



# DIAMOND IN THE RUFF

ACBL District 21 Newsletter

Vol 3, Number 7 February 2021

## Leaves From the Executive Branch

*By Ray Yuenger, Past President*

According to this District's Bylaws, one of the District's objectives is "[t]o publish a periodical for members and Units in the District." It's my belief that the District Board needs to communicate regularly with the membership to let members know what the District has been doing and is planning to do. Particularly in these isolated times, a newsletter helps foster a sense of community. As President I undertook to compose a monthly column reporting progress at the District level to the membership.

In these pandemic times, District 21 ("D21") has been unable to carry out one of its core functions, which is holding regionals. In September 2020, the Board decided to cut back on publication of this newsletter from monthly to quarterly till there is more to report and D21 has some income. But that doesn't mean the District Board has been twiddling its thumbs while face-to-face bridge has halted.

In this column I'm going to report on the highlights of activity at the District level



## New District 21 President

*by Tracey Bauer, President*

First, I want to thank Ray Yuenger for his leadership. He is an asset to the district, and I am grateful that he will continue to serve on the district's executive committee and lend his expertise to benefit all of us.

This is a challenging time for the game we all love. I believe we have a great opportunity to increase the awareness of bridge as we explore online opportunities and how to return to live bridge. I hope to harness our resources, energize volunteers, and grow bridge. The talented team I am assembling is already hard at work to set us up to modernize the organization. We will then concentrate our energy on growing our membership and helping our units and clubs adapt to the new hybrid online/live model of our game. I have dreams of improving the player experience for all levels of the game, building community and making it fun.

For those who do not know me. I live in Marin County with my husband and two high school age children. I started playing bridge when my daughter, now 15, was in the womb. I have a career that allows me



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since my last column in December and then review what has been accomplished during my year as President.

## **Board meetings**

### January 9

On January 9, 2021, the District Board held its regularly scheduled meeting on what would have been the penultimate day of the Monterey regional. There was one item on the agenda that I thought would require some discussion, namely a number of proposed amendments to the Bylaws, some technical, some substantive. As I reported in my December column, the Bylaws committee had been hard at work since proposing amendments that were adopted at the May 30, 2020 Board meeting. The directors were given over 30 days' notice of the proposed new amendments. A couple of directors had informed me in advance of January 9 that they had some questions about a couple of the proposals.

Amending the Bylaws requires a two-thirds vote of those present. Complicating the vote counting is that units get weighted votes based on the size of their membership. Every unit gets one vote with an additional vote for every 200 members. The units with the most votes, six, are Diablo Valley, Palo Alto, and Sacramento. Even the smallest units, six of them, currently have two votes.

Complicating the voting even further on January 9 was a recent Zoom upgrade that relocated some functions usable for voting, namely indicating "yes" or "no" or virtually raising one's hand. I thought my computer was automatically upgrading software, but it hadn't picked up those

changes, so I ended up misadvising people during the meeting about where to find these functions.

To bypass as much of this confusion as possible, I organized the voting to proceed by way of unanimous consent as to any items not specifically flagged for individual discussion and separate votes. By this expedient ten of the 12 sets of technical changes were approved without objection or separate discussion.

Without advance notice, a proposal to change "he/she" and "she/he" to "s/he" was identified as controversial for excluding gender-fluid and gender-neutral people. This led to a lively discussion about the evolution of language and society for about 18 minutes with several proposed revisions to the amendment. Finally a compromise was proposed and approved for the Bylaws committee to implement.

After 14 more minutes of discussion about where and whether to relocate a definition of "mail," a topic that had been flagged in advance, a compromise was reached.

While all these changes were technical, I was particularly pleased to see revisions made to clearly identify the people designated by their units to attend Board meetings as the Directors of the District Board, not merely "representatives" to the Board. I hope that when this group of people recognizes they are the District's Board of Directors, some will become more engaged in decision-making for the betterment of the District.

Next up on the agenda were ten sets of substantive amendments. Some are more significant than others. Without

reviewing all ten of them, one eliminated the voting power of D21's ACBL Director. It wasn't clear who the Director should be representing when voting on questions for the Board, the Director's unit, the entire Board, or the individual. Another change expressly authorizes meeting electronically when necessary as we have been doing already. Another change empowers the Board to remove an officer at any time by supermajority vote without waiting for the officer's term to end. Also procedures for removing members of the District Board were clarified.

Three of the ten proposed amendments were flagged for individual discussion and the rest passed without objection. One proposal that failed to gain supermajority approval was to eliminate the Western Conference Representative as a mandatory member of the Executive Committee ("ExCom"). Under the Bylaws, certain officers are automatically on the ExCom while other members are named by the President. After all, the Bylaws say that the purpose of the ExCom is to "provide advice, counsel, guidance, and support to the President."

A final proposed change was recognized as requiring a good deal of additional discussion and the Board meeting had already lasted two hours. The Board voted to table that topic and the meeting proceeded by honoring the recipients of Goodwill awards from the District's Goodwill committee and from the D21 President. Those honorees are mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter.

January meetings are traditionally when Board officers are elected, but at

25 minutes after noon, the Board agreed to continue its meeting and any further business till January 30.

After the meeting I got some feedback proposing that the Board meet more than three times a year when necessary. It has turned out during the pandemic that the ACBL Board has been meeting on a monthly basis rather than three times a year before the nationals. If I could have foreseen all the discussion needed about technical amendments, I would have proposed a special Board meeting just to discuss the Bylaws changes and proceeded with the regular agenda on January 9.

### January 30

The week preceding the January 30 meeting was filled with numerous email messages among Board members about one of the topics on the agenda. It turns out that when the President of Monterey Unit 530 signed a lease for club premises beginning in October 2019, the unit provided the landlord with a federal taxpayer number that, according to the Internal Revenue Service website, identified the organization's legal name as "District 21, American Contract Bridge League, a California corporation." So D21 was named the tenant on the lease, and this characterization was carried into a First Amendment of the lease signed at an unknown time in 2020.

In October 2020 some members of the U530 Board brought this misnomer to my attention as D21 President, asking if the signature was authorized and how it affected U530's lease obligations. I responded that U530 and D21 were separate entities and U530 was not authorized to sign contracts

on behalf of D21. On December 5, in response to a message by another U530 Board member, I asked the Unit to arrange with its landlord to modify the lease to reflect the proper tenant. Without repeating the more than 50 emails in this discussion, whether the D21 Board wanted to ratify or disavow this lease was on the agenda for the 30th.

Early in the meeting on the 30th, another technical issue emerged. A test revealed that a new Zoom function enabling voting by recorded poll results was not working, so we had to fall back on plan B for conducting votes, namely private chat to the D21 Secretary, who could then record and weigh the votes before counting them.

After committee chair reports, the Board returned to the last proposed Bylaws amendment, to extend the terms of Board officers from one year to two. The proposal was based on the tradition that Board officers have routinely been re-elected every year in uncontested elections, except that every two years there has been a contested election for Vice-President, because, again by tradition, after the President's term ended after two one-year terms, the Vice-President would be elected President without opposition. There typically hasn't been politicking for District Board positions. It took some arm-twisting before I agreed to run for Vice-President. In addition to eliminating an unnecessary election, the proposal would have allowed a new President more time than the six meetings held in two years to make progress on longer-term projects. After discussion, this amendment failed to obtain supermajority approval.

Next on the agenda, due to the failure of this amendment, were elections of Board officers. The Secretary, Sandi Davis, Treasurer, Jean Barry, and Vice-President, Sigrid Price, were re-elected by affirmation with no other candidates nominated. However, there was a surprise nomination from the floor by Jackie Zayac of Tracey Bauer for President. I say "surprise" because this nomination wasn't mentioned during the ExCom meeting the previous evening, although the next day's agenda was the main topic of that meeting. The Bylaws do allow for nominations from the floor.

Although I was hosting the Zoom meeting, we had to arrange for me to leave the Board meeting while Tracey made a presentation. (Tracey has kindly shared her PowerPoint presentation with me, which I'll view after this newsletter is published.) There were some technical difficulties in arranging another meeting host but I left the meeting and returned in about ten minutes after seeing some chat saying it was my turn to speak. I spoke briefly and then the Board was asked to submit their chat votes to the Secretary while we proceeded to an election to fill two positions on the Board of Governors.

Anne Hollingsworth, Max Schireson, and Jackie Zayac were running for those positions. There was a lot of discussion about whether each Director should cast one vote, thereby electing the top two vote-receivers, or whether each Director should cast one vote for each of the two open positions, thereby electing the top two vote-receivers. A majority favored the second method. Each of the candidates



made a presentation while I placed the other two in a virtual waiting room and then the Board proceeded to cast chat votes while the next issue was addressed.

The next question asked was whether the Board in 2021 wanted to continue its practice of giving \$5,000 annually to charities unrelated to bridge when D21 has had no income from its last four regionals. Jeff Hack, the Charity chair, recommended not making donations. After some discussion the Board proceeded to cast chat votes while I reported that D21 is still in the process of completing its purchase of the van previously leased to move tournament supplies. While we had paid the remaining balance on the lease in October, the lessor had been slow in providing the title documents, which had arrived a week before the January 30 meeting. It remains for the District to record the transfer of title.

The Secretary announced the results of the votes. Tracey, Jackie, and Anne were each the successful candidates. The Board deferred making any charitable donations in 2021.

The Board voted to reward the third-place NAP qualifiers.

It was about noon and the topic of the Monterey lease was discussed. Susan Mazzei, the District Board member from Monterey (who was also the lease signer), reported being in negotiations with the landlord to amend the lease to eliminate D21 as the tenant. Further discussion about the D21 Board taking a position on these negotiations was tabled.

As part of this discussion, the Board accepted the offer by Lynn Bartz, a Director

from U507, to send the IRS name changes for D21 units so that no similar confusion will arise from IRS records in the future. The Board also accepted Lynn's offer going forward to prepare the annual 990 forms reflecting the group exemption that D21 has obtained on behalf of many of its units.

### **My Presidency**

Tracey has kindly suggested I include a review of my year as President of D21 in this, my valedictory column as President. From my prior monthly columns, you may have concluded I'm loquacious in print. I have tried in those columns to share everything that might be of interest to D21 members. You can read or reread those columns in the newsletters on the D21 website. I don't want to repeat myself, so I'll just mention what comes to mind first.

### Hotel contracts and cancellations

Looking back, as the new D21 President I was prepared to have discussions about how we can manage the national trend of reduced turnout at regionals. I was not prepared to be researching force majeure contracts in hotel contracts or keeping up with public health announcements at national, state, and local levels as they pertained to the viability of holding a regional. Needs must. D21 has successfully negotiated the cancellations of hotel contracts in Sacramento, Santa Clara, Sparks (Reno), and Monterey without liability. Pam Hughes, our tournament manager, was key to these negotiations as she was instrumental in making the contracts. I provided background support

regarding the legal language required to justify invocation of force majeure clauses.

I was also able to propose some language changes in future contracts with the Monterey hotel that will minimize D21's financial exposure.

### Bylaws

During a tournament hiatus, it was a good time to focus on the organization of D21. The President is an ex officio member of all committees. I was actively involved with the Bylaws committee (Stu Goodgold, Sigrid Price, Jackie Zayac, Marion Robertston, chair) and we proposed several sets of amendments, including some technical amendments that were approved at the May 2020 meeting as well as the amendments adopted in January 2021. There is always room for improvement, but I believe D21 now has some up-to-date Bylaws conforming to the current Bylaws and regulations of the ACBL and anticipating the future changes from 25 District Directors to 13 Regional Directors.

### Surfacing and updating the operations of D21

When I became President I surveyed many of the officers, committee chairs, and other D21 personnel and created a Practices and Policies committee (Stu, Jackie, Sigrid, Cornelia Gould, with me as chair) with the following objectives. First, figure out how D21 and all its departments have been operating. Are decisions made pursuant to written guidelines or Board policies? Is a chair or officer compensated by way of stipend or otherwise? Second,

document these practices. Third, determine options for what the policies should be for a particular department or operation. Fourth, educate the District Board about the existing practices and propose policies by which the Board can provide guidance to the organization. Finally, publicize the Board policies, so that the organization and operation of D21 is transparent to new Board members and indeed the entire membership. There has been one meeting so far of this committee followed by some extensive email discussions. It has a lot of ground to cover and frankly, an early proposal for a financial review policy was too full of legalese (by me) for the committee to act on. A revision is in the works.

### The 99er program

One of my more pleasurable duties has been attending to a new interdistrict program (now including West Coast Districts 17, 21, 22, and 23) with two main objectives. (1) Create an online game for an underserved part of our membership, the 99ers, and offer them some post-game free lessons. (2) Provide the home clubs of these 99ers in our districts with an income stream based on a part of the table fees not needed to operate the program.

This program is modeled on one created by Jay Whipple in D9 (Florida) and he has generously offered the use of his software as needed to enroll local clubs. (A feature of this program is that a club can enroll its 99ers in our club without pooling its entire membership.)

You can read a program flyer elsewhere in this newsletter.

The first game was on October 19. Through the end of December, D21 clubs have been paid \$5,199.24 in table fees. D21 is by far the largest contributor of players. The game averages about 35 tables a night currently. It is self-sustaining. Management discussions involve how many boards to offer and how much to charge during Silver Linings weeks and how much we can afford to send back each month to local clubs. We are trying to figure out how to minimize the workload of the group's treasurer, who is volunteering her time sending over 50 checks a month to local clubs and paying our staff of two directors, two teachers, and two director-teachers. I know some VACBs are struggling to keep their doors open, so the success of this game has been encouraging, particularly as we are reaching the newer bridge players who will be the foundation for the survival of the ACBL and D21.

On that happy note, I'll say thanks for the opportunity to serve as District President, even for a short time. I apologize to those I presumably offended along the way. I recognize there have been growing pains getting used to and keeping up with using Zoom while presiding at a meeting. There were missteps in proposing returning the tournament supplies van and putting supplies in a less accessible storage pod, but those mistakes were avoided in time after further study.

I know Tracey, our new President, is bringing a lot of energy and enthusiasm to reimagining D21. She will need your help, so answer her call. I intend to.

## District 21 2021 GNTs

*By Grant Vance, D21 GNT Coordinator*

According to the latest announcement from the ACBL:



Grand National Teams

- 2020 National Final, scheduled for Montreal, was canceled.

- For Districts whose 2020 District Finals were completed:

- Districts are strongly encouraged to send teams to the 2021 National Finals if they were announced as your representatives for Montreal.

- Districts should not hold District Finals in 2021 if 2020 winners are established.

District 21 will accordingly be sending our 2020 winners to the 2021 GNT Championships. All masterpoint qualifications from 2020 will be honored for this 2021 contest. These Championships will be held in July, 2021, either in Providence or online, depending on the pandemic's duration. D21 will not hold a grass roots GNT contest in 2021.

The next iteration of our District GNTs will be held in 2022. By this time, we all fervently hope face to face bridge will have returned. If not, the 2022 contest will be held online. Be ready to use Zoom if our GNTs are held online; Zoom will be a required element of entering the event. Zoom adds a personal element of contact missing from our normal BBO games, and makes security much more palatable. It won't replace the experience of holding cards, being with all our friends and foes, and travelling to tournaments, but it's a good step closer!

to travel the whole Pacific Northwest and has given me the opportunity to play bridge in various locales. I have always been a hybrid player, playing half my bridge online and half in clubs and tournaments. I am passionate about the game and have served on the boards of Marin and D21 for the past decade. I started our social media presence for Marin's unit, D21, and lent my expertise to the ACBL with their social media national roll out plan. I'm employed in sales and marketing for an international company and work in collaborative international teams. The focus of my job is working with small businesses to help them stay top of market and adapt to changing market conditions, working on top brands like RayBan and currently Chanel.

I hope to use these skills to modernize our approach to bridge. I would love to share my vision with you and get your feedback on where you would like the district to focus its efforts this year by hosting this upcoming feedback event:

D21 President TownHall on March 6th at 10am on Zoom. Please email me at [district21acblpresident@gmail.com](mailto:district21acblpresident@gmail.com) to register.

Zoom link to be sent to those registered.

I am honored that the district board chose me to lead us at this critical juncture of the future of bridge. This has been a challenging year, however these challenges provide us new opportunities to pivot, grow, and improve our bridge experience. I look forward to working with all of you as we re-imagine bridge in the 21st century.

## Tampa Board of Directors Online Meeting - Fall, 2020

By Jackie Zayac

Last Fall, the ACBL Board of Directors held its meetings in San Francisco and we all left expecting to celebrate Thanksgiving 2020 in Tampa, Florida. Instead, the ACBL Board of Directors held its Fall meetings online on November 18-20, 2020. The silver lining is that the meetings were held a week ahead of Thanksgiving which gave the Board the opportunity to spend the holiday with friends and family for the first time in years. Of course, this is not a normal year and, hopefully, people did not gather together, especially with the spike in Covid-19 cases we have experienced in December. Some days, I feel like I am living a year in the Twilight Zone!



Here are some of the election and appointment results from the Fall meeting:

- Georgia Heth was elected to serve a second year as the ACBL President.
- Carlos Munoz was elected as a 401K Trustee for a four-year term from January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2024.
- Cindy Shoemaker was elected as a Trustee of the Charity Foundation for a four-year term from January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2024.
- Nancy Strohmer was elected to fill a vacated term as a Trustee of the Charity Foundation which will end on December 31, 2021.



- Lane Galloway of Laredo, Texas is the 2021 Aileen Osofsky ACBL Goodwill Member of the Year.
- Uday Ivatury is the 2021 Honorary Member of the Year.
- Jay Whipple is the 2021 Volunteer Member of the Year.

The Board reviewed and approved the special event calendar for 2021 after making two changes. There will be a one-week event benefitting the ACBL Education Foundation in February 2021 and a one-week event benefitting the ACBL Charity Foundation in April 2021. Initially, two days were proposed for each event, but the Board increased both events to a one-week duration.

**Ratification of Audit Firm** – The firm of Dixon Hughes Goodman, LLP was approved as the ACBL auditors for fiscal years 2020 – 2022. It became effective immediately.

**Report on Hearings** – The Appeals and Charges Committee reported that it had approved five negotiated settlements for cheating cases. The Board received the report by a vote of 25-0.

**CDR Revisions** - This motion made changes in the section of the codification regarding an ACBL member in good standing, which appellate body has jurisdiction over a disciplinary case, charged party’s rights and automatic review and appeal procedures. The motion was approved by a vote of 24-0-1. I voted yes. It became effective immediately.

**Operating and Capital Budget** – The 2021 Operating Budget and the 2021 Capital

25-0. It became effective immediately.

**U.S. Currency for Membership Dues’ Transactions** – Amend the codification to allow for the payment of membership dues in U.S. dollars only. The vote was 24-1. I voted yes. It became effective immediately.

**Budget Calendar** – This motion changes the timing of the budget process. The budget for the next calendar year will be finalized no later than November 1, approved by the Finance Committee and then presented to the full Board for ratification prior to the end of the calendar year. The vote was 25-0. It is effective January 31, 2021.

**Platinum Events** – Amend the Platinum Events entry requirements for paid up ACBL members, who have earned at least fifty (50) platinum points to qualify to play in said Platinum Events, to require the accumulation of platinum points from the nine (9) most recently held in-person NABCs. THIS IS MY MOTION! Tracey Bauer brought this issue to my attention during the summer and I submitted this motion to keep everyone impacted by this requirement from being negatively affected as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The vote was 25-0. It is effective retroactive to January 1, 2020.

**Alert Chart** – Approve the Alert Procedures as presented by the Competitions and Conventions Committee in 2020. Some of the changes include rather than saying “transfer”, the suit will be named, state the length of a suit rather than “could be short” and support doubles will no longer be alerted. Grant Robinson has inserted a link to the new Alert Procedure to my report on the D21 website. The vote was

25-0. It will be effective January 1, 2021.

The next four motions were all recommended by the Transition Task Force as the Board begins to reduce from 25 to 13 members. There will be a new system of delegating authority to management, but everything will continue normally while the delegation to management takes place over time.

**Establish a Framework for Operating Guidelines—Amend Codification Chapter II – Business Management, A. Finance, Section 3 – Management Functions** to add the following:

3.6 The ACBL Board delegates authority to ACBL management in the program areas identified by, and subject to the specifications and constraints listed in, a newly created Appendix 2D – Operating Guidelines.

The vote was 25-0. It will be effective January 1, 2021.

**Overall Operating Guidelines – Codification Appendix 2D – Operating Guidelines** shall include a Section 1 as follows:

- Overall

As functions shift from the ACBL Board of Directors to ACBL management, the Board intends that current operations continue except where noted within these Operating Guidelines.

The vote was 25-0. It will be effective January 1, 2021.

**Operating Guidelines for NABC Site Selection – Codification Appendix 2D – Operating Guidelines** shall include a Section 2 as follows:

- 2 NABC Site Selection

- ACBL management shall maintain a standard Request for Proposal (RFP) for NABC site selection. The ACBL President and the Finance Chair must be alerted to any changes to the RFP.

- It is the expectation of the Board that NABCs will be profitable, however, ACBL management may provide any reasonable budget for any proposed NABC site. As manpower permits, ACBL management shall update budget projections for approved NABC sites if substantial changes to the projections occur.

- The Board shall continue to be responsible for any decision to change the number of annual NABC tournaments.

The vote was 24-1. I voted yes. The effective date will be the earlier of January 1, 2022 or the approval of operating guidelines by the NABC Review Committee.

**Operating Guidance for NABC Review - Codification Appendix 2D – Operating Guidelines** shall include a Section 3 as follows:

- 3 NABC Review

- The Board of Directors must approve substantial changes to NABC events and start times.

The vote was 25-0. The effective date will be the earlier of January 1, 2022 or the approval of operating guidelines by the NABC Review Committee.

**ACBL Logo – Codification Chapter III – Administration, C. Legal, Section 2 – Seal and Emblem, subsection 2.2** is stricken and replaced with the following:

2.2 The ACBL’s logo suite may be updated from time to time by ACBL management with Board approval.

The logo was described in detail in the codification and reference to it must be removed to allow the ACBL to roll out a new logo suite which will occur in the near future. The vote was 24-1. I voted yes. The effective date will be as soon as ACBL management can implement the changes.

### **Unsuccessful Motions**

#### **Teaching Clubs/Centers Incentives**

**(1)** – Modify the ACBL Guest Membership Program by offering new players a one-year membership discount available exclusively through teachers, teaching clubs and teaching centers. The motion failed by a vote of 2-23. I voted against the motion because I want all of our new members to have access to the best rate for membership.

#### **Teaching Clubs/Centers Incentives**

**(2)** – Offer one to two additional Club Championship games with no sanction fee based on objective recruiting performance. The motion failed by a vote of 0-25.

#### **Teaching Clubs/Centers Incentives**

**(3)** – The ACBL shall feature teaching clubs and teaching centers in its advertising, targeting known Guest Members and new prospects. The motion failed by a vote of 0-25.

#### **Teaching Clubs/Centers Incentives**

**(4)** – The ACBL shall award extra matching Cooperative Advertising Program funds to the top recruiting teaching clubs and teaching centers. The motion failed by a vote of 0-25.

**Unit and Club Teacher Recommendations** – The ACBL shall establish procedures to enable teaching clubs and Unit Board of Directors to recommend teachers who teach at clubs or bridge centers to teach beginning bridge classes, record the recommendations for all members in good standing and list the teachers on the trybridge.org website. The motion failed and the vote was 0-25.

#### **Teaching Clubs and Teaching Centers**

– The ACBL shall establish procedures for designating teaching clubs and teaching centers and make a list of teaching clubs and teaching centers available to new prospects in response to their search for how to learn bridge. The motion failed and the vote was 0-25.

As I write this report, the first vaccines for COVID-19 are being given in the United States. I hope that you are all staying safe and healthy during the pandemic. I am hopeful that this is the beginning of the end of our life in the Twilight Zone.

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## **Board of Directors Special Meeting December 16, 2020**

*By Jackie Zayac, District 21 Director*

The ACBL Board of Directors held its final special meeting of the year on December 16, 2020. The following are the motions that were considered during the meeting.



**OEOC Committee** – Brian Platnick was appointed as a replacement member to the Online Ethical Oversight Committee. The vote was 25-0. It is effective immediately.

**Masterpoint Formula Modified for Strength of Field** – In all tournament events for which the overall awards are calculated by formula, (including Individuals, Pairs, Swiss Teams, Board-a-Match Teams, excluding STaCs and events with arbitrary first place awards, such as the Grand National Teams and excluding all events with a knockout phase, the masterpoint formula shall be modified to account for the strength of the field in that event. This was the second reading of this motion. The vote was 25-0. It will be effective on January 1, 2021 or as soon as management can implement it.

**Reducing Masterpoint Awards To Reflect Non-Face-To-Face Play** – In all events conducted online in which ACBL gold, silver or red points are awarded, all masterpoint awards shall be 80% of the amount that would be awarded in a face-to-face game of the same structure, as calculated by applicable formulas. This was the second reading of this motion. The vote was 24-1. I voted yes.

**CBF Mixed Team Awards** – The arbitrary award for the CBF Mixed Team Championship shall be 80 Gold masterpoints, with a match award of 8.00 Red points and with the minimum table rule applying. This was the second reading of this motion. The vote was 25-0. It is effective immediately and retroactive for 2020.

**Reconsideration Of Budget Calendar** – At the Tampa Board Meeting, the Board voted to change the timing of the budget process. The budget for the next calendar year will be finalized no later than November 1, approved by the Finance Committee and then presented to the full Board for ratification prior to the end of the calendar year. The vote was 25-0. It is effective January 31, 2021. At this meeting, the Board was asked to reconsider and defeat this motion so the language could be changed. The vote was 0-25 and it was defeated.

**Budget Calendar** – After defeating the Tampa motion, the Board voted on the following language. The budget for the next calendar year will be finalized no later than October 15, approved by the Finance Committee and then presented to the full Board for ratification in November. The vote was 24-1. I voted yes. It will be effective January 31, 2021.

**Bifurcation of Codification** – The Codification is being divided into two parts. The provisions of the Codification will either be part of the Governance/ Corporation Policy or Bridge Operations Policy. The vote was 23-1-1. I voted yes. It is effective immediately.

It has been my honor to serve as your District Director from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020. I wish you all the very best in your bridge endeavors.



# COVID 19: Calculated Odds,

## Void in a Deal – 19 to 1

*By Stu Goodgold, District 21 Director*

Yes, that's right. The odds of getting a void in a hand are 19 to 1 or about 5%. Fortunately, the odds seem to be higher for being dealt the virus.



There was an election for the District Director from D21 last summer. In case you were not aware of any voting it may be because just unit board members are involved in voting. To summarize, I was elected as the new District Director for D21 and started serving as of January 2021.

This being my first article as a District Director in quite a few years, I realize that everyone reading so far may not be familiar with the governing structure of the ACBL. If you are, just skip down beyond the next four paragraphs.

The ACBL has about 152,000 members, although that number has been in decline this year due to a little matter known as COVID-19. The ACBL includes most of North America, namely the US, Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda. The ACBL consists of 25 Districts, with each District having two or more units within their boundaries. There are about 300 units all told; our District 21 has 21 units... quite convenient to remember. Every sanctioned club is within the geographic limits of a unit; there are roughly 3,000 clubs in all.

Along with the ACBL, every District and Unit has its own board of directors, which make decisions for the organization, be they business, financial, strategic, or

bridge-related. Each of the 25 districts elects a district director who sits on the ACBL Board of Directors (hereafter, the BoD to keep it short). However, that is changing over the next three years, so that the size of the BoD will be reduced to 13 by 2025.

Additionally, each District currently elects five members for the Board of Governors (BoG), which acts as a broad-based advisory board to review decisions by the BoD, and propose motions of its own for the BoD to approve (which happens very seldom... the approvals, not the proposals). The elections for the District Director and the five BoG members are done exclusively by voting of the boards of each Unit within the District, with votes weighted by the number of members in each unit. If you wonder why you don't get a vote, make an effort to get on your unit board and have your say.

In past years the Board of Directors would meet before each of the three NABCs, commonly called nationals, held every year. These are sensibly enough called the Spring, Summer, and Fall NABCs. But this has been no ordinary, or sensible, year as everyone is aware. While it has been only five weeks since the year began, the full board has already met four times via Zoom.

The BoD makes numerous business and governance decisions, most of which are of minor concern to the average bridge player. Rather than bore you with such arcane details here, I will keep it short and report mostly on what affects our district and the players within our district. Anyone truly interested in the full workings of the BoD can find the details in the official minutes or just chat with me.

Last fall the BoD approved the new Alert Procedures. Hopefully, you have all seen them by now and have read the Bridge Bulletin of January 2021 where the highlights were discussed. I hope you especially noted the last part in which it is stated that transitioning to the new alert rules is expected to take some time and leniency will be applied as we make that move.

Even though 2021 has barely begun, the BoD has already made some pertinent decisions.

With the cancelling of almost all live bridge events, ACBL management made difficult decisions to cut expenses significantly. Online bridge proved to be so popular that revenues for 2020 were down only a little but expenses were down considerably more. The ACBL had a net increase of \$2.5M in assets on gross revenues of almost \$16M. The budget for 2021 includes \$300K for marketing incentives, mainly to reverse the decline in membership over the last year.

The North American Pairs (NAP) were not held in 2020. The top pairs in the D21 NAP Finals for Flights A, B, and C from 2019 were carried over to compete for the championship at the 2021 Spring NABC. Unfortunately, this event was cancelled due to COVID-19. Instead, the NAP championships will be held online. Normally, those who finish 1st or 2nd in their flight are awarded \$700 and \$300 respectively for competing in the event. There was much discussion by the BoD whether the money was a prize or meant as a reimbursement for expenses. The decision was to allow the moneys to be paid even though players have no expense

for playing online (yes, the entry fee is waived) primarily because management had already told the participants it is a prize. The next cycle of the NAP starts this summer, but the 'prize' might be changed to a 'reimbursement'. D21 has been supplementing the NAP awards by giving \$200 to the third place finishers who compete in the championships. After some debate, the D21 board voted to also pay the third place prize for this year.

Another significant change in the works is a reduction in the size of the Board of Governors (BoG). This change requires an amendment to the ACBL Bylaws. Any change to the Bylaws requires a 2/3 vote in favor, plus a second reading and 2/3 vote to be taken at least 30 days after the amendment is published in the Bulletin. Bottom line – bylaws changes are not quick or easy. The proposed change reduces the BoG from five members per district down to three members per district. It more broadly defines the purpose of the BoG and also identifies three specific standing committees for the BoG. The amendment passed the first reading 20-5, more than the required 2/3 majority. As a former long-time and very active member of the BoG, I fully support the intent of the amendment to make the BoG more active and meaningful. However, I voted No on the amendment as written because the current bylaws define only one required committee, that of the BoD Executive Committee, whose decisions are a commitment upon the whole ACBL. No other committees are defined in the current bylaws, and in my opinion, adding three much less important standing committees is a degree of specificity that is unwarranted and undesired in these bylaws.

The BoD has an Appeals and Charges Committee, which is the final body to hear cases involving ethical violations. There is also an Ethical Oversight Committee and an Online Ethical Oversight Committee. These days ethical oversight means most often cheating online, so the latter committee has an enormous amount of work before it. It is not unusual for the members of these committees to pore through hundreds of pages, examine hundreds of hands, and hear each case for a dozen hours or more. There are still many such cases in the pipeline, involving players from experts through average club players. The Appeals and Charges Committee recently upheld a decision against a known pro.

On a personal note, I am sure we are all looking forward to when we can once again have face-to-face bridge events, be they club games, sectionals, regionals, or NABCs. ACBL management has extended the cancellation of all tournaments through the end of April so it won't be any time soon.

Of course, no one knows when we will return to the real tables, but we do have to plan for what everyone is expecting: lower attendance at the initial events. Let us all support our return to live bridge when it does indeed happen. And let's turn the tables on that little, microscopic matter called COVID-19 that leaves a void in our hearts....in spades.....at our clubs....and you read it here in the Diamond in the Ruff.

## **Bauer Wins Autumn Festival**

Our incoming D21 President and long-term Social Media Chair, Tracey Bauer, won the Autumn 2020 Festival of the Women's Online World Bridge Club. The Festival lasts for a week, offering seven daily tournaments, including pairs, individual, and robot individual. Each tournament was ten boards. The overall ranking is based on the best ten results obtained by a player, not all the player's results.

Tracey thanks her partners in the pair games, Olivia Schierson, Amy Casanova, Kim Eng, and Christina Lund Madsen.





## Bridge Eyes on the Mask

by Houpei Wei



On September 26, 2017, I became a member of ACBL. June 6, 2020, I became a Club Master of Unit 500 of District 21. December 6, 2020, I promoted to Sectional Master.

During this period came COVID-19, masks, shelter-in-place. We bridge players miss the joy and laughter of the club, big and small humor, humanistic care, what delicious snacks, as well as our high fives and hugs.

Until the virtual club was established, we were in pain and sorrow. When I was extremely bored, I started bridge with my 5-year-old grandson, Kevin Wei (in the photo). What we didn't expect was that he was out of control and addicted, not only to playing cards every day, but studying every character on our convention card. That was my first bridge epiphany .

When I started from scratch to be a Master of the club, I experienced 33 months off and on, minus six months as a volunteers' teacher at the 44th World Bridge Championships. It took 27 months.

In this initial period, we don't expect to get any good rank as long as we are happy. However, after becoming a Club Master, bridge became more interesting and I sought opportunities to get master points. The purpose of playing bridge at this stage is to see the smiling faces of friends. That was my second bridge epiphany.

It took only six months to earn the 30 points separating Club and Sectional Masters. In this time BBO and the ACBL created the virtual club scene. I've been able to play in several virtual clubs and earned enough masterpoints in six months. That has been my third bridge epiphany.

I've kept track of the costs of online play from October 23, 2020 to December 6, 2020. \$31.25 for 25 ACBL speedball games, \$30 for six games at Redwood, \$43.75 for 25 Saturday pairs games, \$25 for five games at CCBC, \$2 for one ABA game, \$37 for 37 games at the Sky club. The total cost of 99 games was \$169, with an average cost of \$1.71 per game.

Since June 6, 2020, I've spent \$461.95 earning 33.3 masterpoints for an average cost per master point of \$13.87. With the improvement of bridge technology, the average cost of each master point will gradually become lower. That's my fourth bridge epiphany.

When I hold my certificate, I miss my bridge partner Lynn Gurnee every Wednesday and my bridge partner Carla Francis every Thursday. I remember their good playing skills clearly, but I almost forget their headscarf, hood, height and smiling face. We all long to see each other at a bridge club, and even on line. If online



games can include video, then bridge's intimacy must be stronger. That's my fifth bridge epiphany.

Playing cards online in BBO virtual clubs made me learn how to rewrite my profile, how to post CC to my partner, and how to check the bidding process. How to look back on cards that were already played. How to check the results of other tables. How to pay attention to the etiquette of online bridge. And how to invite partners and find your own club. That has been my sixth bridge epiphany.

How close am I to my next ACBL Rank? I will continue to study, play cards hard and make more friends. 26 red/gold points, 9.35 silver, to 100 Master points. Because these are the guarantees of health. That's my seventh bridge epiphany.

Covid-19, go away. Vaccine, come on. Let's get back to the club soon. My friends, how are you all? There are card friends over 90 years of age. I hope to see you again soon.

The eyes on my mask are already piercing.

## **2020 District 21 Goodwill and Special Presidential Goodwill Award Winners**

*By Ginny Wailes, D21 Goodwill Chair*

We are very pleased to report that the following outstanding contributors to bridge in our district have been selected to be our 2020 District 21 Goodwill and Special Presidential Goodwill Award winners.

### ***Goodwill Award Winners***

**Dan Bergmann:** Unit 501, Livermore

**Tony Jackson:** Unit 509, Santa Rosa/  
Petaluma

**Libby Longstreth:** Unit 529, Modesto

**Lyn Sacco:** Unit 499, Diablo Valley

**John Schwartz:** Unit 503, Palo Alto

**Jill Wallace:** Unit 473, Reno

### ***Special Presidential Goodwill Award Winner***

**Jackie Lowenberg:** Unit 498, San Mateo

The purpose of these awards is to recognize individuals for their outstanding contributions and personal qualities that lead to the promotion of bridge. Examples of these contributions and qualities include time and efforts on behalf of home units, attention to growth of local membership, cheerful general volunteerism, and support and development of newer and less experienced players.

Through their dedication and ongoing and varied efforts, these winners have made significant contributions to the bridge community. They are all so very deserving of this recognition, and we are most fortunate to have this hardworking, effective, and capable group in our district. Thank you, Dan, Tony, Libby, Lyn, John, Jill, and Jackie, for all that you've done to support bridge. Congratulations to you all!

Many thanks as well to Sandi Davis, Anne Hollingsworth, Tom Pajak, and Prudence Saunders for their fine work as members of the Goodwill Nomination Review Committee.

# RANK ADVANCES

**JANUARY 2021**

## **JUNIOR MASTERS (5 MASTERPOINTS)**

Ronnie Aronowitz, Los Altos CA 503  
Claire Auslen, Mill Valley CA, 508  
Leslie Ballinger, Woodside CA, 498  
Deidra Barsotti, Atherton CA, 503  
Gary Barton, Belmont CA, 498  
Ann Belcher, Oakland CA, 502  
Ethan Bortman, Moraga CA, 499  
Linda Bromwell, Oceanside CA, 507  
Barbara Brown, Saratoga CA, 507  
Eileen Fahrner, Tahoe Vista CA, 465  
Louise Gross, San Rafael CA, 508  
Carmen Keenan, Emerald Hills CA, 498  
Judith Kocher, Half Moon Bay CA, 498  
Georgia Lee, Palo Alto CA, 503  
Robert McElheny, Sunnyvale CA, 507  
Cecilia Muaddi, Danville CA, 499  
Michael Newmark, Reno NV, 473  
Charles Olvis, Pebble Beach CA, 530  
Ann Schuyler, Alameda CA, 502  
Phil Sewald, Menlo Park CA, 498  
Gunter Steinbach, Palo Alto CA, 503  
David Weil, San Francisco CA, 506  
Nancy Zhu, Oakland CA, 502

## **CLUB MASTERS (20 MASTERPOINTS)**

Ronnie Aronowitz, Los Altos CA, 503  
Claire Auslen, Mill Valley CA, 508  
Leslie Ballinger, Woodside CA, 498  
Deidra Barsotti, Atherton CA, 503  
Gary Barton, Belmont CA, 498  
Ann Belcher, Oakland CA, 502  
Ethan Bortman, Moraga CA, 499  
Linda Bromwell, Oceanside CA, 507  
Barbara Brown, Saratoga CA, 507  
Eileen Fahrner, Tahoe Vista CA, 465  
Louise Gross, San Rafael CA, 508  
Carmen Keenan, Emerald Hills CA, 498  
Judith Kocher, Half Moon Bay CA, 498  
Georgia Lee, Palo Alto CA, 503  
Robert McElheny, Sunnyvale CA, 507  
Cecilia Muaddi, Danville CA, 499  
Michael Newmark, Reno NV, 473  
Charles Olvis, Pebble Beach CA, 530  
Ann Schuyler, Alameda CA, 502  
Phil Sewald, Menlo Park CA, 498  
Gunter Steinbach, Palo Alto CA, 503  
David Weil, San Francisco CA, 506  
Nancy Zhu, Oakland CA, 502

## SECTIONAL MASTERS

**(50 MASTERPOINTS)**

Lisa G Bruml, San Mateo CA, 498  
Helen Burke, Oakland CA, 502  
Tj Campbell-Lucas, Tiburon CA, 508  
Etan Cohen, San Francisco CA, 506  
Sandra Fricke, Half Moon Bay CA, 498  
James Kassis, Sacramento CA, 505  
Elaine Kitano, Corte Madera CA, 508  
Maureen Martin, San Mateo CA, 498  
James McGraw, Pleasanton CA, 501  
Shailesh Naik, Saratoga CA, 507  
Patricia Owens, Incline Village NV, 465  
Harjit Sekhon, San Martin CA, 524  
Padmini Sökkappa, Livermore CA, 501  
Madeline Soo, Reno NV, 473  
Richard Tullis, Moraga CA, 499  
Houpei Wei, Union City CA, 500  
Nancy Wood, Sparks NV, 473

## REGIONAL MASTERS

**(100 MASTERPOINTS)**

Beatrice Fu, Los Altos Hills CA, 503  
Madhukar Mehta, Foster City CA, 498  
Gloria Mullen, Menlo Park CA, 503  
Nancy Mulligan, Livermore CA, 501  
Jacky Poulsen, Livermore CA, 501  
Darryl Rosenheim, Sonoma CA, 529  
Rita Schreiber, San Francisco CA, 506  
Betsy Wagner, San Jose CA, 507

## NABC MASTERS

**(200 MASTERPOINTS)**

Barbara Callaway, Carmel Valley CA, 530  
Joyce Ertola Carlson, San Carlos CA, 498  
Irving Googins, Pleasanton CA, 499  
Theresa Iantosca, Los Altos CA, 503  
Regan Johnson, Davis CA, 505  
Linda Kenigsberg, Saratoga CA, 507  
Natasha Khandheria, Corte Madera CA, 508  
Dee Kursh, Oakland CA, 502  
Tillie Myers, San Jose CA, 507  
Allen Simon, Palo Alto CA, 503  
Marilynne Solloway, San Francisco CA, 506  
Bonnie Tragni, Scotts Valley CA, 550  
Susannah Walker, Alamo CA, 499  
Donna Wirt, Saratoga CA, 503

## ADVANCED NABC

**MASTER**

**(300 MASTERPOINTS)**

Dana Murphy, Windsor CA, 509

**LIFE MASTERS**

**(300/500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Paulette Moe, Ross CA, 508  
Dale Seymour, Los Altos CA, 503

## **BRONZE LIFE MASTERS**

**(500/750 MASTERPOINTS)**

Renate Bialy, Sonoma CA, 512  
Ashwini Datar, Cupertino CA, 507  
Terry Gardner, Green Valley AZ, 500  
Beverly McLeod, Sacramento CA, 505  
Peg Remaklus, Vacaville CA, 512  
Joel White, Danville CA, 499

## **GOLD LIFE MASTERS**

**(2500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Kenneth Johnson, Morgan Hill CA, 524  
Hilde Meislin, Mill Valley CA, 508  
Mun Takeda, Fresno CA, 522

## **SAPPHIRE LIFE MASTERS**

**(3500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Nancy Blasingame, Cumming GA, 501  
Winston Stone, Gilroy CA, 524

## **SILVER LIFE MASTERS**

**(1000 MASTERPOINTS)**

Patrick Arnett, Morgan Hill CA, 524  
Frances Bennett, Palo Alto CA, 503  
Richard Hill, Capitola CA, 550  
John Hullman, Soquel CA, 550  
Debbie Machlin, Los Altos CA, 503  
Wayne Rechnitz, Orinda CA, 499  
Karen Zuckerberg, Los Altos Hills CA, 503

## **DIAMOND LIFE MASTER**

**(5000 MASTERPOINTS)**

Jim Houghton, Pollock Pines CA, 505

## **RUBY LIFE MASTERS**

**(1500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Ying Liu, Palo Alto CA, 503  
Lee Medeiros, Crockett CA, 499  
Ankur Rathi, San Francisco CA, 503

## **FEBRUARY 2021**

## **JUNIOR MASTERS**

**(5 MASTERPOINTS)**

Priscilla Bender, Reno NV, 473  
Lois Lybeck Carelli, Oakland CA, 502  
Patricia Cericola, San Francisco CA, 506  
William Cline, Novato CA, 508  
David Coppock, Davis CA, 505  
Leslie Doherty, Palo Alto CA, 503  
David Lansky, San Francisco CA, 506



Harrison Pollak, Oakland CA, 502  
Arnold Roth, Stockton CA, 510  
Deborah Sagues, Ross CA, 508  
Arunodoy Saha, Santa Clara CA, 507  
Pamela Sherman, Sonoma CA, 512  
Theodore Spieth, San Francisco CA, 506  
Janet Tornow, Los Altos CA, 503  
Helen Walker, Berkeley CA, 497  
Mark Zoback, Stanford CA, 503

## **CLUB MASTERS (20 MASTERPOINTS)**

Kathleen Ashton, Los Altos CA, 503  
Christopher Barnes, Nicasio CA, 508  
Anna Brown, Burlingame CA, 498  
Prakash Devaskar, Petaluma CA, 509  
Laura Dholakia, Menlo Park CA, 498  
Sydney Dodds, Walnut Creek CA, 499  
Paul Downey, Healdsburg CA, 509  
Laura Fay, San Francisco CA, 506  
Linda Green, San Anselmo CA, 508  
Eleonore Gutierrez, Salinas CA, 530  
Diane Hidy, San Francisco CA, 506  
Martha Hildreth, Reno NV, 473  
Claire Humphrey, Danville CA, 499  
Linda Hutson, Chicago IL, 509  
Robert Kahl, Lafayette CA, 499  
Kathleen King, Mill Valley CA, 508  
Zandra Krischer, San Francisco CA, 508  
Teresa Loftus, Pleasanton CA, 501  
Robert McElheny, Sunnyvale CA, 507  
Donald Nelson, El Dorado Hills CA, 505  
Margaret Nelson, Loomis CA, 505

Jonathan Osborne, Woodside CA, 498  
Rick Pyle, Danville CA, 499  
Archie Robinson, Pebble Beach CA, 530  
Illa Skidmore, Carmichael CA, 505  
Suzanne Tanenbaum, Larkspur CA, 508  
Lisa Teel, Novato CA, 508  
Deanna Woodhour, Carmel CA, 530  
Lawrence Zito, Gilroy CA, 524

## **SECTIONAL MASTERS (50 MASTERPOINTS)**

Patricia Anderson, Kensington CA, 497  
John Becker, Los Altos CA, 503  
Eric Bishop, San Francisco CA, 506  
Jeremy Brott, Santa Rosa CA, 509  
Karen Bukowski, Sparks NV, 473  
Judy Coy, Orinda CA, 499  
Gilbert Gonzalez, San Francisco CA, 506  
Victoria Hazelrig, Hillsborough CA, 498  
Jeff Hoffman, San Rafael CA, 508  
Mikki Kindelberger, Stockton CA, 510  
David King, San Francisco CA, 506  
Alice Lowe, Walnut Creek CA, 499  
Christine McMahon, Alameda CA, 502  
Larry Meyer, Sacramento CA, 505  
Janis Morehead, Acampo CA, 510  
Michael Peirce, San Francisco CA, 506  
Richard Robertson, Granite Bay CA, 505  
Stuart Rowe, Brentwood CA, 499  
Geno Stille, Incline Village NV, 465  
Alan Wood, Sparks NV, 473

## REGIONAL MASTERS

**(100 MASTERPOINTS)**

Dana Bisconti, Atherton CA, 503  
Cynthia Crawford, Napa CA, 512  
Jan Ives, Placerville CA, 505  
Richard Provines, Mountain View CA, 503  
Arthur Schultz, El Cerrito CA, 497  
Patty Smith, Walnut Creek CA, 499  
Jean Tepper, San Francisco CA, 506

## NABC MASTERS

**(200 MASTERPOINTS)**

Dorene Beavers, Reno NV, 473  
Harley Conner, Santa Rosa CA, 509  
Don Garka, Livermore CA, 501  
Eleanor Gauger, Benicia CA, 512  
Janine Hodgson, Palo Alto CA, 503  
Don Levine, Oakland CA, 502  
Sunil Singh, San Francisco CA, 506  
Stephen Walker, Alamo CA, 499

## ADVANCED NABC MASTERS

**(300 MASTERPOINTS)**

Joanne Cornbleet, Saratoga CA, 507  
Gregory Gauthier, San Francisco CA, 506  
Katherine Kwong, Foster City CA, 498

## LIFE MASTERS

**(300/500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Wendy Buchanan, Woodbridge CA, 510  
Jennifer Duval, Santa Clara CA, 507  
Brandon Ge, Cupertino CA, 507  
Dana Murphy, Windsor CA, 509  
Kevin Patterson, Hayward CA, 500  
Kristin Smith, Corralitos CA, 550  
Bob Spivock, Lafayette CA, 499  
Roy Tsai, San Jose CA, 507  
Alan Woodberry, Orinda CA, 499

## BRONZE LIFE MASTERS

**(500/750 MASTERPOINTS)**

Philip Abrahamson, Atherton CA, 503  
Christine Evans, Walnut Creek CA, 499  
Bill Ihrie, San Carlos CA, 498  
Wendy Jarrett, Corte Madera CA, 508  
Conrad Larkin, Santa Rosa CA, 509  
Libby Longstreth, Riverbank CA, 529  
Geraldine Macdonald, Los Altos CA, 503  
Gary Mankin, San Francisco CA, 506  
Lori Mirek, Atherton CA, 503  
Trudy Moore, Orinda CA, 499  
Dana Shelley, Atherton CA, 503  
Kate Smith, Los Altos Hills CA, 503  
Bob Spivock, Lafayette CA, 499  
John Stremel, San Jose CA, 507  
Lillian Trac, San Rafael CA, 508  
Hans Van Boldrik, Santa Rosa CA, 509

## **SILVER LIFE MASTERS**

**(1000 MASTERPOINTS)**

Howard Balfour, Santa Rosa CA, 509  
Ellen Coll, Corte Madera CA, 508  
Robert Crosby, San Mateo CA, 498  
Philip Freiburger, Los Gatos CA, 507  
Xin Ge, Cupertino CA, 507  
Preston Kauk, Cupertino CA, 507  
Belinda Ledgerwood, Walnut Creek CA, 499  
Elizabeth Silverman, Piedmont CA, 502  
Glo Klinger Williams, Stockton CA, 510

## **RUBY LIFE MASTERS**

**(1500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Mary Bates, San Mateo CA, 498  
Ginny Curtis, Citrus Heights CA, 505  
Peter Figdor, Danville CA, 499  
Josephine Ventura, San Mateo CA, 503

## **GOLD LIFE MASTERS**

**(2500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Joelle Benioff, San Francisco CA, 506  
Joanne Cobeen, Hercules CA, 497  
Larry Spanier, Rohnert Park CA, 509  
William Taggart, Shingle Springs CA, 505

## **SAPPHIRE LIFE MASTER**

**(3500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Ray Boehne, Pebble Beach CA, 530

## **DIAMOND LIFE MASTERS**

**(5000 MASTERPOINTS)**

Malcolm McLaughlin, San Jose CA, 507  
Anthony Trebaol, Milpitas CA, 507

**MARCH 2021**

## **JUNIOR MASTERS**

**(5 MASTERPOINTS)**

Judy Duncan, Half Moon Bay CA, 498  
Yakov Feldman, Mountain View CA, 503  
Marguerite Klaiss, Hillsborough CA, 498  
Sandy Kriegsman, Petaluma CA, 509  
Fadi Maamari, San Jose CA, 507  
Robert McIlhatton, Fresno CA, 522  
Paul Phinney, Carmichael CA, 505  
Wynn Reed, Reno NV, 473  
Jeffrey Roughgarden, Auburn CA, 505  
Susan Roughgarden, Auburn CA, 505  
Nettie Sabelhaus, Sacramento CA, 505  
Gisela Schecter, Half Moon Bay CA, 498  
Luke Sonnet, Menlo Park CA, 498  
Vicki Strotz, Tiburon CA, 508  
Deborah Thompson, Berkeley CA, 497  
Robert Waggener, Walnut Creek CA, 499

## CLUB MASTERS

### (20 MASTERPOINTS)

John Abbis, Menlo Park CA, 498  
William Ballard, Livermore CA, 501  
Patti Beaulieu, Los Altos CA, 503  
David Coppock, Davis CA, 505  
Dyn Dietz, Marina CA, 530  
Eileen Digorgio, San Carlos CA, 498  
Frankie Ferguson, Walnut Creek CA, 499  
Lori Gualco, Sacramento CA, 505  
Rosemary Heil, Oakland CA, 502  
Janet Howard, Walnut Creek CA, 499  
Adrienne Leigh, Burlingame CA, 498  
Diana Mann, San Carlos CA, 498  
Gail Murayama, Half Moon Bay CA, 498  
Randi Murray, Burlingame CA, 498  
Bruce Peetz, Los Gatos CA, 507  
Susan Pretel, Sunnyvale CA, 503  
Lauren Rosen, Burlingame CA, 498  
Tim Segall, Oakland CA, 502  
Maya Sewald, Menlo Park CA, 498  
Cornelia Tilney, Portola Valley CA, 503  
Jerrold Zell, Incline Village NV, 465  
Nancy Zhu, Oakland CA, 502

## SECTIONAL MASTERS

### (50 MASTERPOINTS)

Janice Adragna, Concord CA, 499  
Daryl Babbitt, San Francisco CA, 506  
Ellen Beaudet, Los Altos CA, 503  
Kathy Bertonneau, Brentwood CA, 499

Ray Bland, Lafayette CA, 499  
Noreen Blonien, Sacramento CA, 505  
Lucille Breslow, San Francisco CA, 506  
Michael Breslow, San Francisco CA, 506  
Gail Cameron, Redwood City CA, 498  
Deihleen Claffey, San Francisco CA, 506  
Leslie Dahm, Reno NV, 473  
Terri Goldman, Los Altos Hills CA, 503  
Gary Hargrave, Martinez CA, 499  
Warren Kaplan, Saratoga CA, 507  
Janet Kinney, Walnut Creek CA, 500  
Liz Koh, San Mateo CA, 498  
Jenifer Lary, Brentwood CA, 499  
Neil Libroek, Lafayette CA, 499  
John Loftus, Larkspur CA, 508  
Janet Loops, Capitola CA, 550  
Barbara Mickle, Carson City NV, 473  
Deborah Penrose, Half Moon Bay CA, 498  
Tom Philipps, Concord CA, 499  
Daniel Popplewell, San Francisco CA, 506  
Saul Rapkin, Folsom CA, 505  
Archana Rathnakar, Saratoga CA, 507  
Jennie Schacht, Oakland CA, 502  
Ilene Schwerin, Novato CA, 508  
Rebecca Simmons, Moss Beach CA, 498  
Beverly Stamper, Kentfield CA, 508  
Nancy Steinbach, Palo Alto CA, 503  
Margaret Stovall, Stockton CA, 510  
Carolyn Wasmuth, Sacramento CA, 505  
George Westin, Lodi CA, 510  
Carolyn Wilson, Santa Cruz CA, 550  
Edward Winchester, Reno NV, 473



## REGIONAL MASTERS

(100 MASTERPOINTS)

Larry Bazinett, Pleasanton CA, 501  
Cynthia Birk, Reno NV, 473  
Ying Chow, Los Altos CA, 503  
Bonnie Clawson, Discovery Bay CA, 499  
Michael Cohn, Saratoga CA, 507  
Lynn Farris, Pebble Beach CA, 530  
Rosalind Fisher, Carmel CA, 530  
Christine Foley, Martinez CA, 499  
Ralph Griffin, San Mateo CA, 503  
Susan Griffin, San Mateo CA, 503  
Cathy Johnson, Foster City CA, 498  
Barbara King, Pine Grove CA, 505  
Loreta Landucci, Walnut Creek CA, 499  
David Lawson IV, Sacramento CA, 505  
Lester Loops, Capitola CA, 550  
Richard Lutz, Discovery Bay CA, 499  
Patricia Mitchell, Menlo Park CA, 503  
Shirish Mulay, Roseville CA, 505  
Marcia Pade, Menlo Park CA, 503  
Kathleene Paul, San Francisco CA, 506  
Jane Pedroli, Ross CA, 508  
Jane Plocher, Woodland CA, 505  
Edwin Pogue, Sutter Creek CA, 505  
Roberta Polson, Clayton CA, 499  
Charlene Porras, Stanford CA, 503  
Deepak Ramanathan, San Francisco CA, 506  
Carol Ross, San Rafael CA, 508  
Joy Schenker, Oakland CA, 502  
Luann Schwab, Palo Alto CA, 503  
Evan Scott, Larkspur CA, 508  
Frank Silver, Oakland CA, 502  
Bruce Silverman, Walnut Creek CA, 499  
Elaine Simkins, Reno NV, 473  
Ruth Stotter, Tiburon CA, 508  
Nicklos White, Sacramento CA, 505  
Yuri Yatskar, Monte Sereno CA, 503

DIAMOND IN THE RUFF

## NABC MASTERS

(200 MASTERPOINTS)

David Berkeley, Atherton CA, 503  
Hilary Charlton, Atherton CA, 503  
Judy Duport, Santa Rosa CA, 509  
Shirley Ehrlich, Mill Valley CA, 508  
Jim Haynie, Lincoln CA, 505  
Margareta Hodzic, San Jose CA, 503  
Ed Lichtig, Lafayette CA, 499  
Jane Maloney, Incline Village NV, 465  
Christie Noble, Walnut Creek CA, 499  
Ken Rice, Oakland CA, 502  
Henry Rivers, San Jose CA, 503  
Sherry Ruskin, San Francisco CA, 506  
Carole Seed, Stockton CA, 510  
Gary Sheerer, Los Altos CA, 503  
Ming Sheng, Los Altos CA, 503  
Doug Weil, Napa CA, 512  
Judy Weil, San Francisco CA, 506  
Jenny Zhou, Pleasanton CA, 501

## ADVANCED NABC

MASTERS

(300 MASTERPOINTS)

Eunice Menezes, Cupertino CA, 503  
David Ow, Salinas CA, 530  
Stephanie Youngquist, Palo Alto CA, 503

## **LIFE MASTERS**

**(300/500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Rajani Chandrasekar, Livermore CA, 501  
Gerald Hewitt Jr, San Jose CA, 507  
Furqan Naeem, Pittsburgh CA, 499  
Susan Papilion, Foster City CA, 498  
Ken Pelowski, Atherton CA, 503  
Miriam Steinberg, Carmichael CA, 505

## **RUBY LIFE MASTERS**

**(1500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Edward Easley, Sacramento CA, 505  
Louise Frye, Woodside CA, 498  
Michael Hughes, San Jose CA, 507  
Rose Knutson, Lodi CA, 510  
John Oswalt, Sebastopol CA, 509  
Gayle Tunnell, San Francisco CA, 508  
Paul Vevera, Roseville CA, 505

## **BRONZE LIFE MASTERS**

**(500/750 MASTERPOINTS)**

Marc Cervellino, Palo Alto CA, 503  
Elizabeth Cowell, Mountain View CA, 503  
Richard Reiter, Incline Village NV, 465

## **GOLD LIFE MASTER**

**(2500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Peter Cheung, Fremont CA, 500  
Thomas Franklin III, Martinez CA, 499  
Sarah Stern, Monterey CA, 530

## **SILVER LIFE MASTERS**

**(1000 MASTERPOINTS)**

Han-Yu Chang, Sunnyvale CA, 507  
Jung Hu, San Jose CA, 507  
Sharon Legallet, Hillsborough CA, 498  
Anthony Muller, Pebble Beach CA, 530  
Virginia Sulpizio, Kentfield CA, 508  
Anne Wilson, Campbell CA, 507

## **SAPPHIRE LIFE MASTERS**

**(3500 MASTERPOINTS)**

Sharon Bahry, Reno NV, 473  
Paul Nelson, Santa Clara CA, 507

## **DIAMOND LIFE MASTER**

**(5000 MASTERPOINTS)**

Judy Fisher, Campbell CA, 507



# The All-Western 99er NiteClub

A game dedicated to 99ers where you and your partner can play safely and have fun

12-board ACBL Virtual Games, awarding masterpoints®  
Mondays-Thursdays at 6:30PM PT

Followed by post-game analysis on [Zoom](#),  
hosted by our districts' finest teachers

## Prerequisites:

Participants must have fewer than 100MPs  
Participants must have played in at least one virtual game on BBO  
Participants belong to a club that has opted into the 99er NiteClub program\*

## Registration:

Between 4:30PM and 6:15PM PT, log into BBO  
Select "Competitive" under "Play or Watch Bridge"  
Select "ACBL Virtual Clubs" under "Tournaments"  
Look for VACB905265 "All-Western 99er NiteClub"

If the ACBL has your email on file, you will also receive an invite on those days your club has opted into this program, including the schedule for the day plus links to the previous day's program

\$6 entry fee – a portion of the proceeds will be returned to the clubs.

*Proudly sponsored as a service to our 99ers by Districts 17/21/22/23 and Unit 526*

For more information, please contact your home club  
or the 99er NiteClub at [99erNiteClub@gmail.com](mailto:99erNiteClub@gmail.com)

\* Some players may not be affiliated with a local club – as "free agents," you will be vetted by the club manager when you register

# HEART OF THE DISTRICT

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<a href="#"><u>Santa Rosa/Petaluma</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>509</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Cecelia Zachar</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Silicon Valley</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>507</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Ray Yuenger</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Stockton</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>510</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Debbie DeZarn</u></a>



## Berkeley/El Cerrito/Richmond up soon).

*By The Beer Dude*

Happy MMXXI – good riddance to MMXX & to Dolt 45, the worst POTUS ever! As far as EC Bridge Club goes, I doubt we'll be able to reopen until at least April – I'm still not able to book dates. It'll be on our website as soon as I get the go-ahead.

In late October, we lost Barbara Gamba (age 79) due to after effects from a fall. Until she gave up the game a few years ago, she played semi-regularly w/Jan Kosel. The bigger & better news was that “H”(elen Studabaker) hit the big Nine-oh in early November & is alive & kicking! Jan Kosel scored enough of her needed metal points on BBO to make LM in November. She & Ben Grubel have done very well playing together online. We picked up a couple more newcomers (UC students most likely) in the last quarter; we also lost long-time denizen Annette Goldberg in early Dec – she was 98. Annette was the cruise queen – often gone for 3-5 months at a time; her last one was the Carnival cruise that got hit w/COVID, requiring a 2-week quarantine at Travis AFB in May.

By the time I write again, it'll be baseball season, & we'll know if the Warriors will make the playoffs. And maybe I'll have cashed my bet on KC to win the Super Bowl. And hopefully, we'll have had a few good dousings of much-needed rain!

2020 – what a long strange trip it was, but we kept on truckin' & rode it out. May we all be COVID-vaccinated by June, sooner if we're lucky (those age 75+ are

Remain safe & sane – wear those masks when you're out in public! And may you have enjoyed some good bubbly New Years' Eve & Day (as well as on Inauguration Day)!

## Diablo Valley

*By Lisa Assoni/The ShortCut Cook*

New Year/Are you kiddin' me?

In past years traditionally most folks stay home for New Year's Eve and begin to take an inventory about their lives and make resolutions. We try and make new changes for the better, and look back on the past and say farewell. So what sprouts up for Americans? We make 1.8 million New Year's resolutions each year. If you take into account the whole world, the number of people making resolutions skyrockets to hundreds of millions. And, the number one resolution is-- drum roll please-- losing weight, exercising more, and making good, healthy food choices. For us bridge folks, we can be a sedentary group. OMG, especially now with this Corona Virus. Even my dog is gaining weight. Yes, we all try to eat well. However, sometimes our food choices fall flat as a pancake. So let the sun and bread rise, as we hope to lighten our load. This can be done, even when playing from home. Walking is a good thing, so if you can, exercise too. Try to eat light and think right!



Andy Fine noted that playing on-line brings a whole new menu to our tables. We play with folks from other countries, some we weren't familiar with, but it's nice to engage with people from around the world. That's one way to travel!!!

New Years, New years, please help us stop my fears, I'll try and do my best to focus on the good things, and dispel the bad. News can make us very sad. Resolutions are made, foundations are laid; but by two weeks or so, you'll forget what you made. So, it's all about keeping trying to be safe and sane.

I never thought a mask was a good thing. It's become quite a task. Facial coverings come in all colors and shapes, some make us look like a saint, and others make us look faint. So keep it simple, and keep your expectations low, and if someone's cranky, just let it go. Always remember to ponder a response, by keeping it thoughtfully slow.

The vaccine lurks in our future, wondering when our turn will come. I look to my Maker for guidance from above, praying for miracles that may or may not come. It's been said time and time again. - May your New Year be a renewal for a brightly lit future. And remember, to always keep the light on.

Well wishes to all!

Lisa/[shortcutcook.com](http://shortcutcook.com)/Covid recipes

*Sidenote: I have a website [shortcutcook.com](http://shortcutcook.com). It's sharing fun, fast, and healthy recipes. It was designed just for this terrible pandemic.*

## East Bay

*By Joye Sidoti (efsjbd\_ba@hotmail.com)*

Happy New Year. I hope and pray that the vaccines are safe, effective and available. I am writing this column in the middle of December. Pfizer and Moderna have been given Emergency Use Authorization for their vaccines, AND Mother Nature has sent an early major snowstorm to the Northeastern states which will disrupt the delivery and distribution of the vaccines. Why not?

In March, most of us will 'celebrate' the one-year anniversary of the last time we played face-to-face bridge with bidding boxes, boards and cards. Some opponents were discussing the upcoming National in Columbus, Ohio; they weren't concerned about some virus; the ACBL would have hand sanitizers available. Then the Governor asked us to stay home. I remember rushing to the store to buy enough food and supplies to last a few weeks, thinking I could even last a few months. Now it's almost a year! Hopefully, the 'new normal' will be soon.

Many thanks to Betty Kael, Tom Pajak, and Sandi Davis for creating the EBCBC weekly newsletter emails. Their efforts in keeping us updated are appreciated.

Congratulations to the following members on their recent rank advancement: Cynthia Hull to Club Master; Lois Flock, Philip Leung, and Tom Pajak to Ruby Life Master; Ravi Bhalla to Emerald Life Master.

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 distance.

Larry Bowerman is writing the April column, so please contact him at (lmjtbow@pacbell.net) if you have anything to report.

## Fresno

*By Laura Da Costa*

It is 2021! This year, we hope, will be better than last year (cross fingers, knock on wood). Hope all of you are well and continue to be well in our new year and that we will all be able to see each other face-to-face at the bridge table by the end of Summer.

We start the new year off by thanking Kay Chrisman for her service as both Secretary for the board and director/owner of our Tuesday and Thursday afternoon 750 games. Kay has chosen to retire from those duties for health reasons. Hopefully when the clubhouse is up and running again, Kay will be able to join us in the role of player. We really do appreciate all that you have done Kay, including the tireless job of keeping the clubhouse running.

The election for Board of Directors has been completed. The now seven-member

board had three openings for this election. The three incumbents, Laura Da Costa, Deb Petersen, and Steve Johnson have been re-elected. First runner up, Margot Cegielski, was appointed to take Kay Chrisman's spot on the board, so that we can continue to have seven members.

At our first meeting after the election, some board members were voted to continue their previously elected positions: Don Austin as President, Laura Da Costa as Vice President, and Marion Austin as Treasurer. It was also voted that Margot Cegielski will take over the role of Secretary that Kay held for over a decade.

In other news, we finally concluded a negotiation to end our lease for the Shaw clubhouse. The final steps for that agreement were performed early in the new year. We thank our President, Don Austin, for all of his work in the negotiation process. It is hoped that we will be able to start our search for a new home in February. If you know of a good location, let a board member know.

In other news, members are still advancing in rank through online play. This month we congratulate Mun Takeda who is now a Gold Life Master (2500 mps)!

A big Welcome to Unit 522 to Kathleen Dennen of Clovis!

## Livermore Valley

*By Rosemarie LaFrancesca*

This is a month late, but sing it to the tune of Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer:

*“Rudy the SAYC player  
That’s the only game he knows  
Keycards are not his forte  
That’s just the way he flows  
Knows not New Minor Forcing  
Or any other fancy thing  
When he is the declarer  
He has the gall to sing  
Why oh why does he beat us  
Every time we play  
We use every bell and whistle  
Alerting all the way...Oh  
When he arrives at our table  
We know that we’ll be fixed  
If I say how I truly feel  
I’ll probably be eighty-sixed  
We just play to have some fun  
And to pass a little time  
Rudy can do what he wants to  
I’ll just sing this silly rhyme  
So Rudy the SAYC player  
You found a game that’s sure to please  
Join us every Monday  
We’ll show you what it means to squeeze”*

I hope my bridge playing is better than my parody....Happy New Year to all Livermore Club Members and friends. Let us hope we will have in-person bridge games in our Unit during 2021.

## Marin

*By Gail Haar*

A big virtual welcome to our new member –Alan Follett, and congratulations to new Club Masters Shelley Gordon & Tracy Solomon, and new Sapphire Life Master Mark Peterson.



For more than 10 years our unit has turned its annual Holiday party into a fund raiser for Homeward Bound of Marin, a local charity which provides shelter, housing and training to families and individuals facing homelessness. Turning this year’s bumper crop of lemons into lemonade, the Board decided to move the event on-line. Henry Kingdon graciously allowed the unit to take over his Sunday afternoon Fuldek BBO game and agreed to direct both an Open and Limited game. In addition, Board members Tracey Bauer and Melanie Haddad spearheaded an online auction which allowed bridge players near and far to bid on the chance to team up with a pro in a special online charity bridge tournament. After the game, a Zoom meeting allowed all the participants to hear hand analyses from the pros and then to stay, enjoy a glass of something festive and visit virtually with their friends. A real party! As an added bonus, a newsletter for all participants was prepared with a pro analysis of all the hands played so we could learn as well as have fun.



41 tables (33 in the Open and 8 in the 299'er) including 37 pros and national and international champions, 2 USBF Juniors and an array of just plain players, turned the tournament into a big win for Homeward Bound of Marin. Far surpassing our previous efforts, the event raised more than \$153,000, enough to support 50 vulnerable families, veterans, seniors and others through more than 3 months of services.

Mary Kay Sweeney, the Executive Director of Homeward Bound of Marin, thanked us for building a "bridge" between homelessness and housing. Thanks to everyone involved for turning their time and efforts into a "top board" for our unit and our community.

If you haven't done so yet, go to [marinbridge.com](http://marinbridge.com) and check out the information about our Unit's BBO Virtual Club games. There's also an excellent FAQ that is updated frequently with input from our members. 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](mailto: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.

## Monterey

*By Mary Block*

The unit held a virtual Holiday Party on December 12 via Zoom following the

Saturday morning game. It was a pleasure to see familiar faces again. Many of us had to have all our holiday gatherings electronically, and we are grateful for the technology. The technology can be fun. I was not really standing in front of Dodger Stadium, although I was wearing my Dodger hat to cover my pandemic length hair. Some of the members were also sporting facial features not seen in real life, including Rudolph noses.

I have noticed another side effect of the pandemic: it is negatively affecting my memory. I now am having trouble remembering the names of bridge players whom I know very well. I can often remember the face and the first name, but have no clue to the last name. Instead, I remember the BBO name, which frequently has no relation to the actual name. Right, Zelda?

This is the time of the year also that we honor the memories of those we have lost during the past year. Fran Cava, Susan Creveling, James Didion, Alex Henderson, James Pond, Jill Leach, Wally Thorpe and Mary Quenette were all mentioned earlier in the year. This past month sadly added the names of Larry Slayton, Judith Lesieutre, and Jerry Hader to the list. Judy was a longtime Life Master member of the unit and is survived by her husband Jean. Larry was a longtime member and club owner/director of the Monday and Thursday afternoon games. He was a kind and gracious gentleman and will be missed. Jerry had moved away from here a few years ago, but she played for many years in the NLM games. And just the other

day, we found that Ruby Heinrichs passed away. She was a long-time player in the NLM games.

There are just a few status upgrades to report this month: Donald Fennell, Charles Olvis, and Paula Robichaud are now Junior Masters; Sarah Bouchier and Tom Hughes are Club Masters; Robert Dubroff and Barbara Calloway have reached the rank of NABC Master.

Stay safe and stay tuned.

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

## Napa/Solano/Sonoma

*By Tom Sheahan*

Anyone know any good jokes? There's not a lot of bridge news to bring you these days. I have talked to several people in our unit and the feeling is mutual that we all can't wait to get back to the tables and be with our friends again. One thing that has hit home with me is that I really miss the game, but miss the players a lot more. Let's get everyone vaccinated and play bridge again! Luckily the over 75 group will be at the front of the line for the vaccine.

We did actually have a few players that reached milestones with some online play. Congratulations go out to Joanne Wegsten who attained Sapphire Life Master recently



by accumulating her 3500th master point. Theila Smith reached 2000 master points and Peg Remaklus and Patty Schribbs made Bronze Life Master with 500 points.

We hope your New Year will be safe and healthy and hope to see you back at the tables very soon!

## Palo Alto

*By Judi Gentry*

Dear Fellow Bridge Players: Thank you Palo Alto Bridge Club. Thank you BBO. And thank you wonderful bridge friends and awesome partners. I have talked to many people who credit the availability of bridge on line – at least in part – for helping maintain their sanity through 2020.



Palo Alto Bridge Club is a welcoming presence when playing at the club, and our team of star directors makes virtual club games feel special as well.

The club has always hosted a wonderful Holiday Party, but how would they pull it off in the virtual on-line version? Well, 2020 showed it could be done. While hosted on Zoom, our board thought of clever ways to make the gathering festive and uplifting. With Frank Smoot as emcee, we started with a tantalizing game of Celebrity Quiz. Three unit directors provided 2 Truths and an Untruth about themselves. It was the job of the participants to determine which statement about each celebrity was not fact.

My personal favorite: we learned that Kevin O’Leary is NOT a Friggatriskaidekaphobic (afraid of Friday the 13th). Will confessed that he did not run the Harvard Marathon in 3:30. Having seen him traverse the room and leap small tables in a single bound, I was willing to believe that he had achieved that!

In addition to the announcement of new board members (listed in last month’s article), the board reported that they ARE hoping to hold Firecracker 2021 next summer. We also learned that, thanks to the activity and generosity of so many club members playing in our Virtual Club Games, the finances of Unit 503 continue to be healthy. When the schedule works for you, all are encouraged to play in our club games to assure that, when the pandemic subsides and we can return to the club, there will be a club to which we might return. We also learned that the board is exploring ways that we might combine in person and distance play to allow those who are unable to get to the club to continue to play with us.

Finishing the party on a high note, all applauded and celebrated the announcement of the 2020 Unit 503 Service Award (for making our club a welcoming place to play bridge) and a 2020 District 21 Goodwill Award. Out of 21 units and 8,273 members, five people were selected. These awards recognize outstanding contributions and positive personal qualities that promote bridge in our communities. This year, both of these awards went to the same person: John Schwartz! John is always a popular player, director (and person), but he has

upped his game during 2020. He has been a liaison with BBO and sends out emails informing all of changes and activities on BBO. For those of us unfamiliar with BBO, he has been a great guide into this strange land. Thank you John, and congratulations on a well-deserved honor.

We have some events coming up that you won’t want to miss.

- Starting in February our unit will be hosting a virtual knockout team tournament. It will be held on BBO and will be fun and casual (no fees, no points.)

- Save the date Saturday March 6th 9:30-noon!

Robert Todd will be a Celebrity Speaker for an online fundraiser for PABC! The topic is Competitive Bidding and Doubles.

Since we can’t go on a bridge cruise with Robert this will be the next best thing.

- It’s on the calendar: the 2021 Firecracker Sectional is scheduled for July 7-11.

The ACBL is scheduling special club games to encourage playing in virtual clubs and provide colored points (red, silver and gold.) Watch for these:

- Feb 13-14 Valentine weekend with extra points (red) in virtual clubs

- April 22-25: Stay # Home, Play # Home – regionally ranked events

- May 24-30 Silver Lining Week

I hope 2021 will be a year each of you will remember for all the right reasons: good health, good friends, good times and great bridge.

## Reno

*By Jill Wallace, Unit 473 Board President*

The Positive Outcomes of Playing Bridge Online, By Jill Wallace and Sandy Haslem.

It's all about that base, about that base, Bridge Base Online (BBO) that is! Our members are grateful to stay connected and to play via BBO in 2020-2021 while we deal with the many challenges of being socially distanced.

We are especially grateful that our newer players have had a platform that has allowed them to continue learning the game and experience the fun and challenge of playing duplicate bridge. Virtual Club games for the newer players include a 99er game on Thursday and Sunday afternoons, and three weekly Pro-Am games. The three Pro-Am games are defined by the maximum number of masterpoints for the "amateur" of the pair. There is a 200 MP, a 500 MP, and a 750 MP maximum game for the amateur of the pair, giving the "pros" a chance to mentor players at several different levels. It has been fantastic to see so many of our experienced players mentoring our less experienced and intermediate players. The ability to review not only the bidding of a board but also to review how it was played has been especially helpful in these mentoring relationships.

Since closing the Mathewson Bridge Center in March, bridge education has continued online. Parallel coaching sessions, online series of classes and team games have focused on advancing the skills of our newer duplicate bridge players.

Thirty-six players participated in the online "Beginning and Beyond Beginning Bridge" series of 12-week classes in October through December. Another group of over 30 players are registered for an online series of "Declarer Play" that will run for 8 weeks from February through April. One of the benefits of these live series of lessons is the lessons are recorded and can be reviewed as many times as the students want to view them.

Our virtual club games allow for a certain number of guests, so players can play with friends and family across the country. With ACBL "Support Your Club" games, members can play against high level competition while benefitting their home club. In addition, all our members have the opportunity to earn silver, red and gold points in virtual club games and in ACBL tournaments to advance their MP standings as they play from home.

Online play has provided new opportunities and growth in the numbers and playing ability of our players. It will have a prominent place in the future of our club, even after we are able to return to playing face to face duplicate bridge.

## Sacramento

*By Mariam Steinberg*

Albert Chow, a bridge director and owner of the Sacramento Bridge Center, plans on playing a significant role in the future of bridge





in Sacramento. His life has taken some interesting twists and turns that have led him on this path.

Albert hails from Hong Kong from a family of three sisters and two brothers, where he attended an elementary school for children of officials and expats from Portugal; instruction was in English. Secondary school was a British boarding school, one of the tops in Hong Kong, where he also studied French. If you have noticed that Albert speaks perfect English, it can be partially attributed to the large number of staff from Cambridge and Oxford.

Very few bridge players may be aware of Albert's hidden talents. He initially developed his stage presence performing and directing plays in high school, being voted as the "Best Actor of the Year." He initially learned bridge one year with members of his quiz team and over summer vacation they played five days a week, weekdays from midnight to 6 a.m., then went for dim sum at a nearby restaurant.

After winning a contest on a reality show similar to "America's Got Talent," Albert's folk music group, "The Willows" (which included his sister) toured extensively in Hong Kong performing in a variety of venues. "The Willows" even produced a record, which may still be available in Canada. Amazingly, Albert has had no formal musical training; he just has an exceptional ear for music, which is evident when he discusses it—he likes classical, folk, pop, jazz and his favorite—big band music. Although he was number one in his elite school, he was unable to attend a program in which he was interested at either

of the two universities in Hong Kong. (Of the 70 students in his class, 65 went abroad for their studies due to limited space at local universities). After researching American colleges at the United States Information Service Library, he applied to Pepperdine, Washington State U. and Sac. State; he ultimately chose Sac. State, which he attended for six years, mostly focusing on history. After observing classmates playing bridge in the cafeteria one day, he joined them and then after college one of these friends led him to the Dante Club.

After attending Sac. State, Albert worked his way up to Executive Director of Operations at Tower Records, where he was put in charge of computers and training staff. He was the main buyer at Watt Ave., created manuals for employees, and helped set up new stores. One of the fun things he did was work with architects, which later helped him when opening up the new Sacramento Bridge Center. In 2000, Tower was in financial trouble and downsized; they bought him out.

A couple of years later, after running into a friend from college, Albert discovered video poker, which he still plays as a source of income.

After he left Tower, his involvement with bridge increased, and he began directing about 21 years ago, after John and Ronnie McMurdie asked him to take over one of their games. Around 2015, Albert volunteered to take responsibility for the club (once again at the encouragement of John McMurdie) after they lost their lease from the Dante Club and had to move precipitously.

Previously, all the directors shared the lease, but this was no longer in the cards...It was such a major ordeal moving twice and then remodeling a gutted office building to suit very specific needs. Club members stepped up with major monetary donations, time and advice. His Tower experience helped prepare him for this big undertaking. I asked Albert why he did it. "I wanted to continue the passion of so many people—it's a huge loss if we can't continue with this passion. It would be a shame to let that fade away. Bridge is a brilliant game and fabulous hobby—there are not too many games like it!" "It's not doable for one person," he emphasized. "So many people help—people give classes, run games, prepare food and help out. It takes a lot of people."

In his spare time, he likes to surf the Net, satiating his curiosity about a multitude of topics, including music and religion. Albert is also an excellent cook, evident from the creative meals he serves at games ("Tuna Tuesdays" aside!). He appreciates good cuisine, especially Chinese comfort food, as well as French, Thai and Creole.

Albert elaborated, "The club is holding up financially thanks to all the players, and directors who won't take pay online—everything's donated, and nobody has grumbled," explained Albert. It's been goodwill to develop a Virtual Club for the benefit of the local clubs. Although Albert is involved with the financial aspect, for all intents and purposes Teri Smoot is the boss. "I gave her the authority to do whatever she pleases," he continued." I can't run the games and prepare for the

future." He added, "She's superb, she's a gem. And kudos as well to Dave Willmott, Jim Coke, Dave Vidaver (and Albert) who currently direct along with Teri." Jim Coke wrote a computer program to determine the division of the fees--\$4.00 of each fee goes back to the clubs according to where the player played in the previous year.

"The club will probably not re-open until the fall—we can't re-open until there is herd immunity. The players have to feel safe. We may have to open partially. Food is going to be a problem—we won't be able to serve buffet for a while. Different factors mitigate the outcome—we're in a precarious demographic. We will be taking an abundance of caution: masks, more severe cleaning, probably less tables, bidding verbally possibly, and disinfecting cards before the game. We cannot eliminate all risks...When we re-open, we will not be sure of the world. We will probably keep the online (depending on ACBL) and the physical club. There are going to be a lot of changes. At the point we re-open, things depend on the support of our players. A certain number will stay online; some people are not ambulatory and won't have to drive. We're not sure now of the format. We'll only come back when it feels comfortable and safe. We may have to build the number of tables slowly as if starting from scratch. There may not be games every day. It may take a couple of years to bring it back. Currently, about half of our club members (200) are playing online".

The advance of online commerce hurt the bookstores because they were not ready to take on a digital age and Albert

is determined to not let that happen to hurt the future of bridge. “We can put the two delivery systems side-by-side and bring out the better of the two worlds. That’s my challenge—I’d like to move us forward. We should try to do it right if we want bridge to survive and thrive with the best of face-to-face and online. This is new to us. Let’s make this a better experience for everyone!”

## San Francisco

*By Kimberly Fanady*

Happy New Year! Have we EVER been gladder to welcome a new year? Here’s to better days, new beginnings, and as always, more bridge!

As crazy, difficult, and interminable as 2020 seemed, we in the San Francisco bridge community had much to be grateful for. Principally, we are glad that our clubs were able to make a quick transition to the Virtual Clubs format on BBO and continue playing online. All of the SF clubs moved online, keeping their in-person schedules, and some were even able to offer additional games. Thanks to our wizardly club directors who made this possible: Will Watson, Dianne Barton-Paine, Edmund Wu, Cathy Hildebrand, and Tom Stillman. Most Unit 506ers kept playing and supporting their clubs online. Our bridge community remains strong and will be ready to head back to the tables



when we are able to reopen in person. We hope that will be soon in 2021!

Congratulations to new Junior Masters Cynthia Hubbard and Vicki Kahn; Club Masters Donna Casey, Susan Fox, Sarah Malarkey, and Hans Werneti; Sectional Masters Shazia Makdhumi, Joanne Nino, and Matt Therian; Regional Master Patsy Ludwig; NABC Masters Kirsten Beda, David Jamison, and Marvin Kirchner; Bronze Life Masters Peter Krag and Kevin Liberg; Silver Life Master Cecilia Valdivieso; and Ruby Life Master Douglas Grant. Keep climbing that masterpoint ladder!

Welcome to our new members: Diane Frankel, Kathy Lund, Rachit Nandwani, Bella Polsky, Ted Spieth, and Joyce Tan; and transfer Anita Marcus (Marin). Be sure to say hi to these players when you encounter them on BBO.

Many Unit 506ers played well and made us proud in the ACBL’s fall and winter online regional and NAOBC tournaments. Special congrats to David Neuman, third overall in the 0-5000 Pairs at the Fall NAOBC; and Rhian Davies and Christian Goetze, first overall in the 0-750 Gold Rush Pairs at the Winter Wonderland Regional. Way to go!

Finally, we sadly say goodbye to Serena Greening, who passed away in December. Serena was a relatively new player who took to the game immediately, played often at the SF clubs in person, and greatly enjoyed bridge; our condolences to her family and friends.

We also say goodbye to an icon of the San Francisco bridge community, Teiko

Peterson, who passed away on September 12 at the remarkable age of 99. Teiko was playing bridge when I first started 30 years ago, and she continued to grace our tables every week until the end. She was kind and gracious to everyone. I never heard a cross word from her once. She truly led a long life well lived. Here is a marvelous photo of her from 2019, playing with two of our young rising stars.



RIP Teiko-san.

## San Mateo

*By Janelle Van Rensselaer*

As we wrap up 2020 and look forward to 2021, I want to thank our membership for their generosity during the past year and support of our clubs. Hopefully, we have turned the corner and can look forward to “normal lives” later in 2021.

The annual Christmas game this year had 16 tables. Winners in the Open game were Ken Hui and Siuling Ku, and Jay and Mary Bates, both pairs with a 61.1% game. Winners in the 499er game were Debbie

Carey and Kit Morse with a 61.5% game and Gloria Halliday and Marie Horn with a 59.4% game. Many thanks go to Raad Bunni for directing this game.

We celebrated the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021 with a game on New Year’s Eve, timed to hold a Zoom party afterward that would include watching the ball drop in Times Square. Jennifer and Phil Kuhn cemented their 63.9% victory in the open game by ringing in the new year with a grand slam on their last board of 2020. Doug Slayton and Stu Shipley took first place honors in the 499er game at 65.2%.

Our popular Mentor/Mentee games continued in December (13 tables) and January (17 tables). December winners in Section 1 were Raad Bunni and Joanne Gates with a 66.1% game and in Section 2 were Jim Van Ness and Nancy Hoeck with a 63.4% game, and Arline Van Ness and Anna Brown with a 67.6% game. In the January game, Mohan Ramana Rao and Fred Chaslow were the top E-W finishers in Section 1 at 63.1%. N-S players topped out in a 3-way tie for first at 56%, shared by Mary Smith - Norma Bozzini, Carl Eberling - Carol Shaff, and Andrew Ehrich - Bob Farkas. The pairs of Hamid Motamed - Sue Papilion (N-S 63.0%) and Judy Duncan - Virginia Zapitz (E-W 60.2%) were the winners in section 2. Thanks to Sue Papilion and Pete Goldsmith for organizing the partnerships and to Art Quey for directing these games and the New Year’s Eve game mentioned above.

Congratulations to our members who have advanced to new ranks: Junior Master: Christine Ely, Susan Foley, Randi



Murray; Club Master: David Anderson, Leslie Braker, Kai Eckert, Rita Gupta, Debra Martinez, William Pade, Anna Brown, Laura Dholakia, Jonathan Osborne; Sectional Master: Victoria Hazelrig; Advanced NABC Master: Katherine Kwong; Bronze Life Master: Rose Bauer and Bill Ihrle; Silver Life Master: Robert Crosby; Ruby Life Master: Mary Bates. Well done! Happy New Year!

## Santa Cruz

*By Karen Schamberg*

At the Unit 550 Annual Meeting on December 12, the following officers and directors were welcomed and installed: President, Carol Avenmarg; Vice President, Tom Burke; Treasurer, David Harken; Secretary, Robert Johnson; and Directors: Ken Gamble, Ken Llacera, Sydney Reuben, Steve Smith, John Wesolowski, and Jonni Faircrest.



We want to recognize and thank Ken Llacera who served as President for the past eleven years and is continuing as a director, and as our web guru. We also want to thank and recognize John Hullman for his service as a director and continuing the Mentor-Mentee Program for the past four years; Michael Burk for his work on the board as Facilities Chair; and Laura McCabe as the board representative to District 21.

After our Annual Meeting, 30 pairs played in the Dolores Abrams Memorial Games having fun and winning

masterpoints. Congratulations to the 2020 winners: Open Division – Susan & Jim Slinger, 60.82%; and 299er Division – Renee Flint & Carolyn Watanabe, 58.33%.

On the first day of the ACBL Winter Wonderland Regional, Steve and Kristin Smith took a first overall in the Golden Bells Gold Pairs with a 71.46% game and winning 23.47 Gold masterpoints. Not only was that some amazing playing by them, but I'm told that puts Kristin into Life Master status. Congratulations to both of you.

Another standout pair was Angie Millslagle & Harold Wasserstrom who took a first in the Sunday 499er Pairs. Well done.

Finishing in the top 6.6% were: Kristin Smith, Steven Smith, Jim Slinger, Susan Slinger, Ken Llacera and Angie Millslagle. Congratulations to them and to all the SCBC players who participated in this online Regional tournament.

High scores in vClub games were earned by: Billy Miller & Ken Llacera, 70.00%; Mick Friedberg & Ken Llacera, 70.07%; Gina Brown & Neville Kirby, 70.14% and 71.3%; Jim Slinger & Susan Slinger, 70.37%; Ken Gamble & Ken Llacera, 72.22%; Ken Gamble & Joanne Wicker, 72.22%; Robin Baker & Fenev Matthews, 75.0%; and "brains88" & Angie Millslagle, 85.0%.

Congratulations to the following folks for reaching Milestones in November/December: Sapphire Life Master, Mick Friedberg; Sectional Master, Betsy Allen; Club Masters, Jared Jacobs and Jason Prochaska.

Another person we want to recognize is Ken Gamble who has been teaching classes on hand evaluation, play, & defense. According to Kristin Smith, “While I cannot absorb all the well-articulated and organized lessons, I am benefitting from these ‘Master Classes’ in bridge. It is an amazing resource to have such offerings from our unit. Both Steve and I have benefitted too from patient partners, both mentors and peers. Like Nancy Wainer says, in order to win at duplicate, one needs the perfect mix of skill, luck and partnership.”

“We have had A LOT of time during Covid isolation to develop our bridge game and are so grateful to Ken Gamble who got us all BBO savvy nearly a year ago now.”

Check the unit website often for updates and club news as it is our lifeline to bridge: [www.santacruzbridge.org](http://www.santacruzbridge.org).

## **Santa Rosa/Petaluma**

*By Cecelia Zachar*

Happy New Year! I’m sure we’re all looking forward to a return to normal. It seems so long ago since my last live sectional last March.

In the Wine Country we’ve had to cancel our Spring 2021 sectional, but we’re hoping to have our Fall 2021 Sectional September 18 and 19 in our new venue, the Petaluma Community Center. We’ll have lots of room, lots of parking, and lots of ducks on the lake. We’ll let everyone know the details as the time draws near.

In lieu of our Holiday Party, we had our 2020 Annual Meeting on Zoom, which

was really quite a pleasure. We said thank you to two departing board members, Jan Conklin and Donna Edwards; re-elected Harley Conner; and welcomed new board members Stephanie Poley and Bill Walton. The rest of our board are Tony Jackson, Maxine Reagh, Jim Duport, and Brian Sullivan. We so rarely thank our board members — thank you, all!

We shared a moment of silence honoring unit members we lost in 2020: Chris Bennett, Ted Johnson, Susan Kirn, Doris Leckie, Mina Leibowitz, Al Loebel, Marianne Paine, Sue Thue, and Marie Wardell.

In my last report, I lauded the advent of new bridge teachers who are using Zoom and similar tools to share their knowledge and experience with the rest of us. In Unit 509, our rising star teacher is Tony Jackson. Tony is also the president of our unit board. Due to his innovative bridge classes and his tireless work as unit president, Tony has won the 2020 District 21 Goodwill Award. To quote from his nomination: “His pre-pandemic classes of ‘Thinking Bridge’ were packed because we all realized quickly that Tony is a gifted teacher. His classes were organized, detailed and entertaining. But even more importantly Tony is one of those teachers who truly wants his students to succeed. It’s never about him; it’s always about the people in the class. And it helped that he brought in incredibly delicious home-baked goodies each week....The good will that Tony exhibits through his generous donation of his time and expertise benefits our bridge community immensely as we advancing students gain skill and confidence. Tony

has brought us all together with his online classes in this unusual time of isolation. The only thing missing are his cookies....” Congratulations, Tony.

Our Annual Meeting ended with about 15 minutes of Zoom chat. What fun it was to sit at my computer and see a whole screen-full of friends’ faces at one time, to say “hello”, and to hear a little bit about who’s doing what with whom.

Since my last article for this newsletter, we have had two big Virtual Club games: Hallie Beacham and Paul Downey, 71.53% on December 21, and Kate Hill with Rebecca Rogers, 78.57% (!) on December 28. Congratulations!

I ask our BBO players to let me know when they get a big score. On January 6, Roy Redlich and Hans Van Boldrik scored 70.64% to place 2nd of 262 pairs in a Speedball game.

We had two players who earned the rank of Club Master in November, Hallie Beacham and Brian Sloan. I’ve heard a rumor that Howard Balfour made Silver Life Master in December, but I’m waiting for the email at the end of the month to be sure.

Change is good, and change is hard. One of our most favorite, most appreciated, and soon to be most missed players is Randee Dimond. She is moving to Washington State, and unfortunately we won’t be able to give her a big party because of the pandemic. Fortunately Jane Bender wrote a little poem in Randee’s honor. Here it is:

◆ Our Dimond in the Ruff ◆

She’s taught slams and doubles and Roman Key Card

And when students struggled because these were hard

She’d wipe out their doubts as they started to buckle

With words of encouragement and her wonderful chuckle.

◆ Our Dimond in the Ruff ◆

She taught at Varenna as well as our club

She’d play with a pro or step in as a sub  
When we need a fourth to complete a table

She’d help out in every which way she was able.

◆ Our Dimond in the Ruff ◆

Her motto: “Bid up! Never miss a cold slam!

Bid 3 spades, not one! It’s OK to jam!

Mess up your opponents! Take up their space!

Bud do it with kindness and a smile on your face.”

◆ Our Dimond in the Ruff ◆

And now she is leaving for Washington State.

We’re sad but here’s hoping the move will be great

She leaves a hole in the club as well as our hearts

We want her to keep our love with her when she departs.

♥ Our Dimond in the Ruff ♥

Happy new year! Stay safe.

# Silicon Valley

By Ray Yuenger

We have begun a new year, 2021, under the same restrictions we endured much of last year, wearing masks, maintaining “social” (more like anti-social) distances from most or all friends and relatives, trying to avoid catching or spreading the COVID-19 coronavirus. I hope you’ve all been successful with that last objective and are getting your vaccinations when it is your turn.



These restrictions preclude planning bridge tournaments or any face-to-face bridge. I hope you are finding other ways to satisfy your yen for bridge. Players keep rising in rank, so they are succeeding in online play.

Congratulations to our unit’s newest Masters (three months’ worth due to the newsletter’s quarterly publication schedule): Linda Bromwell, Barbara Brown, Tiralisa Kaplow, Arunodoy Saha (Junior); Inderjit Aulakh, Renee Cantu, Gene Caselli, Robert McElheny, Benjamin Smentek, Liane Yuen Young, Nick Zhu (Club); Shailesh Naik (Sectional); Betsy Wagner (Regional); Linda Kenigsberg, Tillie Meyers (NABC); Joanne Cornbleet (Advanced NABC); Carolyn Drozdiak, Jennifer Duval, Brandon Ge, Roy Tsai (Life); Ashwini Datar, John Stremel (Bronze); Robert Allen, Philip Freiberger, Xin Ge, Preston Kauk (Silver); Rajeeva Sharma, Brenna Wundram (Ruby); Malcom McLaughlin, Anthony Trebaol (Diamond).

Some unit members made notable showings in the online Winter Wonderland Nationals. Shashi Agarwal placed first in a 499er pairs game. Michael & Liane Young had two stratification tops and a section top in 99er games. John Stremel had a strat top in an open side pairs game. In mid-flight pairs Joel Singer and Jung Hu each had section tops.

Earlier in the month Ashwini Datar & Vilas Namjoshi placed 2nd in an under 5000 MP national pairs game. Xin Ge, Brandon Ge, Wanwan Ren, & Sarah Chen were on a second-place team in an under 1,500 MP national knockout.

In December the Marin unit 508 held a special event. They auctioned off 37 bridge professionals and experts in a silent auction that raised over \$153,000 for a local charity benefiting the homeless. In the ensuing online event, Mansoor Gowani (playing with Valentin Kovachev) tied for first out of 33 tables.

The Unit 507 board continues to meet online on a monthly basis. There has been a change in positions. President Stu Goodgold was elected to be the Director representing District 21 on the ACBL’s Board of Directors beginning in 2021. Consequently, to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, he resigned as President of Unit 507. As a consequence, Mich Ravera, our long-time Vice-President, is elevated to the position of President. Long-time board member Mischel Postas has been nominated to replace Mich as Unit Vice-President. The Board itself selects its officers according to the Bylaws. Lynn Bartz and Ray Yuenger have been



named the unit's representatives to the District Board. Ray was District President for a year, but was not retained in a rare contested election.

This newsletter was originally planned to be published after a District 21 Board meeting scheduled for January 9 so that the meeting could be reported. As it happened, there was too much to cover on the 9th, so the meeting was continued to January 30 and I'm due to write up the outcome of the meetings for a column appearing on the front page. Despite these publication delays, I still want to wish all my readers a happy and healthy new year whenever you read this column.

## Stockton

*By Debbie DeZarn*

Happy New Year and Happy St. Valentine's Day to all the Unit 510 members and friends! Things will be better in 2021 as clubs will begin reopening for face to face play. Some of the Stockton Bridge Club Board members have unofficially mentioned the idea of reopening the club in April, or as soon as the players have been vaccinated. We don't know when our players, most over age 65, will qualify to get it. Please ask yourself what it would take for you to feel safe playing in the Stockton Club (we have no control over Oak Park) and share your ideas and concerns with any Board member. There has not been a formal Board Meeting since



the club closed in March but President Ken Hillman will call one once restrictions are eased and vaccine supplies are plentiful.

I am pleased to announce that Wendy Buchanan became a Life Master at the end of December 2020! Her goal had been to attain this rank before her milestone birthday in January but reaching it by end of year was icing on the cake. Wendy's will be the first name engraved on the newest Life Master plaque when the Stockton Bridge Center reopens.

Congratulations to Wendy who fondly remembers winning points in her very first duplicate game with Jon Bearg when Ken Hilman ran the 499er game at the old Harrisburg location. She then spread the word among all her retired teacher friends that duplicate bridge was really fun and "easy". How naive we all were in the beginning. But the fun keeps us coming back. Wendy wishes to thank all the partners, teachers, and mentors who helped her achieve this rank. Her full story is available on the District 21 Facebook page.

In December Glo Klinger Williams reached Silver Life Master and in January Rose Knutson became a Ruby Life Master! Janis Morehead and Mikki Kindelberger achieved the rank of Sectional Master. Arnold Roth became the newest Junior Master. After the Silver Point week on BBO in January, George Westin and Margaret Stovall reached Sectional Master. Congratulations to all the new Masters.

Welcome to new Stockton unit members Joan Canepa, Carol Roth, Gretchen Salvetti, Harriet Corren, and Karanjit Bajwa. They

are on their way to Junior Master. I'd also like to give a shout out to Shirley Womack and Mary Westin who just passed the 200 point mark so can no longer play with their buddies in the 199er games.

Judy Tillinghast had surgery for cancer in November and only needs radiation, no chemo; Yay! Meanwhile she hasn't skipped a beat in her BBO games and feels great. She and partner Shirley Womack finished 1st in their section and 5th overall of 86 tables in the December 19 Winter Wonderland 499er tournament.

The Mini-McKenney (total pigmented points) and Helen Shanbrom Ace of Clubs (total black points only) awards will be announced officially after the deadline for this issue but here are the expected results

for our unit. Remember that your bracket is determined by the number of points you had on January 1 of 2020, no matter what you ended up with in December. Within each bracket the McKenney will be named first, then the Ace of Clubs winner. If only one name, they won both!

0-5 Margaret Stovall; 5-20 Carole Seed; 20-50 Paula Monroe; 50-100 Judy Tillinghast; 100-200 Shirley Womack; 200-300 Marcia Laird; 300-500 Bill Mitchell and Wendy Buchanan; 500-1000 Debbie DeZarn; 1000-1500 Rose Knutson; 1500-2500 Alan and Susan Hamilton tied for both; 2500-3500 Lorna Crooks; 3500-5000 Nick Bykov (no winner for Ace of Clubs); 5000-7500 Joan Garcia; 7500-10,000 Ann Nutting; over 10,000 Howard Parker III.

**Have great news to share  
from your unit? Contact**

***Diamond in the Ruff***

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**and tell him all about it!**

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