smallest and largest are transported. The monthly cost of storage doesn’t differ much between the smallest and largest. The company will only promise delivery of a POD within a three-hour window of time and the company simply doesn’t transport PODs on Sundays. Sundays are a typical day for dropping supplies off for a regional starting on a Monday and for picking up supplies at the end of a regional. Some hotels might not tolerate storing a large POD on their premises for a week, so there could be additional charges to remove it till the end of a tournament. Alternatively, the POD could be brought to another POD storage facility possibly miles from a tournament and D21 would have to provide its own transportation for those final miles.

The more I learned about the limitations of POD storage, the more I realized that it would be a big step to putting D21 out of

the sectional supply business, exactly what I had assured Board representatives they were not deciding. I got in contact with our current El Sobrante storage facility and learned that we could save a lot of money by downsizing into a smaller unit on their premises. I asked Calvin Harper, our long-time supplies driver and deliveryman, to look at the options. I had toured the existing storage unit two years earlier and found it about half full. Calvin explained that since my visit D21 has acquired more supplies, because the district is now dealing its own boards for regionals with new dealing machines. But we were able to identify a suitable smaller storage unit at a cost of \$183 monthly.

With the hard work of Calvin, Doug Hong, and Doug's roommate, the supplies were moved into the smaller storage unit before the weekend. The workers also identified some surplus items that were not longer in use by D21 and disposed of them. So the vote to economize by moving supplies into a POD turned into the action of moving them to a much cheaper unit in the same storage facility. Jean Barry worked with the storage facility by signing the new rental agreement.

Regarding the van lease, I felt I needed to educate myself about D21's options under the lease. The monthly payments are just short of \$400. By turning the van in by June 27, D21 would avoid about five months of payments. However, the lease provides for an early termination charge. The lessor informed me that the charge would be just short of \$1,200. I'm probably not aware of all the van-related costs, but if D21 is going to remain in the sectional

supply business, some kind of vehicle will be needed. Calvin told me that many years ago D21 tried to rent trucks just for tournament weekends to move the supplies, but the idea was abandoned. Under the existing lease, D21 will have an option to buy the van when the lease expires, and this might be the most economical move in the long run. In any event, considering the early termination charge, the Treasurer and I are reconsidering the wisdom of acting on that Board vote.

Having further educated myself about the ramifications of POD storage and termination of the van lease after the District Board meeting, I now feel that those motions were presented prematurely with insufficient information given to the Board to make an intelligent decision. For that reason a number of unit representatives expressed justified reservations.

POD storage and elimination of a D21 moving van would both tend to disable D21 from continuing to supply sectionals as we have for a long time. What the cost to D21 is of supplying sectionals needs to be examined. If the District is truly losing money by subsidizing its units under the current payment structure, perhaps the structure needs to be redesigned, but the units should and will be heard before D21 makes any decision to go out of the sectional supply business.

Another further development is unrelated to the Board meeting. The ACBL recently decided it would not require its Tournament Directors to staff any sectionals or regionals for the balance of 2020. I have asked the ACBL Executive Director whether this means that existing

tournament sanctions are being cancelled. I am awaiting a response.

The latest Bylaws have been posted on the D21 website.

As Executive Editor, with the June DIR I sent a cover message asking D21 members if they were reading it now, if they would continue reading it if it was simply posted to the D21 website instead of delivered by email, and how they felt about less frequent publication. While the

newsletter is distributed to over 6,700 email addresses, our email software doesn't tell us how many of those recipients open the message. I am encouraged that 14 readers took the time to respond, saying they do read the DIR and most prefer its monthly delivery, with a couple expressing interest in receiving it every two months.

I hope that reading this column has proved somewhat shorter than having attended the online Board meeting.

**Have great news to share
from your unit? Have
an exciting experience
from an online game?
Contact *Diamond in the
Ruff* Editor Rich Luttrell
at luttrellr@sbcglobal.net
and tell him all about it!**

RANK ADVANCES

JUNIOR MASTERS (5 MASTERPOINTS)

Janice Adragna, Concord CA, 499
Kristin Andersen, San Ramon CA, 499
Doris Arterburn, Livermore CA, 501
Sarah Bouchier, Carmel CA, 530
Jerrold Braunstein, Rocklin CA, 505
Edward Bukowski, Sparks NV, 473
Karen Bukowski, Sparks NV, 473
Christine Corsetti, Hillsborough CA, 498
Pamela Craigie, Reno NV, 473
Oliver Evans, Woodside CA, 498
Susan Farber, Half Moon Bay CA, 498
Frankie Ferguson, Walnut Creek CA, 499
Susan Fox, San Francisco CA, 506
Susan Galletta, Redwood City CA, 498
Margaret Goldsmith, Hillsborough CA, 498
Joanne Greenspan, Hillsborough CA, 498
Martha Hildreth, Reno NV, 473
Kasia Kern, Walnut Creek CA, 499
Anil Khatri, Los Altos CA, 503
Margaret Lockwood, Placerville CA, 505
Margaret Nelson, Loomis CA, 505
Mark Nelson, San Anselmo CA, 508
Cynthia Peterson, Larkspur CA, 508
Tom Philipps, Concord CA, 499
Pamela Pontius, Hillsborough CA, 498
Adriano Quiroga, Mountain View CA, 503
Carol Sayers, Danville CA, 499
John Sayers, Danville CA, 499

Brian Sloan, Rohnert Park CA, 509
Patricia Smith, Menlo Park CA, 503
Padmini Sökkappa, Livermore CA, 501
Tracy Solomon, San Rafael CA, 508
Margaret Stovall, Stockton CA, 510
Richard Tullis, Moraga CA, 499
Susy Vrouvas, Corte Madera CA, 508
George Westin, Lodi CA, 510
Lawrence Zito, Gilroy CA, 524

CLUB MASTERS (20 MASTERPOINTS)

Betsy Allen, Santa Cruz CA, 550
Heather Black, Sunnyvale CA, 503
Katherine Campbell King, Berkeley CA, 499
Brandi Chavin, San Francisco CA, 506
Michael Durall, Sacramento CA, 505
Katherine Erickson, Moraga CA, 499
Pam Freeman, Reno NV, 473
Mike Friedman, Sunnyvale CA, 507
Joe Fuchs, Walnut Creek CA, 499
Mac Geschwind, Reno NV, 473
Robert Healy, Palo Alto CA, 503
Brian King, Berkeley CA, 499
Elaine Kitano, Corte Madera CA, 508
Ruth Kleinman, El Cerrito CA, 502
Mitchell Miller, Reno NV, 473
Gail Moberg, Los Alto CA, 503
Shailesh Naik, Saratoga CA, 507

Umesh Padval, Menlo Park CA, 498
Michael Peirce, San Francisco CA, 506
Stuart Rowe, Brentwood CA, 499
Terri Rowe, Brentwood CA, 499
Megan Sanguinetti, San Francisco CA, 506
Cathy Spieker, Atherton CA, 503
Kent Taylor, Half Moon Bay CA, 498
Houpei Wei, Union City CA, 500

SECTIONAL MASTERS **(50 MASTERPOINTS)**

Marilynne Bachli, Hillsborough CA, 498
Erna Bailey, Reno NV, 473
David Berkeley, Atherton CA, 503
Judy Berkeley, Atherton CA, 503
Ann Brick, Berkeley CA, 497
Lucy Chen, San Jose CA, 507
Marilyn Chilcote, Oakland CA, 502
David Clayton, Berkeley CA, 497
Kathleen Danforth, Los Altos CA, 503
Lora Danis, San Francisco CA, 506
Gwen Edelstein, Gold River CA, 505
Nancy Ficarrotta, Soquel CA, 550
Linda Fong, Tiburon CA, 508
Lisa French, Windsor CA, 509
Leslie Golden, Lafayette CA, 499
Chip Gordet, El Dorado Hills CA, 505
Gretchen Griswold, Oakland CA, 502
Mary Hogarty, Sacramento CA, 505
Vijesh Iyer, Palo Alto CA, 503
Robert Keays, Santa Rosa CA, 509
Nancy Levinson, San Rafael CA, 508
Elizabeth Majchrzak, Moraga CA, 499
Cindy McColl, Los Altos Hills CA, 503

John McManis, Oakland CA, 502
Gail Mejeur, San Francisco CA, 506
Thomas Miller, Brentwood CA, 499
Judith Murphy, Brentwood CA, 499
Linda Murray, Sacramento CA, 505
Judy Niver, Alamo CA, 499
Jane Pedroli, Ross CA, 508
Carol Ross, San Rafael CA, 508
Judith Ruble, Walnut Creek CA, 499
Carole Seed, Stockton CA, 510
John Shipley, San Mateo CA, 498
Jeff Slavitz, Tiburon CA, 508
Patricia Steele, Los Altos CA, 503
Ford Tamer, Hillsborough CA, 498
Rula Tamer, Hillsborough CA, 498
John Vallergera, Oakland CA, 502
Mary Westin, Lodi CA, 510
Candace Wilkes, Walnut Creek CA, 499
Virginia Willson, Larkspur CA, 508
Valerie Wood, San Lorenzo CA, 502
Yuri Yatskar, Monte Sereno CA, 503

REGIONAL MASTERS **(100 MASTERPOINTS)**

Ed Becker, Danville CA, 499
Barbara Black, Aptos CA, 550
William Burns, Orinda CA, 499
Debbie Carey, Emerald Hills CA, 498
Hilary Charlton, Atherton CA, 503
Kenneth Derr, Orinda CA, 499
Shirley Ehrlich, Mill Valley CA, 508
Beverly Gilfillan, Salinas CA, 530
Jayme Goodale, San Anselmo CA, 508
Ashish Gupta, San Francisco CA, 506

Carol Gurrad, Concord CA, 499
Marie Horn, San Mateo CA, 498
Theresa Iantosca, Los Altos CA, 503
Leika Kejriwal, Palo Alto CA, 503
Natasha Khandheria, Corte Madera CA, 508
Jane Maloney, Incline Village NV, 465
Pamela Mann, San Francisco CA, 506
Allan McAllister, Oakland CA, 502
Wayne McIntyre, Pebble Beach CA, 530
Angie Millslagle, Santa Cruz CA, 550
Annie Nielsen, Washoe Valley NV, 473
Gail Oraftik, Piedmont CA, 502
Yilmaz Ozturhan, San Ramon CA, 499
Alice Probst, Reno NV, 473
Robin Rakusin, Reno NV, 473
Sally Reed, Pebble Beach CA, 530
Gloria Reiss, Soquel CA, 550
Katherine Schram, Santa Rosa CA, 509
Elsie Shaw, Morgan Hill CA, 524
James Sherriff, Carmichael CA, 505
Rona Sherriff, Carmichael CA, 505
Jonathan Shi, Palo Alto CA, 503
Fred Smith, Menlo Park CA, 503
Paula Stanko, Reno NV, 473
Arlie Stephens, Sunnyvale CA, 507
Marcy Tivol, Palo Alto CA, 503
Gwen Vallio, Castro Valley CA, 500
Janell Volkoff, Morgan Hill CA, 524
Gerald Williams, Carmel CA, 530
Mary Willis, Tahoe City CA, 465
Eli Wismer, Los Altos Hills CA, 503
Julie Wong, Tiburon CA, 508
Jenny Zhou, Pleasanton CA, 501

NABC MASTERS **(200 MASTERPOINTS)**

Emil Aalto, Santa Clara CA, 507
Carolyn Drozdiak, Los Gatos CA, 507
Gerald Hewitt Jr, San Jose CA, 507
Robert Kahn, Reno NV, 473
Mark Kogan, Orinda CA, 499
Patti Kogan, Orinda CA, 499
Jesse Liu, Fremont CA, 500
Peggy McCormick, San Rafael CA, 508
David Merenbach, Belmont CA, 503
Olivia Schireson, Stanford CA, 503
Joyce Sweeney, Antelope CA, 505
Hide Tanigami, Los Altos CA, 503
Judy Tanigami, Los Altos CA, 503
Sudhir Virmani, Sunnyvale CA, 503
Charles Wilson, Santa Cruz CA, 550

ADVANCED **NABC MASTERS** **(300 MASTERPOINTS)**

Charlie Chen, San Jose CA, 507
Kayden Ge, Cupertino CA, 507
Irwin Javinsky, Moraga CA, 499
Brian Zhang, Dublin CA, 501

LIFE MASTERS
(300/500 MASTERPOINTS)

Andrew Chen, San Jose CA, 507
James Collart, Lincoln CA, 505
Ashwini Datar, Cupertino CA, 507
Lynn Dondero, Sonoma CA, 512
Barnaby Grist, Reno NV, 473
Laurie Hailey, Walnut Creek CA, 499
Rajeev Jog, San Jose CA, 503
Miriam Kaegi, Novato CA, 508
Mary Schelling, Orinda CA, 499
Marina Seppius, Palo Alto CA, 503
Kate Smith, Los Altos Hills CA, 503
Helen Spalding, San Francisco CA, 506
Dmitri Stukalov, Palo Alto CA, 503

BRONZE
LIFE MASTERS
(500/750 MASTERPOINTS)

Susan Barkley, Atherton CA, 503
Anne Bossange, Saratoga CA, 507
Ron Chestnut, Petaluma CA, 509
Cynthia Douglas, Fair Oaks CA, 505
Brenda Hatton, San Jose CA, 503
Joseph Held, Oakland CA, 502
Richard Hottell, Rancho Murieta CA, 505
Misook Jung, Berkeley CA, 497
Marina Seppius, Palo Alto CA, 503
Helen Spalding, San Francisco CA, 506
Elizabeth Strasen, Petaluma CA, 509
Dmitri Stukalov, Palo Alto CA, 503
Bill Yeast, Mill Valley CA, 508

SILVER
LIFE MASTERS
(1000 MASTERPOINTS)

Julie Cardinalli, Reno NV, 473
Abbe Cohen, Santa Rosa CA, 509
Terence Degan, Monterey CA, 530
Foster Geng, Castro Valley CA, 500
Michael Hu, San Jose CA, 503
Catherine Molnar, Piedmont CA, 502
Karen Turnbaugh, Novato CA, 508

RUBY
LIFE MASTERS
(1500 MASTERPOINTS)

Brian Eisenberg, Martinez CA, 499
James Harris, Palo Alto CA, 503
Kathryn Le Gro, Carmichael CA, 505
Richard O'Brien, Los Altos CA, 507
Mischel Postas, Campbell CA, 507
Stephanie Singer, Belmont CA, 498
Rick Wilson, Pleasanton CA, 501

GOLD
LIFE MASTER
(2500 MASTERPOINTS)

Peggy Tatro, San Rafael CA, 508

**SAPPHIRE
LIFE MASTERS
(3500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Clark Millikan, Santa Clara CA, 507
Mark Stern, Fresno CA, 522

**DIAMOND
LIFE MASTER
(5000 MASTERPOINTS)**

Daniel Raider, San Mateo CA, 498

**EMERALD
LIFE MASTERS
(7500 MASTERPOINTS)**

(May)
Robert Garret, Gardnerville NV, 465
Bill Riester, San Jose CA, 507

(June)
Ellen Schiller, Greenbrae CA, 508

**PLATINUM
LIFE MASTER
(10,000 MASTERPOINTS)**

Ted Muller, Sacramento CA, 505

HEART OF THE DISTRICT

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<u>Livermore</u>	<u>501</u>	<u>Rosemarie LaFrancesca</u>
<u>Marin</u>	<u>508</u>	<u>Gail Haar</u>
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<u>Stockton</u>	<u>510</u>	<u>Debbie DeZarn</u>

Berkeley/El Cerrito/Richmond

By The Beer Dude

I had nothing to say last month, so I didn't write a column; this one involves current situation regarding El Cerrito Bridge Club & a few observations on the BBO scene; read on.

I get monthly notices from EC Rec regarding rentals; given that EC killed its July 4 parade, I don't expect the rental scene will reopen until at least 8/1 – my guess is later, & it could be shut down again if there's a COVID resurgence in the fall. So, we're still sitting in Limbo until further notice. I won't be starting an online game – I don't want to compete w/clubs that need the revenue to cover their overhead, something we have ZERO of while we're closed. I've given the local club owners the OK to accept my players who've not played in their games in the past year.

To BBO I go: I've followed East Bay Community Center games from the gitgo (if for no other reason than to see which of ECBC's players are playing there), occasionally a couple other clubs. I know at least 2 of my regulars play 3 times/week in the early national game. I got zero feedback on hosting an online game, plus I heard from a good friend who's on the ECBC board that directing such games has issues – the big one being that you have to monitor the game constantly for director calls. BBO prevents bids/leads/plays out of turn, as well as revokes, so those are no problem. However, it also requires self-alerting (the alerter's partner doesn't see it), so rulings on failure to alert/misinformation on alerts become

more difficult to rule on. I have no idea on how such rulings are handled online, but I want no part of it. I don't need the director income to cover my vacation expenses this year – I'm not getting on a plane until 2021; will drive to LA for Xmas if there's no resurgence & my cousins decide to do their usual gigs.

The D21 Board meeting on Zoom went well, tho a half-hour longer than usual as folks got acclimated to it. I was already, as I've done Zoom chats/Google meets w/my pub pals since April. The host (D21 Prez Ray Yuenger) did right by muting everyone except the speaker, so there was no crosstalk common to the in-person meetings (which I loved, as well as the few idiots on the board got little time to ask stupid questions/mention irrelevant issues). This will happen again in Sept & likely in Jan, given that ACBL gave notice Jun 17 that all remaining 2020 Sectionals & Regionals, plus the Tampa NABC are cancelled. My sympathies to all the units who draw a good portion of their funds from tournament profits.

Got a check late May for ECBC cut of BBO royalties from (mostly) April games, but there was no list of where those came from. Have yet to see the check for May; likely it'll come after I've sent this on.

Keep staying safe & may your July 4 be free of the neighborhood idiots shooting off loud fireworks (I've heard a lot since Memorial Day weekend where I live).

Tweak beerman1949@gmail.com to brag/gripe/suggest; Unit info & game results available 24/7 @ www.berunit497.org.

Diablo Valley

By Lisa Assoni/*The ShortCut Cook*

Oh my, it's July!

This special day was set aside as American Independence Day on the Fourth of July every year that represents the Declaration of Independence and the birth of the United States of America. This year's 4th will look much different. Instead of a blast from the past with barbecues, drinks, food, and friends, we will most likely be at home. It's still a grand holiday, and it's OK, celebrate.



How about getting take out ribs, baked beans, and a salad? If you're alone, talk on the phone, Zoom, or Facebook. If all else fails, eat with your doggie or kitty, and make no bones about it. DO NOT give them any leftover bones or any kind. Lulu, my rescue doggie, has been a real blessing. These faithful friends are always there for you. Even when I play on-line bridge, Lulu is lying by my side. She's the only one that's glad I'm playing from home.

Yes, challenges have risen to the top, like bread dough. Face to face playing is no longer an option. I so enjoyed seeing you all, chatting and playing. This social distancing is quite difficult to swallow. One good thing for me is you can't see my face. I grimace, frown, raise eyebrows, and take deep breaths. Now I can lament in my own home.

It's quite a game isn't it! So often when playing, we bridge bitch, complain, pitch the best cards to defeat contracts, lick our wounds, and maybe even jump for joy. This all came to my attention when I was playing on-line bridge this week. I could hear subtle voices in my head saying, "How stupid was that? Or how could I have done that." I knew I should bid 3 No-trump. OMG, am I crazy? I can't even follow suit! Yikes. When I hear all my lamenting, I realized that I too am a victim of my own mistakes, and not letting go, and keep harboring over, and setting myself up for failure for when the next hand is played.

SO TODAY, I'm suggesting that all the folks who badger themselves over a misplayed card realize this isn't the last game you'll play, and you'll play better in the future. Positive is good, negative is bad. Try smiling once in a while. That actually helps lift your spirits and makes others feel good. Smiles are contagious.

Stay chipper, try and keep a regular schedule. One thing that's helped me greatly is dressing nicely. It's so easy to stay in the jammies, sweats, heck, who's going to see me. Guess what, you will! It helps lift our spirits, feel better about ourselves, and love who we are. Before you put on that bathrobe, get dressed first. If you hesitate, you won't bother at all.

So cutie pies, stay stylish and bridge savvy.

East Bay

By Joye Sidoti (efsjbd_ba@hotmail.com)

Captain's log. Stardate 4513.3.

Wouldn't it be nice to have everyone on the planet transported back to 2019 before the first person contracted COVID-19 and to change that one event? Or to hit RESET? Or to wake up and find that we all shared this horrible nightmare and it was only a dream?

At least we have BBO. I had no exposure to it 'before.' I wonder what we are going to call the 'good old days.' I like BC (Before COVID-19), but that's already taken. Possibly we'll use 'old normal' as a contrast with our 'new normal.'

I'm very impressed by BBO. It does everything it needs to. They were able to quickly add ACBL events like Support Your Club, Virtual games, and tournaments. If your speakers are loud enough, you can hear sound effects. When a new hand is dealt, I can hear cards being riffled. When it is my turn, there is a 'dong' sound in addition to the yellow bar. I can call the director. There is even a little area for messages. Yet I don't enjoy playing bridge on BBO. I play for mental stimulation and BBO does a good job. I also play for socialization and that is missing. I feel like I'm playing interactive solitaire.

There is a new vocabulary on BBO. The first time I played, I was declarer. After the hand was over, I saw a message from my partner, 'wdp' WHAT? I couldn't think about it, because I heard the new deal and the 'dong.' I eventually found out 'wdp' meant 'well done partner'.

A few days later, I was on BBO. It was the last board. The declarer was in 4 of a major, making 5. I thought he should have made 6. I looked at the message area and dummy sent 'wdp' to declarer. I couldn't believe he really meant it. Maybe he was being sarcastic. Most people did make 6 and they tied for bottom. Well done!

Something I do like about BBO is that dummy sees declarer's hand immediately. Partner was declarer. I saw 2 possible ways of playing the hand. Partner won the opening lead and found a third way. I yelled 'NO, DON'T DO THAT.' Partner managed to go down in a cold contract. Did BBO etiquette require me to send a 'wdp' message to partner? I didn't.

Convention cards seem obsolete. At the bridge club, some opponents would study our card intently even for 2-board rounds. 'What is Biershank? What is your recommended defense?' Now we just describe our general system and carding and some people don't even do that. Abbreviated messages are sent at the beginning of a round. One pair played std and std. With one partner, I play 2/1, USDA, and odd/even. This means 2/1 game force, upside-down attitude (implying std count) and odd/even for our 1st discard. One pair played mod-Precision with 1d=16+ HCP. What else did they play? Who knows? Who cares?

I know there are human directors at Virtual games, but I wonder if BBO games have a human or robot director. Here is my long, sad story. Board 15 wasn't finished, but the round ended. The result area showed 'A = =' As the last round started,

I got a message that the result was changed to 4 hearts making for 620. There was an 'ok' button. I wasn't okay with the result. The next round started.

I realized I could call the director. If you don't know, during the game, there is a blue box with 3 white lines, near the top left. I pressed it. One of the options was 'call director'. This gave me the opportunity to explain that the declarer should have made 4 hearts, but he misplayed it. I received a message from ACBL41 (private) that stated he lost 3 tricks. I wanted to answer, but I didn't know how. I later found out that I had to call the director again. I sent my message from the bottom of the screen.

I tried to explain what happened, but the director wouldn't listen. The opponents got to 4 hearts on an auction where I made a diamond overcall. Partner led the ace of diamonds. Dummy had four diamonds (the jack and 3 small). I encouraged and declarer ruffed (1st trump).

Declarer played the ace of hearts (2nd trump) and everyone followed. Dummy had queen, 10, 8, x. The declarer played another heart (3rd trump) and I won my king with partner playing a small heart. I played another diamond and declarer ruffed (4th trump) and then played the 9 of hearts (5th trump). My partner sluffed and declarer let the clock run out.

I would have gotten in later with an outside ace and we would cash 2 diamonds and declarer would have been down. The director kept insisting declarer had another trump, but he had played it! Human or robot?

Imagine trying to discuss this while playing 3 boards. I described this story

because I know some directors will read it and maybe they will have an answer. At the very least BBO should be changed. If a director adjusts a hand, instead of 'OK', have 'AGREE' and 'DISAGREE' choices. The 'DISAGREE' choice should automatically call the director and provide the opportunity for an explanation.

Governor Newsom has a 4 phase plan to get us completely into the 'new normal'. I wonder if that includes face masks and 6 feet social distancing. If so, duplicate bridge is going to wait until phase 5. We can sanitize the Bridge Mate before the play starts. If just North (or South) touches it, that would work. North could show East/West the results and North would touch the accept key. If not, the Bridge Mate would need to be sanitized each round. I'm not sure how the boards, cards and bidding boxes could be sanitized.

If and when we go back to playing together, I predict the following: Partner opens 1NT. Right-hand opponent glares at me and finally says 'range?' I don't have to say 15-17 any more....or yes I do. Opponent passes and I have to decide what to do with my 6-card major and 6 HCP. Do I want to transfer at the 2-level or 4-level or 2-level and invite with 3.

While I'm thinking, I hear 'Joye, your turn.' I didn't hear 'dong!' I say 'transfer' and before I can pull the bid from the box, my left-hand opponent calls 'director please' because I announced my own bid. I'm learning a lot of new habits that will have to change. I hope the directors have a lot of patience.

Welcome to new Unit 502 members Ann Belcher and Robert Minot. Congratulations

to Tina Heldman who is now a Bronze Life Master.

There have been some game changes and additions at EBCBC. The new schedule is: Open games (every day) at 1:30 pm; 299er games (Tues, Fri, Sat, Sun) at 10:00 am; Monday Evening Shuffle at 6:30 pm; Tuesday Evening 299er game at 6:45 pm; All games are still \$8.00.

I want to thank Larry Bowerman who graciously traded months with me so I could publish this column while it was still relevant.

Stay healthy. Practice the 3 W's: Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; Wear a face mask; Watch your distancing.

Marcia Wasserman is writing the August column, so please contact her at (marciawasserman@gmail.com) if you have anything to report.

Fresno

By Laura Da Costa

Hello Everyone!

The Fresno Bridge Center remained closed for the whole month of June. At the moment, the closure is likely to go through some, if not all, of July as well.

As you are probably aware, all regionals and nationals scheduled for the rest of the year are cancelled. Hard to say whether that would apply to our Non Life Master Sectional scheduled for August 8 & 9, as it does not use ACBL personnel. However, there is a good chance we will have to cancel it because we probably will not be

able to follow the ACBL rules for running a game. We should know at some point this month (July) if it is cancelled for August.

Meantime we are starting to get some revenue from the Bridge Base Online (BBO) games that some of you have played in. The BBO pair games that benefit clubs are held at 7 am, 2 pm, and 4:30 pm. Also, there are Individual games held each day.

For those wanting to play in other virtual games, our different clubs have pooled our player database with Desert City Bridge Club. It has allowed some of our players to play in recent silver point games that they are holding. Their schedule of games can be found at www.desertcitiesbridge.com.

Speaking of Websites, we are about to lose our old one, the one that most of you probably log into all the time. That website was part of our previous district's website (District 22). We were just informed that it is being shut down. Once it is gone, please use www.fresnobridge.com to keep up to date with what is (or is not) going on.

Until we see each other again, stay well.

Livermore Valley

By Rosemarie LaFrancesca

As restrictions end, people are venturing out a bit more. Some states see a spike in the virus as a result. We do not have any plans to open the Livermore Club yet, but we continue to enjoy online play. It is nice to never bid out of turn or to make insufficient bids. We have far fewer Director calls. We have Director calls

mainly for slow play or because someone lost their internet connection!

When we return, I propose having only one bidding box at each table. This box will be passed to the next bidder...no more insufficient bids!

In the meantime, we will see you online. I am pleased to run into former players who have moved. Nancy and Steve Blasingame are frequent players on the Livermore game days; and on Friday I played against Stan Sitzmann, our former member who moved to Minnesota. I guess there are some advantages to playing online.

See you soon virtually!

Marin

By Gail Haar

Even in these difficult times our unit is growing. A big virtual welcome to Martin Brotman, William Cline, Susan Daniloff and Susan Lachtman, and a hearty congratulations to Arti Bhargava who attained the rank of Diamond Life Master.



If you haven't done so yet, go to marinbridge.org and check out the steadily increasing information about our Unit's BBO Virtual Club games. There's also an excellent FAQ that is updated frequently with input from our members.

A Unit 508 tradition is to have a party each June to honor our Ace of Clubs and Mini-McKenney Award winners. Quick refresher: The Ace of Clubs is a certificate

given to the players in each unit, one per ranking level, who earn the most master points in club games during the calendar year. The Mini-McKenney medallions are given to the players in each unit, one per ranking level, who earn the most total master points during the previous year, not including on-line points. (That may change!) The awards are not mutually exclusive; it's possible to win either or both in the same year. This year our awards were sent through the U.S. Mail, but here's a virtual shout-out to the winners!

0-5, Natasha Khandheria: AC & MM; 5-20, Georgian Farren: AC & MM; 20-50 Jayme Goodale: AC & MM; 50-100 Marvin Moskowitz: AC; 50-100 Naomi Spiegelman: MM; 100-200 Bruce Innes: AC & MM; 200-300 Susan Van Keulen: AC; 200-300 Christine Koehler: MM; 300-500 Stephen Levinson: AC; 300-500 Bill Yeast: MM; 500-1000 Andrea Ventris: AC & MM; 1000-1500 Peter Sager: AC & MM; 1500-2500 Angelo Servino: AC; 1500-2500 Margaret Peterson: MM; 2500-3500 Richard Riezman: AC & MM; 3500-5000 Joan Ehmann: AC; 3500-5000 Arti Bhargava: MM; 5000-7500 Ellen Schiller: AC; 5000-7500 Robert Thomson: MM; 7500-10,000 Carole Liss: AC & MM; 10,000+ Loretta Bromberg: AC; 10,000+ James Griffin: MM.

We had 6 new Life Masters this year: Rita Schaulat, Linda Bucklin, Jody Newman, Enid Rubin, Lillian Trac and Wallace McOuat. Congratulations to you all!

As I write this, the ACBL has just announced that the Fall NABC and all Regional and Sectional tournaments are

cancelled through the end of the year. Our local Virtual Clubs are gamely (pun intended) trying to fill the gap with BBO games and the ACBL is scheduling on-line Regional tournaments for those of us striving for colored points. If you are still hesitant about on-line bridge and are looking for a mentor to help you through the process, please contact Don Tusel at marinbridge.mentoring@sonic.net. We have mentors ready and eager to assist players at all levels to get comfortable in this new-to-many-of-us environment.

Remember:

People with small minds talk about other people;

People with ordinary minds talk about events;

People with great minds talk about ideas;

People with warped minds talk about bridge hands.

And as Sergeant Phil Esterhaus said every week on Hill Street Blues, stay safe out there.

Monterey

By Mary Block

Due to the exigent circumstances of the Covid-19 quarantine, the normal procedures of the election of Board of Director members, annual meeting, and membership appreciation have had to be conducted via the internet.

The new members of the BOD are Mary Block (what was I thinking?), Curt Hussey, Ray Mok, and Joe Truskot. Thanks to

outgoing members Susan Mazzei, Susan Mehra, Amy Pofcher and Ed Schrenzel. Susan Mazzei was President of the unit during the difficult transition, and Susan Mehra was Secretary, always a thankless position. Election of officers will be held at the July meeting.

The awards for Ace of Clubs (total points earned in local club games go to: Peter Steffen, Rita Sturgeon, Amy Pofcher, Barbara Callaway, Ray Mok, Bill Cohen, Jack Crary, Tony Muller, Maja, Lauren Upson, Helen Rubin, Michel Nasr, Betty Jackson, and Rita Shugart. The awards for the Mini-McKenny (all points earned) go to: Peter Steffen, Rita Sturgeon, Jim Chibidakis, Barbara Calloway, Ray Mok, Bill Cohen, Charles Rauch, Tony Muller, Maja, Helen Rubin, Andy Goodman, Betty Jackson, and G. Venkatesh.

The new Life Masters this year avoided being roasted since no one could figure out how to do that virtually. They are: Janice Gleason, Jim Lauderdale, Betty Prunty, Charlene Reimnitz, and Joel Reimnitz.

The Goodwill award this year was an easy choice: John Mahoney exemplifies service to the game of bridge and to our local bridge community. He spent many tireless hours in 2019 searching for and negotiating the lease for the new Bridge Center, contributing his real estate expertise without expecting anything in return. He is always courteous to partners and opponents and the bridge table. He and his wife, Ann, are both wonderful ambassadors for the game of bridge.

There are a few more matters of record to report. The unit has one new member, Arlene Motz. Roger Barry and Rita

Sturgeon are now Sectional Masters. Laura Gherman and Dave Maddox have reached the exalted status of Ruby Master.

I am sad to report that Fran Cava passed away recently. She had played for many years in the NLM games.

As we are all living under what amounts to house arrest, thank goodness for BBO. There are five official games within our unit, delivering masterpoints and providing money for either the unit or a local charity. Other unofficial regular team games are going on, and many small casual games.

I am looking for lockdown anecdotes. What is the most foolish thing you have done? And I don't mean not returning partner's lead. In my case, it was buying toilet paper from Amazon. I knew I was taking a chance with a third-party seller, and I had a bad feeling when I realized it was from China. I was totally dismayed when the order arrived and I realized I had paid \$30 for ten mini-sized rolls.

We are www.montereybridgeclub.com
The Bridge Center is [831-747-1650](tel:831-747-1650). I am maru0407@comcast.net. The Foundation is <http://montereybridgeeducation.org>.

Napa/Solano/Sonoma

By Tom Sheahan

There are still no in person games, but our players are still getting their names in lights. Congratulations to Lynn Dondero, who made Life Master by sitting in his living room. Lynn picked up a needed



Silver point in an online game to go over the top. He and Karen Rocco were victorious a month earlier in an online Regional game and made a nice haul of 27 Gold points. Lynn also made Bronze Life Master as did Karen in the previous month. Congratulations Lynn! Well deserved!

George Gordon is doing his usual great job of directing in the Sonoma online game on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. You play 18 boards in 2 1/2 hours so give it a try. Stay safe out there!

Palo Alto

By Judi Gentry

Hi Bridge Friends:

Its hard to believe that we are entering our fifth month of shelter-in-place! Five months of pursuing bridge in new, alternative ways. For many of us, playing at our club has morphed into playing at our Virtual Club, which has been a reasonably comfortable transition. We're playing with our favorite partners, "seeing" our familiar opponents and being directed by the same club owners whom we respect and appreciate. Thanks to our club leaders, there are many ways we can stay engaged in our bridge community and enhance our bridge knowledge as well.



In May, the very popular bridge lecture series resumed. So far we have benefitted from Sarah Younquist talking about Managing Trump, Ron Karr on Card Combinations and Kevin Wilson (from

Nashville) presenting Fitting Honors. The videos and slide presentation of each of these lectures are available on the club website (paloaltobridge.org). On July 7 (9:30-11:00 am) Lynn Yokel will be offering her always popular lecture format: Six Hands. Don't miss it!

In June, a new feature was added to some of our Virtual Club games: Hand Analysis and Debrief. What a great opportunity to learn from exceptional players what we should have done to get to the right contract or play a difficult hand. So far, these sessions have occurred after the Monday and Thursday games. We have been guided by Ron Karr, Will Watson and Frank Smoot as we go through hand records and figure out how to get better results. If you play in these games, stick around and join the Zoom discussion groups.

There will be a Special Firecracker Unit Game on Sunday, July 12 at 1 pm. Put it on your calendar.

Larry Cohen was scheduled to present a 2-day seminar at our club in June. Of course, it was cancelled. If you would like to benefit from his knowledge, PABC has partnered with Larry to support his online seminars and help our club. If you enroll in a seminar from our website, part of the fee will come back to our club. Check the website for information.

In case all these innovations don't convince you that Unit 503 is doing everything possible to keep you connected, I asked our directors for some reading recommendations:

- *Winning No Trump Leads*, by David Bird and Taf Anthias. It's a book that makes you think a lot more carefully about what

your opening lead against a No Trump contract should be. It contains a lot of good mathematical examples to back up the plays.

- *Robert's Defense Lessons*, by Robert S. Todd (www.advinbridge.com). Really good book describing defensive concepts, carding and leads.

- *Understanding 1NT forcing*, by Marty Bergen. Hard to find, but it may be available at reasonable price from Barnes and Noble.

- *Insights on Bridge: Moments in Bidding*, by Mike Lawrence.

- And, of course, if there's not a book to answer your question, perhaps you could ask Will Watson or Ed Barlow.

I hope you're keeping busy and staying healthy, and enhancing your bridge skills in the process. Judi

Reno

By Jill Wallace, Unit 473 Board President

In last month's article, I described the ways in which several directors of the Mathewson Bridge Center in Reno, NV have been supporting our newer players through weekly coaching sessions. Recently, I received an email from one of these players with the subject "kudos and thanks", which I've included below.

Hi Coaches, I do hope all of you know how much this club and your coaching sessions mean to your membership. A friend recently mentioned that I had a good mental outlook during this isolation period. I told her I attributed part of it to my bridge activities. Honestly, the lessons,

tournaments, and just casual 2-hour games my cohorts and I play weekly have been a life saver.

Did I mention that my game improvement graph is steeper than the daily Covid case graph? (bad joke?) I think the online learning platform lends itself to my learning style. I just want to say thank you for sharing your time and talent with me and all of us. I appreciate the handouts, feedback while we play, and just your attitude that welcomes beginners' "dumb" questions.

In the remainder of this article, I'd like to extend "kudos and thanks" for the following:

- To ACBL: Thank you for providing opportunities for people to play in ACBL duplicate bridge games and earn masterpoints. You have responded to this challenge in an exemplary manner and, paired with BBO, have kept us bridge addicts sane.

- To BBO: Thank you for your wonderful playing platform, particularly the teaching tables, where we do all our coaching. As a bridge teacher, I really appreciate being able to watch every step of the bidding and play in a way that I couldn't do in a physical classroom. Whether the participants in a coaching session have a seat at the table or are kibitzing, they receive coaching that is as individualized as it gets. I predict that the online coaching sessions are here to stay even after we return to the face to face world of duplicate bridge.

- To our experienced players: Thank you for stepping up and playing with our newer players in the Pro-Am virtual club games that are offered twice a week. The

opportunity to play with a more experienced player is very much appreciated by our newbies.

- To our newer players: Thank you for working so hard in coaching sessions and in games, both practice and official, to improve your bridge game. Your progress has been amazing to watch. My best advice to you: Remember that learning to play bridge well is a journey, not a destination! It is a lot of fun to be on this journey with you.

My hope for the future of duplicate bridge is that we will take all of the things we have learned in this challenging time and emerge better than before.

San Francisco

By Kimberly Fanady

Summertime! Hope everyone is hanging in there. Every morning I look in the mirror and think, wow, do I need a haircut!



ACBL's Endless Summer online regional at the end of June should be strong competition, lots of masterpoints, and most of all lots of fun! Just think, you could tell your grandchildren you won the Chocolate Ice Cream Pairs. Log on and sign up. Hope everyone enjoyed the recent Longest Day weekend club games, which were the ACBL's annual fundraiser for the Alzheimer's Association. We all know, play bridge and stay sharp!

Welcome as always to our new members Virginia Baldelli, Patricia Cericola, David

Lansky, and David Weil. It's remarkable and terrific that new bridge players are still signing up! Everyone say an electronic hello and give a virtual elbow bump to these newcomers when you see them online.

Congrats to our ladder climbers: new Junior Master Paul Ehrlich; Advanced NABC Master Rhian Davies; LIFE MASTER Jo Streich; Bronze Life Master Chris Chen; and Ruby Life Master Marc Rosaaen. Good going all!

Finally, we are very sorry but not surprised to learn that ACBL has canceled the Tampa Fall NABC and will not be providing ACBL certified directors or offering masterpoints for any in-person sectionals or regionals for the remainder of 2020, which effectively cancels those tournaments as well.

But we all have to bite the bullet and do our part until the pandemic is over. Until then, stay well, stay safe, stay strong, Unit 506ers. See you on BBO.

Master. Well done all of you.

By my count, we are now offering 14 vClub games each week, plus one free game on Tuesday at 7 pm. Consult the website for days and times for the vClub games. Also, we are using boards from the Common Game for our vClub games.

High scores in vClub games were earned by: Rich Hill & Robin Evenden, 76.06%; Tom Burke & Lester Loops, 74.44%; Gloria Reiss & Steve Nelson, 74.22%; Robert Johnson & Steve Smith, 72.62%; Jim Slinger & Ken Llacera, 72.39%; and Michael Kerner & Betsy Allen, 70.56%.

If you are new to bridge, or an experienced player interested in honing your bridge skills, be sure to check the website calendar for classes.

While we all miss going to our club and the wonderful social aspect of playing bridge, we are thankful that the SCBC is offering so many opportunities to play. Thank you again Ken and Ken.

Santa Cruz

By Karen Schamberg

Despite the challenges of this pesky pandemic, bridge players are forging on. First I want to welcome a new member to our club, Karen Jelcick. I'm looking forward to meeting you in person one of these days.

Congratulations to the following folks for reaching Milestones this month: Steven Nelson, Regional Master; Karen Klimowski, Club Master; Patricia Moesinger, Junior



Santa Rosa/Petaluma

By Cecelia Zachar

BBO is where it's at. The BBO Virtual Club games at the Bridge Gallery are a success, 5 games a week now and 288 tables in the last month.

Unit 509 is sad to say that our upcoming Fall Sectional is cancelled just as are its other remaining sectionals for this year. Maybe in the Spring...

This year our Longest Day festivities were on BBO. The Bridge Gallery Longest Day games fees were \$10 per person of

which \$5.65 will go to the Alzheimer's Foundation. We had 40 tables, so our donation for table fees this year is \$965. Additional donations have been made by players whose checks will be sent to the Alzheimer's Foundation along with the \$965. Our Saturday morning < 500 masterpoint winners were N/S: Sylvia Landt & Judy Kale A, Maxine Reagh & Margaret Senneff B, and Stephanie Poley and Katherine Schram C; E/W Jerry Ogden & David Anderson A & B, and Swan Day & Kathy Ann Wilson C. Saturday afternoon < 2000 winners were N/S Theila Smith & Nancy Rude A, Carol Fraser & Lynn Dondero B, and Lynette Erlach & Linda Hutson C; E/W Jennifer Duval & Elizabeth Strasen A & B, Kathy Ann Wilson & Cynthia Crawford C. The Sunday < 2000 winners were N/S Linda Marin & Barbara Norman A & B & C; E/W John Shribbs & Patricia Shribbs A & B, and Mary Lyons & Robert Rottmayer C. Sunday Open Pairs winners were N/S Doris Ashcroft & Susan Vogtlin A, Barbara Simon & Lynda McGuire B, and Linda Marin & Barbara Norman C; E/W Rebecca Rogers & Kate Hill A, Peter Sager & Barbara Prior B, and David Ganz & Andrea Ventris C.

Since my last article for this newsletter, we have had no 70+% Virtual Club games. I've been told about 2 other big BBO games. In a Daylong Masterpoint Game where a player plays with 3 robots, Jennifer Jones reports that she was the winner in a 520 table game on May 27 with a 75.70% game. On June 5 Bill Walton and Jackie Ortiz came so very close with a 69.89% game in a field of 376 pairs.

At the end of May, the ACBL notified us that our newest Club Masters are Lisa French and Jean O'Donnell, and our new Sectional Master is Jean Polley. Our new Life Master is Abbe (abbefabe) Cohen. Congratulations, all!

Keep well.

Silicon Valley

By Ray Yuenger

While the latest order by the Santa Clara County Health Officer effective June 5 has authorized automobile parades and drive-through events and some outdoor ceremonies and recreational activities, there remains a general prohibition of “(a)ll public and private gatherings of any number of people occurring outside a single household or living unit.” In other words, face-to-face bridge involving mostly elderly players is not resuming any time soon in Santa Clara County, at least not promoted by Unit 507 or the San Jose Bridge Center Association of club owners. Indeed, the ACBL recently determined that it will not provide tournament directors for any regionals or sectionals for the rest of 2020. So the Unit Board won't be planning a sectional for this fall.



The Board continues to meet via Zoom on a monthly basis to make sure we are staying on top of any developments. As announced in my last column, May and June are the months for unit members to make

nominations of candidates to fill the six positions that open up on the Board every year. As usual, I haven't heard a nomination since I made this announcement in my column and on sjbridge.org. Fortunately, all the board members whose terms are elapsing are willing to continue serving, even though the Board isn't being served pizza during its virtual meetings at dinner time.

Under the prevailing circumstances, the annual Unit 507 membership meeting has been postponed until it is feasible to hold it safely. A MailChimp mass email giving this notice to all members at their current addresses on file with the ACBL was opened by 60% of the members. One wonders if the others don't open email or have outdated email addresses on file with the ACBL.

Regarding online bridge, the table count for the San Jose virtual Bridge Club has been dropping. Some scheduled games aren't held because the turnout is below the required minimum. The virtual club was unable to generate much interest in its menu of Longest Day games. Obviously, people will only play as much as they enjoy it. I'm playing about four times as much online as I did in the club, but that's just me. Keep in mind that when you play in your virtual club, you are helping support the directors who used to run the face-to-face games offered in the San Jose Bridge Center.

Congratulations to our Unit's newest Masters: Jan Pfiffner (Club); Ruth Long (Sectional); Kathy Ormseth (Regional); John Stremel (NABC); Bill Riester

(Emerald).

I usually take this list from a monthly report from the ACBL called the "In-and-Out" report, because it also tracks other changes in the unit's membership. About six days after this report, the ACBL sends me (as Executive Editor of this newsletter) a list of upcoming rank changes that will appear in the next month's "In-and-Out Report." Meanwhile they appear elsewhere in this newsletter under Rank Advances.

Why am I providing you with this background information? Because I'm going to break tradition to congratulate Andrew Chen on becoming a Life Master now, and not wait till next month's column. This cat is already far out of the bag. If you read page five of the June Diamond in the Ruff, there was already a report that Andrew, from a bridge-playing family of Unit 507 members, became the youngest Life Master ever just a few days after his eighth birthday.

If you missed that article, perhaps you saw the same story on page B1 in the Local News section of the Mercury News for Sunday June 21. As a monthly columnist, I can't hope to bring you up to the minute news, but I think this is newsworthy enough to give it special emphasis now.

When the San Jose Bridge Center was forced to close its doors by the pandemic, that ended our plans for a unit game honoring the 2019 unit winners of the Mini-McKenney ("MM"; total masterpoints) and Ace of Clubs ("AC"; club masterpoints) races. So we honor them here. Several people prevailed in both categories, including Andrew Chen (0-5 MPs), Kayden

Ge (5-20), Brandon Ge (20-50), Susan Dietz (200-300), Jung Hu (300-500), and Frank Xie (1000-1500). Prevailing in the other categories were: Carolyn Drozdiak (MM), Donna Wirt (AC) 50-100; Jonathan Yue (MM), Joanne Cornbleet (AC) 100-200; Sarah Chen (MM), Colin Hemsley (AC) 500-1000; Jim Liu (MM), Luen-Jyh Luo (AC) 1500-2500); Kevin Rosenberg (MM), Paul Nelson (AC) 2500-3500; Cheryl Mandala (MM), Bob Ritz (AC) 3500-5000; Yul Inn (MM), Bruce Luttrell (AC) 5000-7500; Will Watson (MM), Bill Langlois (AC) 7500-10,000); Michael Rosenberg (MM), Ed Barlow (AC) over 10,000.

Stockton

By Debbie DeZarn

Wow, our bridge clubs have now been closed for a longer time period than they were open in 2020. But people continue to play bridge online, socialize and discuss hands via the chat functions, and earn points to make progress toward advances in ACBL rank.

Congratulations to our newest Regional Master, Judy Tillinghast. She has been playing in Support Your Club games but more regularly enjoys the Sacramento Virtual Clubs limited games several times a week beginning around 11:30 a.m. I love to see people reach their next rank even though it means one less player in the



Stockton Club monthly 99er game when it restarts.

Other under 99ers moving up the ranks are Carole Seed and Mary Westin who have achieved Sectional Master, and already have their colors completed for the next rank at 100 points. Keep up the great progress ladies. Two of our newest Unit 510 members, Margaret Stovall and George Westin have reached Junior Master by winning their 5+ points in just a few months.

I have been informed by our Board President, Ken Hillman, that for the time being we have enough in the Club bank account to maintain the club's rented space for the rest of the year. ACBL posted guidelines for reopening "face to face" clubs but the recommendations are onerous, such as preparing a full set of boards for each table and washing all the cards after each session. Even borrowing boards from Oak Park Bridge Club we could handle only 4-5 tables. But that is all that will fit in our space anyway with the necessary distancing. Since that is a ton of additional work for any director, even one willing to "break quarantine", the current recommendation is that we remain closed for the rest of the year.

Please send me any personal news you'd like to share in the next issue. Even photos! Anyone wearing a bridge themed protective face mask? I have my July 4 mask, AKA "patriotic themed" mask, ready to wear courtesy of Mary Westin. Check Facebook for Wendy Buchanan in her Corgi mask. Keep healthy everyone!

District 21 Board of Directors

Unit 465	Ed Gould	ed-acbl@left.wing.org
Unit 465	Cornelia Gould	cornelia.gould@gmail.com
Unit 473	Diane Todd	ccnm8801@yahoo.com
Unit 473	Judy Robyns	whitsettrobyn@icloud.com
Unit 497	Mark Kornmann	beerman1949@gmail.com
Unit 497	Joyce Burks	jburks@berkeley.edu
Unit 498	Bob Gleason	bob.gleason@comcast.net
Unit 498	Janelle Van Rensselaer	janellevanr@janellevanr.com
Unit 499	Karen Corburn	Kscorburn@gmail.com
Unit 499	Lyn Sacco	lyn.sacco@gmail.com
Unit 500	Shailesh Shah	srshah0345@gmail.com
Unit 500	Carla Francis	cfrancis14@sbcglobal.net
Unit 501	Art Mirin	aamirin@comcast.net
Unit 501	Pat Leary	plleary@comcast.net
Unit 502	Tom Pajak	tompajak999@gmail.com
Unit 502	Marcia Wasserman	marciawasserman@gmail.com
Unit 503	Prue Saunders	prue@pruesaunders.com
Unit 503	Kip Kado	kipkado@gmail.com
Unit 505	Jim Coke	jcoke@yahoo.com
Unit 505	Katherine Ewing	turtle7nt@att.net
Unit 506	Marion Robertson	mrobertson@msn.com
Unit 506	Thomas Stillman	tjsbridge@gmail.com
Unit 507	Ray Yuenger	rayyuenger@gmail.com
Unit 507	Stu Goodgold	stugo@sbcglobal.net
Unit 508	Bill Yeast	marinunit508@gmail.com
Unit 508	Tracey Bauer	tlcinsf@hotmail.com
Unit 509	Tony Jackson	atjsfo@gmail.com
Unit 509	Jackie Ortiz	jackieo@sonic.net
Unit 510	Marilyn Minden	mminden@comcast.net
Unit 510	Mary Sievers	Marysweet15@yahoo.com
Unit 512	Sigrid Price	price.sigrid@gmail.com
Unit 512	Russell Quinnell	russnita@aol.com
Unit 522	Richard Meffley	Sorter52@ix.netcom.com
Unit 522	Anthony Toto	ca1ant@aol.com
Unit 524	Linda King	linda.king@hughes.net
Unit 524	Patricia Stone	patty.stone@charter.net
Unit 529	Libby Longstreth	Libby10@sbcglobal.net
Unit 529	Roger Smith	rlsmithd21@aol.com
Unit 530	Susan Mazzei	samazzei@gmail.com
Unit 550	Ken Llacera	pasa49@pacbell.net
Unit 550	Laura McCabe	laura@philippians313.org

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ACBL DISTRICT 21 OFFICERS

RAY YUENGER

District 21 President

rayyuenger@gmail.com

SIGRID PRICE

District 21 Vice President

price.sigrid@gmail.com

JEAN BARRY

Treasurer

jbarry.d21@gmail.com

SANDI DAVIS

Secretary

sandi.david21@gmail.com

JACKIE ZAYAC

District Director

jackiezayac@gmail.com

PAM HUGHES

Tournament Manager

jmom380@yahoo.com

TRACEY BAUER

Social Media

tlcinsf@hotmail.com

PUBLICATION STAFF

RICH LUTTRELL

Editor

luttrellr@sbcglobal.net

RAY YUENGER

Executive Editor

rayyuenger@gmail.com

GRANT ROBINSON

Web Site Administrator

dist21webmaster@gmail.com