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Berkeley/El Cerrito/Richmond By Mark Kornman/The Beer Dude (497)

Happy summer – still no word on being able to reopen, altho EC Rec has opened up picnic areas to reserve. With luck, we'll be able to resume in July. When we reopen, you'll have to show vaccination proof the 1st time you play – masks optional. Coffee, tea, & pre-packaged candy only.

Not much on the in-out front – we got a few new members (mostly UC students) & a couple transfers-in. Biggest transfer out was Eric, who moved to Webster Groves (suburb of St Louis) to live w/his sister. He's still dealing w/medical issues; I talk w/him every couple of weeks.

Baseball season is in full swing – the A's are doing as I expected & the Giants have been a huge surprise. Pitching & the long ball have fared both teams well. Glad to see Lachrymose Lebron out of the NBA playoffs – I'm rooting for Phoenix, a team that's never won it all.

Remain safe & sane – wear those masks when you're out in public! Hopefully, I'll seeya at the club soon.

Diablo Valley By Lisa Assoni/The ShortCut Cook (499)

I'll start with a tasty tidbit. August was originally Sextilis, the sixth month in the Roman calendar and consisted of 31 days. It became the eighth month with a length of 29 days around 700 BCE when January and February were added to the year. Julius Caesar added two days to the month around 45 BCE.

It's a hot time at the Contra Costa County, and it's been down right blistering. So what better way to cool down, and get away from the heat is? I've got a great idea, play bridge. If we're lucky, we finally can be indoors, the air-conditioning blowing, that will get your brain flowing.

Remember, Bridge is a lot like a great dessert. Once you get a taste for the game, you always come back for seconds, thirds and never get your fill. It's a brain game that can take you through your youth, and dishes out a smorgasbord for a lifetime of learning. Sometimes we get so busy with our other activities, that we forget our brain needs exercise too. So often as we age, we become more isolated, and thus, more lonely. Truly, bridge is a connection for socialization, and it beef's-up brain skills-you smarty-pants. At least during this crisis, it's has been a great opportunity to improve our





game.

We continue to meet monthly as Board Members and each person 'works hard for no money.' Our President, Lyn Sacco, has continued to carry on, and is very precise, positive, and cheerful. This has helped our group stay focused and continue to serve our Unit 499. Our V.P. Sam Earnhardt, has been dedicated to aiding and assisting wherever needed. Our Treasure Suresh Gadad, is right on the money! Andy Shockley, our secretary, doesn't mince words. He keeps our Board well informed.

Rich Ahlf, has been a dedicated Board for years, as is our publicity specialist. Rich has been keeping a low profile, but ready-set-to Go. Marian Renvall is the hostess with the mostest, and is much appreciated for her hospitality. Clare Smith knows your name. She's very diligent in gathering all the data from our unit and updating our website. Pat Torres is happy to help with membership. Jackie Zayac and Anne Hollingsworth were elected to be representatives for the ACBL Board for Unit 21. The District has 5 representatives, and we are very proud of them. They help resolve lots of bridge issues. Ed Lichtig, a Member At Large, is always there to pitch in wherever needed. You don't need to ask Ed twice. Bruce Johnsonburg, has been our hero for helping kids who want to learn this awesome game. Hoping to engage youth, he's held classes for years. Mike Kruley, a dedicated Board member, a mentor, Director and more. Last but not least is Andy Fine, Andy's been serving our unit for many years, keeps us on track for upcoming tournaments, scheduler, mentor and more. Yes, I'm on the Board too.

Please take care, and we look forward to seeing you eye to eye soon.

Stay safe and sane, Chow

East Bay By Larry Bowerman (502)

Wow, what a long strange journey this has been and probably will continue to be! However, there appears to be a light at the end of the tunnel. The good news is that the vaccines work and that a significant percentage of those people eligible in the Bay Area have been vaccinated! The bad news is that this isn't true everywhere, the vaccination rate has slowed significantly, and variants continue to emerge. Hopefully, the positive progress will continue!

First and foremost, I hope that everyone is continuing to do well, staying safe and enjoying bridge online (on BBO) and/or in-person.





Second, after being closed for 15 months, the EBCBC re-opened for in-person bridge on June 21, 2021! Thanks to Betty Kael, Tom Pajak, Sandi Davis and others, whose hard work made this possible. Thanks also for your decision to require proof of vaccination for everyone who wishes to play in-person at the EBCBC. I whole-heartedly believe that this was the correct decision. The latest game schedule and results can be found by clicking the "Game Schedule" tab on the left side of the Home page of the EBCBC website. Table fees remain at \$8.00.

Third, Doug Handler's Piedmont Games at 7:10 pm on Monday and Thursday will remain on BBO as Virtual Club games for the time being. In addition, Doug will be starting two new Virtual Club games on BBO at 2:10 pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, beginning July 6th and July 7th, respectively. Thanks to Doug for all of his efforts to maintain and expand his on-line games. Table fees remain at \$6.00. If you need additional information, you can contact Doug by phone at (925) 938-4493 or by email at dough0918@aol.com. Please continue to support Doug's games on BBO.

Fourth, the next Unit 502 Board meeting will take place on Sunday, August 1st. Among other things, the Board will be considering whether to hold or cancel the November 20-21, 2021 East Bay Sectional, and whether/when to resume Unit Games. If you have any comments on these two issues, please send them to me and I'll relay them to the Board. Stay tuned for further developments.

As you may know (or surmised), the publication frequency of the "Diamond in the Ruff" newsletter is in flux. The most recent information indicates quarterly publication, but that could change as we emerge from the pandemic. Stay tuned for further details. In the meantime, as Joye, Marcia and I write articles, David Snyder will continue to post them on the Unit 502 website.

I'm sad to report that Lorene Lamb passed away in January, 2021 at age 97! While I didn't know her well, I did play against her a few times several years ago. She was a dedicated bridge enthusiast and worked hard to improve bridge in the East Bay. Her family wrote a nice tribute to Lorene, some of which appears in the EBCBC newsletter dated 6/20/21.

Unfortunately, Hugh Callahan passed away on June 16, 2021. Sandi Davis wrote a nice tribute to Hugh which appears in the 6/26/21 EBCBC newsletter.

Welcome to the following new Unit 502 members (since January 1, 2021):





Kumar Fanse, Dave Rosenfeld, Catherine Faust, Becca Laufenberg, Katherine Glaessner, Nancy Scott, and Dana and Robert Cole

Also welcome to the following people who have transferred into Unit 502 since January 1, 2021:

Joy and Robert Schenker, Tim Segall, John Fenker, Andrew Purcell, Patrick Xia, Harold Hayashi, Serena Greening and Dee Kursh.

When you see them, please introduce yourself and welcome them to our unit.

Congratulations to the following members on their recent rank advancements (since January 1, 2021):

Junior Masters: Ann Belcher, Ann Schuyler, Harrison Pollak, Bert Carelli, Kumar Fanse, Peter Freeman and Dov Rosenfeld.

Club Masters: David Gin, Rosemary Heil, Tim Segall, Nancy Zhu, Gail Arnold, Lois Lybeck Carelli and Nancy Rutledge.

Sectional Masters: Helen Burke, Christine McMahon, Jennie Schacht, Cheryl Brodsky and Charlton Holland.

Regional Masters: Joy Schenker, Frank Silver, Suzanne Quick and Lori Rosenthal.

NABC Masters: Dee Kursh, Don Levine, Ken Rice, Jerry Carrol and Allan McAllister.

Life Master: John McManis.

Bronze Life Master: Herbert Chung.

Silver Life Masters: Elizabeth Silverman and Thomas McGuire Jr.

Ruby Life Master: Shirley Rodenborn and Roseanne Smith.

Gold Life Master: Bipin Patel, Glenn Boyce and Al Goldspiel.

Sapphire Life Master: Norman Marks.

Well done, congratulations and keep on playing! There is always another goal in front of you!

Marcia Wasserman will be writing the next column, so please contact her at





(marciawasserman@gmail.com) if you have noteworthy results or other items to report. You can also send information to me and I'll forward it to Marcia.

Fresno By Laura Da Costa (522)



Hello Everyone. It has been a long time since I have spoken to most of you. Hopefully, we will start seeing each other in the not too distant future.

We have a location for a new clubhouse. Nothing signed yet, but we expect to do so within the next week. The address is 1616 W. Shaw. It is between Fruit and West Avenue, just off a side street called Teilman Avenue, which is quite convenient for those that do not like to travel too much on Shaw. Soon after we sign the contract, we should get a better idea of when we can open for face-to-face games. There will be quite a bit of construction work needed at the site as it is currently an empty shell. If I were to guess right now, I would say end of August to September, but we really will not know for a few weeks. Just a little more patience is needed, we are getting closer.

You will notice that all rankings for District 21 are reported in this Diamond in the Ruff newsletter. However, I am going to start reporting all changes of ranks in this article as well (not just the life master ones, I used to limit this report to). I will start with all of the changes that occurred since the beginning of 2021. So, congratulations to:

- Robert McIlhatton (Junior Master, 5 mps)
- Clint Hudson (Sectional Master, 50 mps)
- Cheryl Johnson (Regional Master, 100 mps)
- Renee Laquerriere (Bronze Life Master, 500 mps)
- Mun Takeda (Gold Life Master, 2500 mps)
- Ann Derwin (Sapphire Life Master, 3500 mps)

Since we missed our Peggy Ochs Memorial game again this year, I thought I would do as I did last year and list in memoriam those individuals that we would have honored





in the May 2021 game. They include Patricia Alviso (July 2020), Mostafa Elhag (March 2021), Suzanne Graham (March 2021), Lois Layne (September 2020), Richard Meffley (September 2020), Verlee O'Neill (May 2021), and Diana Papazian (March 2021). Some very good friends to our clubhouse. They will be missed. It is easy during these COVID days to lose track of our members. If you know of others that we lost this past year, please contact me.

Soon after we start up again, we hope to start beginning bridge lessons. When we shut down, our attendance at lessons was booming. We hope to get many of those students back and add more. So, your mission is to start checking with family and friends to see if we can introduce them to bridge.

Gilroy/Morgan Hill/Hollister By Carol Nicoletti (524)

Good News!

We got "close up and personal" with our first face to face game recently. Unit 524 followed all CDC and ACBL guidelines with spacing and making sure everyone who played was fully vaccinated.

FACE to FACE SCHEDULES:

- *Tuesdays in Hollister at Twin Oaks at 11:00am...details to follow or contact Skip Pack (spack@garlic.com)
- *Wednesdays with Al Peponis (408-779-7122)
- *Thursdays at 10:00am at Gilroy Senior Center (7731 Hanna St.)
- *First Unit Game....Sunday, Sept 19 at 12:30 Morgan Hill Rec Center (171 Edmundson)
- *Oct, Nov, Dec Unit Games will be the third Sunday of the month

Rank Advancements:

George Bitner(sectional master), Anna Gervacino (junior master,) Larry Zito(club master), Fan Jiao(club master), Ken Johnson(gold life master), Al Peponis(Advanced NABC),Ralph Lyle(NABC master), Hajit Sekhon (sectional master), Win Stone(sapphire life master, Patrick Arnett (silver life master).Congratulations to all !





HORSE RACE:

The Mini-McKenny and Ace of Clubs Awards are still up in the air. It's like a horse race. Everyone is neck and neck galloping to the finish line.

Win Stone will continue conducting BBO games except on Thursdays.

Please, don't be afraid of playing on-line. You don't have to dress up, you can eat and drink at the table, and you can holler at you partner, grandkids or dogs and cats. Nobody will know or care. \$5.00 is cheap !

It was good to see old friends. A few moved away, passed away, or ran away. Like everyone else during our stay-at-home orders, we learned to entertain ourselves. Linda King designed her bridge/art studio (ask for a tour). Suzanne Proctor spent three months in Singapore (took time to get home).

Please join us at Stone's bridge on BBO. ...good health and good bridge.

Livermore Valley By Rosemarie LaFrancesca (501)



Hello Unit 501. It has been many months since our last Diamond in the Ruff newsletter. I am not complaining, mind you, for I haven't much to say since the last newsletter! Our unit continues to hold Monday and Thursday games on BBO. I haven't heard when there will be a return to in-person bridge at the Oddfellows hall. I also haven't heard whether Grant will start his games at Stoneridge Creek. It would be great if we could somehow combine the two clubs into one. Hey, Stoneridge Creek, can you let guests come to play bridge?

As many of you know, we have lost our long-time member and director, Carmen Meuter. Carmen will be missed. In Brentwood they also lost the services of Arlene Mahlberg, their long-time director in Discovery Bay. Arlene is moving to southern California to be near her son following the death of her husband, Bennie. It looks like we will need more directors if we are ever to return to a non-virtual bridge game. Perhaps the club could pay for someone to take the director's course. Just a thought. Any takers out there to become a director?

Many of our members have advanced in rank during this lock-down time, and I hope you are keeping track of them via the Bridge Bulletin or the ACBL Unit 501





Facebook page. If you are on Facebook, "like" the Unit's page and you will get updates there from time to time. If any of you have news to share, you may send it to me via email and I will put that news out on Facebook or this article or both! I'm always anxious to hear news that I may incorporate into these articles.

Remember to keep the integrity of the game at the forefront. While playing in the same household, no peeking at your partner's computer; while playing in separate households, no texting or phone calls! Let's not take the fun of an honest victory away from all!

Marin By Gail Haar (508)



A big virtual welcome to our new members and transfers into our Unit – Daryl Babbitt, Patricia Chang, Valerie Blumenfeld, Tillie McCullough and Akira Watanabe. Sadly we lost two of our long time members during the past year, Nancy Wieger and Joan Ehmann. On a happier note, we have a new couple - Jerry Young and Jane Grusby met through bridge and are now happily together. Congratulations also to Peggy Tatro, our long time Director and Club Owner who is now Mrs. Strong. She and her new husband met on the golf course, not at the bridge table, but who are we to judge!

We've had lots and lots of rank advancements! New Junior Masters are Laurie Kahn, Michelle Slatalla, Josh Quittner, Vicki Strotz, William Cline, Deborah Sagues, Claire Auslen and Louise Gross. New Club Masters are Jeffrey Rudsten, Cathy Schuster, Cynthia Peterson, Christopher Barnes, Linda Green, Kathleen King, Zandra Krischer, Suzanne Tanenbaum, Lisa Teel, Sybil Byrnes, Linda Gruber, Jillian Kantola, Mark Nelson, Dobbie Quinones and Bruce Stamper. New Sectional Masters are Sarah Calvani, Nancy Chiu, Alan Spiegelman, Sherri Sugarman, John Loftus, Ilene Schwerin, Beverly Stamper, Jeff Hoffman, TJ Campbell-Lucas and Elaine Kitano. New Regional Masters are Jane Pedroli, Carol Ross and Evan Scott. New NABC Masters are Naomi Spiegelman, Judy Leedy, Shirley Ehrlich and Natasha Khandheria. New Life Masters are Ann Schweichler, Annette Tham and Paulette Moe. New Bronze Life Masters are Wendy Jarrett and Lillian Trac. New Silver Life Masters are Melanie Haddad, Matthew Quint, Akira Watanabe, Virginia Sulpizio, Gail Haar and Ellen Coll. New Gold Life Master is Hilde Meislin. New Ruby Life Master is Jane Frost. Congratulations to you all.





While we all have been playing on-line these past months, many of us are anxious to get back to the table for face to face bridge. In Marin, it looks like that will be happening in early September so stay tuned for the last information as soon as it is available.

Modesto By Ray Adams (529)

The big news in Modesto was the renewal of face-to-face bridge at the Modesto Bridge Center at McHenry Bowl in north Modesto. The first game was a club championship with Lee Maddocks and Sheela Wani finishing first, Gary Capwell and Roger Smith second, and Lorraine Bocks and Gary Smith finishing first in C, first in B, and third in A. Congratulations to you all!

There was a second club championship on the fifteenth, with Bruce Ruskin and Toots Wade finishing tied for first place with Barbara Page and Gail Vick, while Sherrie Barakatt and Jaime Hamilton were first in C. The two high games for month were on the seventeenth, with Lee Maddocks and Mary Sue Walker coming in at 69%, while Ralph Jungwirth and Trelle Uhl had a nice 65% game.

Local bridge players were glad to see the return of Sheela Wani and Toots Weade, neither of whom were able to successfully convert to computers to play in the BBO online club game. Both of these ladies were regulars when the old club was open before the pandemic.

By the way, attendance is much higher in the face-to-face club than it is in the weekend virtual club, which the unit still offers on Saturday and Sundays. I would think this shows just how much of a social event even duplicate bridge is.

Our club was proud to announce that Judy Remmers who also had beginning students at the old club a couple of years ago, had started teaching a new group of beginners early in June. Her class is on Mondays, and has been quite successful so far, having as many as seven full tables.

The high pointers for the month were: A, Bruce Ruskin with 5.91, Lee Maddocks at 5.48, and Pam Mayne with 5.29. This was quite a close contest. In B, Sharon Cole was first with 5.02, Barbara Page came in next at 4.21, and Gail Vick rounded out the leaders at 3.98. In C, Garrad Marsh led with 2.58, Lorraine Bocks followed at 1.91, and Jaime Hamilton was third with 1.01.





Now that we are back to face-to-face and have a new playing area, the unit is looking forward to a brisk and exciting month of July.

Monterey By Mary Block (530)

As this is being written, the Bridge Center has reopened for face-to-face bridge on a limited basis. Stay tuned; we all hope you are paying attention to emails from the Unit and sharing them with your friends. Please have members@bridgewebsemail.com in your list of contacts so that our emails don't go into your spam folder by mistake. One thing that has been agreed upon by the Club Owners and the Unit Board is that proof of vaccination will be required. The first time you play face to face, make sure you have your card with you. It is a good idea to take a picture of your vaccine record and store it on your smart phone so it is always with you. A Waiver of Liability will also be required to be signed for games at the Bridge Center.

The election of members of the Board of Directors has taken place. One new member has been elected, Mano Singham. He replaces Trulee Ricketts, who is leaving the Board after having served as President this past year. We all thank her for her diligent service. New officers will be elected at the July meeting.

The last 15 months have been both challenging and rewarding, more challenging than rewarding, but the rewards have been there. Gold points without having to travel and detailed hand records showing the bidding and play of the hand come to mind.

On the negative side, ACBL records show that we have lost members. It is hoped that some of the players who have let their memberships lapse will renew when we go live again. For most of us, our past bridge participation has largely been a function of habit, knowing that we play with so-and-so on Tuesday mornings and that other so-and-so on Friday mornings, etc. We hope that you have kept in touch with your bridge friends throughout these trying times and these habits and relationships will re-establish. Now is the time to start making plans again.

Congratulations to Sharon Larson and Maja who have passed the examination to become ACBL certified Bridge Directors.

Sorry to have to report that we have lost another of our long-time members, Sarah Stern. She became a Gold Life Master just before her untimely passing.

Here are the following items of record since our last report:





New Members: Thomas Miller, Sridevi Padmakumar, Mary Young, Don McInyre

Transfers in from other Units: Sandra Brown, Donald Nichols, Ann Wyatt, Janis Akin, Rosemary Blankley, Walter Blankley, Laura Quinn, Maureen Wittles, Paula Cole

New Junior Masters: Charles Olivia, Mary Ellen Carlin, Joan Aldrich, Robert Bouchier, George Mills

New Club Masters: Thomas Hughes, Dyn Dietz, Karol Matheson, Paula Robichaud, Francene Tabak, Sylvia Teixeira, Russell Planitzer

New Sectional Master: James Dirgin

New Regional Masters: Lynn Farris, Rosalind Fisher, Ed Schrenzel, Mano Singham, Rita Sturgeon

New NABC Master: Barbara Calloway, Incy Brooks, Neville Kirby, Karen Mok

New Advanced NABC Master: David Ow

New Life Master: Glenn Chee

New Silver Life Master: Tony Muller

New Gold Life Master: Sarah Stern, Lyde McReynolds Hussey, James Rice

In memoriam: Sarah Stern

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

Napa/Solano/Sonoma By Tom Sheahan (512)

Let the games begin! That's the usual cry when the Olympics start up and that's



the cry of Unit 512 when both of these internationally acclaimed sporting events will start up again this July. It's been a long 16 months since the cards hit the table and players are raring to get back at it. It will be great to play again, but even greater to see the many friends we haven't seen since the pandemic started. There's been a real void in our lives not being able to socialize with





friends we've known for many years.

The Sonoma club will have its first game at the Vintage House on Monday July 12th. There are of course new safety restrictions. Players will have to show their vaccination card the first time they play and the Vintage House has requested that we enter the building through the side door. The games in July will be on Monday and in August we will start playing on both Monday and Wednesday and the Tuesday 499er game will also resume. There will be a slight adjustment period to get things back to normal again so we'll have to show a little patience. No food will be served so be prepared for that. The negotiations to start up again were anything but easy and many thanks go out to Sandy Hicks and the board of directors for their effort. Be sure to thank the board consisting of John Coulston, Rick Davis, Brooke Farkas, Jay Gardner, Eileen Holsten, Molly Johnston, Karen Rocco, and Marge Sheridan. They all did a special job in getting us back to the tables again.

Clyde and Kathleen Smith have taken over running the Friday Napa game. Masks will be required to play there, but that could change once things calm down a little more. Vaccinations will also be needed. They are starting play on the 16th of this month with a new starting time of 12:45. No food will be served so bring a snack if you so desire.

The Rio Vista game has already begun with a new day and starting time. The new time will be 11:00 on Thursdays. Vaccinations are needed, but masks are not. Check with Sue Vogtlin for details.

Congratulations go out to Kathleen Smith who attained the status of Gold Life Master with an impressive collection of 2500 points. Yes, we do have some excellent players in our Unit! Russell Quinnell recently got his 7000th point, Dan Harp went over 2000 points, and John Shribbs reached Silver Life Master with a total of 1000 points. Well deserved by all!

Unfortunately there is some bad news along with all the good news of this month. We have lost 3 players over the course of the past few months. Our good friend Sheila Patterson passed away. We played many a knockout session at tournaments with Sheila and her partner Barbara Lemme. Her favorite bridge story was when we played a knockout against a team of Colonels from the Pentagon in the Reno Nationals years ago. They let it be known to us who they were and how we should be impressed and intimidated by their status, but they lost a bit of their swagger when we went ahead by





84 IMPs after 12 boards. We certainly miss all the good times we had with her and John. Dale Oleson also passed away. It was always fun to play against him and his longtime bridge partner George Kieffer at table #1 in Napa. For some reason, it always seemed to be the wildest hands of the day when we played them. John Garvey also passed away a few months ago in Sonoma. John was as good a guy that you could meet at the tables. Always had a smile on his face and played the game the way it should be played. Get well quick to Curt Jeschke who suffered a stroke. Curt is another of the many good people we have in the game and we hope to see him back soon.

Palo Alto By Judi Gentry (503)



Hi Bridge Friends: "There will be face-to-face bridge in Palo Alto Bridge Clubs in July!" That is the news we have waited for over a year to hear. The past 16 months have been a period of significant change in the bridge world and elsewhere in our lives. I think we all know that it is unrealistic to think that we are just returning to things as they were. Our world has changed; the bridge world has changed; and we each have changed in some ways ourselves.

A recent survey of Unit 503 members (and others from neighboring units who have played at the club) was conducted by our wonderful team of club directors. There were 408 responses and results revealed that we view the prospect of returning to the bridge center from many perspectives. I'd like to share the feedback given in that survey to illustrate the spectrum of opinions and how we have guided our directors in structuring bridge games as we reopen. I am impressed by the challenge the directors face and – as always – the creativity and caring that is going into the current solution.

1. Are you ready to start playing face-to-face Bridge? 73.8% of responding members answered in the affirmative.

2. If yes, when? 50.2% ASAP, 30.1% in September and the rest named another time or were unsure when they would be ready.

Based on the reactions to these two questions, it seems apparent that we will not be operating at full capacity immediately. We also do not know what plans are in the works for other units in our area, so we don't know what options will be available to players seeking face-to-face bridge.





- If you plan to play at the Bridge Center you should know that the board has voted that all players entering the facility must be vaccinated. The first time you play here, be prepared to show your vaccination card or – better yet – use the California digital Covid-19 vaccination record to download your proof of vaccination to your smartphone.

3. If we run an on-line section concurrent with face-to-face games, would you play? The responses to this question were most diverse. 35.9% said they would play Mostly Online while the exact same percentage said they would play Mostly at the Bridge Center. 17.2% will play Only at the Bridge Center and 11.2% will play Only Online.

There were many reasons given by players for why they may not return to face-to-face bridge. Several mentioned physical challenges that made it difficult to get to the club or to sit for long periods. The drive was another concern. Start times which got us into either the morning or afternoon commute traffic were an issue. Several people have moved away in the past few years and have valued playing with old friends online, but driving here would not be possible. Others appreciated the short time required to play online (2 hours start to finish with no driving, parking, dressing up or other additional time required.) On the other hand, so many people mentioned how much they missed the camaraderie of the in person game. They missed the smiling faces around the table. We are a community!

Club owners are hoping to accommodate the many varying needs of our members. This is where the creativity comes into play. The directors are working with ACBL and BBO to devise a solution that will work for all. There will still be a bump-up in points for club games. Right now it appears that face-to-face club games will earn 1.5 points and Virtual Club games 1.2 points compared to 1.0 points for BBO games. Of course, as is currently true, there will be an additional cost for club games. Additionally, players in the Open section of a face-to-face game will get credit for all players in other face-to-face sections (e.g. a 499er section at the center) and a special limited section on-line as well. They are considering a high limit on the on-line section to allow most players to qualify. These details are still in the works.

And we were queried about other logistics:

4. Assuming no food is served, what time would you like daytime games to start? 36.7% chose "Same old schedule"; 35.4% said "Noon or later" and 27.9% selected "In time to finish before lunch."





5. In a perfect world, how many boards would you like to play? 27.9% said 18; 12.7% chose 21; 42.6% opted for 24 and 16.7% wanted to play 27 boards.

While the club owners are working together to devise a plan, it is quite possible that these logistics will vary from game to game. The directors have the opportunity to tailor their game based on a variety of factors. We will be hearing more from them as the time comes closer.

In the meantime, I have to express admiration and appreciation to our board and club owners for all they have done in the past "year plus" to maintain our home and keep us together as a Unit. Interestingly, when I asked Gerry MacDonald, our Unit President if she had a message I should convey, she didn't hesitate. She expressed her gratitude to the many volunteers who stepped up to provide help in the way of work (boxing up the library, stacking chairs and moving tables so the carpet could be replaced, organizing the kitchen, throwing out unwanted items, and on and on.) The loyalty of members in continuing to play in the Virtual Club Games and even contributing additional funds to help pay our bills is the reason we are in the position we find ourselves today. As for our Club Owners, I can't say enough. They quickly added directing an online game to their extensive skill sets and kept us informed about the rules and the techniques we needed to navigate this new online bridge world. Thank you, thank you!

And now, a reminder of one of the other main benefits provided to members and friends of Unit 503: ongoing bridge education. The library books will be available for lending with the opening of the center. What a resource we have. Our stellar Lecture series has continued on Zoom through the pandemic and a new season recently started up (thank you to Eli Wismer and Gerry Gassman for organizing this effort.) Chris Barrere will be our next lecture presenter on July 20. The topic is TBD, but it's bound to be informative. By the way, this free series is funded by the Peninsula Bridge Education Foundation. It is our own 503c, so contributions are tax-deductible. And if this isn't enough educational opportunities for you, we have all level of classes scheduled to start in September. Please check the website for schedule and topics.

However you choose to participate ... have fun and ... be kind to your partners and opponents. I look forward to seeing you soon. Judi





Reno By Jill Wallace & Sandy Haslem (473)



The Mathewson Bridge Center (MBC) in Unit 473 reopened for face to face (F2F) games on May 4, 2021. The Reopening Committee represented by members of the Unit 473 Board and the Washoe Bridge Society Board surveyed the club membership and began scheduling F2F games with the requirement that players provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination. May and June proved to be a bit hectic as F2F game scheduling and formats fluctuated to promote attendance at F2F games while continuing to promote virtual club games. By the end of June, the schedule stabilized with F2F games on three days of the week (Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday) and virtual club games on the other four days.

We had hoped to increase our table counts by holding a virtual game in the morning and a F2F game in the afternoon on three days of the week, but we found that participation in virtual club games decreased on those days. Table counts, which averaged 314 tables a month from May 2020 to April 2021 when all games were virtual club games, have been fluctuating during the last few months as follows: March (330 tables, all virtual), April (268 tables, all virtual), May (334.5 tables, F2F & virtual) and June (279.5 tables, F2F & virtual). Our best guess at the reasons behind these fluctuations is in April players were beginning to tire of virtual club play, in May players were excited to get back to F2F club play, and in June many people started traveling after a year of staying at home. We have found that the transition back to F2F games has been as challenging as the change from F2F games to Virtual Club games were in April 2020, but all in all, we are far enough along to say that it has been a successful transition and we are happy to report some of the more positive outcomes.

One of those outcomes is that in the last two months we've had many people wanting to learn to play bridge. Some of this may be due to the large number of people who have relocated to Reno in the last year and maybe others were ready to make connections with others after a year marked by self-isolation. Although this was not anticipated, two 8-week online classes, Learn to Play Bridge 1 and 2, designed by Jill Wallace, were in place to meet the demand. Besides a weekly lesson via Zoom, each of these classes include a weekly online practice session via Shark Bridge and a F2F practice session at the Mathewson Bridge Center for those students who live in the Reno area.





As bridge teachers know, the biggest challenge is getting beginning bridge students from learning bridge in the classroom to playing duplicate bridge at an ACBL sanctioned club. We have a solution for this challenge that is working beautifully. For the Saturday morning F2F practice sessions, several of our club players come to the sessions to welcome and play with the students. Last week, we had 4 students apply for ACBL membership in one day! Not only are the club players assisting students in bidding and playing, our experienced players are also setting up partnerships with students to play in our limited duplicate bridge games. A side benefit for the club players is that they get a good review of bidding and play concepts that the students are currently studying. On July 9th, we are adding a 99er game into our F2F schedule and in August we're planning to add a 49er game to accommodate these new players. Please contact Jill Wallace (alwaysup4bridge@gmail.com) if you would like to know more about this educational program. The next start dates for this series of classes are: Learn to Play Bridge 1 (July 28 – Sept. 5, Wednesdays, 3:30-5:00) and Learn to Play Bridge 2 (July 26 – Sept. 3, Mondays, 1:00-2:30). Registration is open to all students regardless of location because each of the two classes are taught online.

Relative information about these classes and more can be found on the Mathewson Bridge Center website, <https://renobridge.com>. Read more about MBC's educational opportunities on the Education page of the site. Also visit the Walk of Fame page where the Unit 473 Board is sponsoring an opportunity for our players to say "thank you" to a player who got them started playing bridge or who mentored them at a pivotal point in their bridge career. By the time you read this article, some of these people will be recognized on the Walk of Fame page.

We are looking forward to two wonderful events happening in our area soon, the Sparks/Reno Regional, October 3-10, 2021 and the NABC in Reno, March 10-20, 2022. We are optimistic that our bridge world has not only survived the challenges of this last year but may also improve and thrive in the aftermath.

Sacramento By Barbara Somervill & Jim Coke (505)

From Barbara Somervill

Well, we're back...sort of. Sacramento Bridge Club, Folsom Bridge Club, and Foothills are back playing face-to-face bridge. The schedules are somewhat different from before, but you expected that didn't you? You must have a vaccination card to





show you've had your shots to play. For those who, for whatever reason, have not had COVID-19 vaccines, you can still play online at the BBO virtual games. Same great directors. Same terrific games...NO lunch is being served, so you must bring your own snacks. Coffee and tea are available, but if you want something else, you should bring it yourself!

Sacramento Bridge Club

Open Games M/W/F 1:00
Invitational Games T/Sat 1:00
Closed Thursdays and Sundays

Folsom Bridge Club

Open Games T/W/F/Sat 1:00
NLM Games W 3:00 and Th 11:30

Foothills Bridge Club

Open Pairs M noon W 11:00 a.m.
NLM (under 500 MP) Th 10:00 a.m.

BBO Virtual Club: Yes, we still have BBO games, but the schedule is totally different and may change again. The need for BBO games depends on the demand.

Open Pairs T/Th/Sat 10:00 a.m.

999ers M/W/F 10:00 a.m.

FRIDAY COCKTAIL HOUR 6:30 (This is relaxed, wine-drinking, pajama-wearing bridge, and it's only \$3.) What a bargain!

Sunday is for both 499ers (1:00) and Open Pairs (1:10)

We are playing a Swiss on BBO on the 2nd and 4th Sunday evenings at 6:20. This is usually 20 boards, 4 rounds, and over in 2 hours. If you have questions about the Swiss, contact Teri Smoot at montantabridge@earthlink.net. If you don't have a full team, Teri can help you.

From Jim Coke

The three brick & mortar bridge clubs in the Sacramento area have all reopened now. And yes, it is joyous to see people again. I directed and played in my first face to face game on Friday, July 9th at the Folsom Bridge Club. It was marvelous to see friends whom I haven't seen in over a year. A lot of them were people who helped me





with my Saturday game in Folsom before the shutdown. There was Blenda Schwartz who helped me with food for those Saturday game and Folsom club manager Susan Haynie with her husband Jim Haynie. Our Unit Tournament chair, Bob Shiner came and brought unit board member Kathryn LeGro with him – it was the first time they ever played together. Mary Sims who frequently came in and played on those Saturdays with me when we had to fill in a half table and Charles Smith who also filled in frequently and came in and played with me on Friday to help me fill another half table just to name a few. There was a joyful atmosphere because we were happy to see each other.

I had been warned to expect lots of director calls for all the things we can never do wrong in online bridge – leads out of turn, bids out of turn, alerting your partner's bids and not your own, etc. I planned on having a lot of director calls, so I gave a little humorous speech before the game reminding the players of these and apparently it worked! There weren't any director calls.

But we also should discuss reopening from the point of view of how the clubs are doing. The number of players at our games is dramatically down from before closure. To some extent, we expected the reduction in players. All three of our brick and mortar clubs have a mandatory vaccination policy with no exceptions so this eliminates the unvaccinated. Some of our members have passed away and others have seen their health decline. We have a fairly large number of members who have moved away. Some of the moving may be due to Sacramento housing prices skyrocketing due to the influx of Bay Area tech workers who can now work remotely. There is also a large contingent of folks who are worried about face to face contact even with a 100% vaccinated crowd. Our recruiting and training of new players halted during the shutdown, so we were unable to replace our losses during the pandemic. And lastly, people now need to rework their schedules to play and find partners with compatible schedules.

The reality today is that we are seeing table counts of about 40% per game compared to pre closure. On top of this, our schedules are significantly reduced from pre closure. The aggregate number of open games from the three Sacramento area brick & mortar clubs is less than half the number pre closure.

The previous two paragraphs sound grim but we have some reasons for hope. One of our clubs, Foothill BC, has been open two months longer than Folsom BC and Sacramento BC. They used the start small and grow model that the other two clubs are





now using. Their table counts are rising, and they have added another open game. All three clubs have restarted bridge classes, but it will be some time before the beginning players will be ready to play in games. For many of our regular members, it will take time to get comfortable to come play in person and to find partners to join them – I've started that process and am happy to report that I have my playing schedule full for the rest of the month. But the last part of our reopening is likely to be reached only when it is safe enough to allow non-vaccinated players to join the games. Sadly, that may take a while. In the meanwhile, the crisis is not done so we still need you to support your club – whether online or in person.

San Francisco By Kimberly Fanady (506)

San Franciscans are looking forward to the return of in - person games! QuickTricks will be the first SF club to reopen, on Monday, July 12. Unit 506ers are welcome to join in what promises to be a festive and happy occasion. Please read the club's vaccination policy on its website, www.quicktricks.org, and come ready to comply. We hope that with QuickTricks leading the way, the other SF clubs also will reopen soon. The monthly unit games are anticipated to return in September. Online bridge on BBO is great and has many advantages, and thank heavens we had it during shelter in place to keep us all from going stir crazy. But there's no substitute for the company of friends IRL.

My last DITR column before this one was sometime last fall — September 2020 if I remember correctly. In that time, lots and lots and lots of Unit 506 players have advanced up the ranks. We've got many new Junior, Club, Sectional and Regional Masters, and even some Silver, Ruby, Gold and Sapphires. The backlog is way too many to list here! But you know who you are, and thanks to the ACBL Bulletin your friends and frenemies know who you are too. Congrats all!

Sadly, we lost too many beloved San Francisco players since my last column. We sadly say goodbye to Jesse Levy, Dick Rigg, Martha Rosenberg, Bill Schultz, and Lorrie Bassan. Each of them was a good humored and kind presence at our tables. Each of them will be missed. Our condolences to their families and friends.

Hope to see many of you at an actual bridge table for some actual cards soon!
Happy summer!





San Mateo By John Selin (498)

We welcome new and reinstated Unit members:

Sarita Ahern (Burlingame)

Margaret Stringer (Pacifica)

Cindy Dunleavy (Millbrae)

Terri S Bailard (Menlo Park)

Jane H Williams (Menlo Park)

Eva Klein (Hillsborough)

Judith S Jackson (Menlo Park)

Congratulations to our new Master Achievements:

Junior Masters

Regional Masters

- Emily Hamilton
- Yannick Leguyader
- Kit Reitman
- Griff Weber
- Janice R Pieper

- Amy E Christen
- Nora M Frei
- Jeanne Urich

Club Masters

NABC Masters

- Randall M Baum
- Andrew B Ehrich

- Mike Halliday
- Peter Goldsmith

Sectional Masters

Silver Life Masters

- Fay Bigelow
- Linda D Hawkins
- Melanie Mauldin
- Judy D Olson
- Pamela J Pontius
- Cynthia R Wener
- Margaret Wong

- Eleanor A Battaglia

Ruby Life Master

- Virginia B Wailes





We held our monthly unit-sponsored game on May 29 with a total of 12 tables divided into open and 499er sections. Kaili Jiao took 1st place in the open game with 67.8%. Two pairs tied for second with 61.7%: Jennifer and Phil Kuhn, and Mary and Jay Bates. In the 499er game, Bob Chang and David Sweet finished 1st with 61.7%, just ahead of Bev Hall and Katherine Kwong with 60%. Thanks to Raad Bunni for directing.

We held two monthly unit-sponsored games in June, coordinated with the Longest Day campaign. The open game on June 19 ended in a tie for first place for the pairs of Edward Zuckerberg - Fred Chasalow and Art Quey – Bob Gleason with 61.8%, followed closely by Alfred Lee - Sherman Gao at 60.4%. In the 499er, Barbara Lewis - Marilynne Bachli finished first among N-S players with 67.1%, and Kai Eckert - Becca Simmons took E-W honors with 64.6%. The following day, Arline and Jim Van Ness won the open game with 60.2%, followed by a two-way tie for Lawrence Kolton - Edwin Mah and Helene Ettelson - Mie Thiemmedh at 53.8%. The string of ties continued in the 499er, with Sheila Felker - Virginia Zapitz and Eric Duff - Linda Turner sharing first with 55.6%, and second going to Barbara Lewis - Marilynne Bachli at 52.8%. Thanks to Raad Bunni who directed on Saturday and Art Quey on Sunday.

The May mentor-mentee games drew a total of 13 tables. The top finishers in Section 1 were Cynthia Wener and Robert Ng (60%), and Sum Tang and Art Quey (58.9%), Rita Gupta and Pete Goldsmith captured Section 2 honors at 72.7%, followed by a two-way tie: Lauren Rosen - Janice Nakao and Gloria Halliday - Raad Bunni each had 60.7%. Participation in the two games totaled 13 tables. Thanks to Art Quey for directing.

The June mentor-mentee games drew a total of 12 tables. The top finishers in Section 1 were Cynthia Werner - Kal Aziz (58.3%), followed by Cynthia Wener - Robert Ng (56.9%). In Section 2, Rita Gupta - Pete Goldsmith (57.9%) were first among NS players, and Anna Brown - Arline Van Ness (61.6%) won playing EW. Thanks to Art Quey for directing.

Club-level qualifying for the North American Pairs (NAP) competition is under way and will continue through August on BBO. Subsequent rounds of qualification at the unit and district levels and the NAP finals will be played in person. For Unit 498, we plan to schedule a qualifier sometime between September 1 and November 7. The details of this event will depend on first getting live club games established at the Villa in San





Mateo, which is on track for early August. District 21 NAP qualification will be at the Monterey regional in January.

Our Longest Day campaign has raised approximately \$14,000 for the Alzheimer's Foundation. The team is accepting donations through the end of July. Thanks to all who donated, Janelle Van Rensselaer and her team who organized the event, and the players who offered their time to play with donors in sanctioned events and on teaching tables.

Terms for the use of our new face to face facility are still being negotiated with the owner; we hope to go back to live play in August. Related to this, we conducted a survey of unit members to get a sense of how many expect to return to live play. Out of 117 respondents:

- 57% said that they will return to live bridge and 37% maybe
- 54% said that they will play live & BBO and 36% maybe
- 44% will play big ACBL events & 35% maybe

PDBC will be holding NAP qualifiers through the months of July and August. Here is our July schedule:

- Thursday July 1 - 12:45 pm Flight C 0-500 NLM NAP Qualifier
- Thursday July 1 - 1:05 pm Flight A (Open) NAP Qualifier
- Wednesday July 14 - 12:45 pm Flight C 0-500 NLM NAP Qualifier
- Wednesday July 14 - 1:05 pm Flight A (Open) NAP Qualifier
- Wednesday July 14 - 6:30 pm Flight A (Open) NAP Qualifier
- Thursday July 15 - 12:45 pm Flight C 0-500 NLM NAP Qualifier
- Thursday July 15 - 1:05 pm Flight A (Open) NAP Qualifier
- Wednesday July 28 - 12:45 pm Flight C 0-500 NLM NAP Qualifier
- Wednesday July 28 - 1:05 pm Flight A (Open) NAP Qualifier
- Wednesday July 28 - 6:30 pm Flight A (Open) NAP Qualifier

August schedule will be announced





Santa Cruz By Karen Schamberg (550)



The big news at Unit 550 is that we reopened on a limited basis in June. All players and directors must show proof of vaccination on their return to the club. Masks are optional. Check the website for updates and all specifics.

The F2F (face to face) games are at Noon on Mondays and Wednesdays and 10 a.m. Fridays. These are Open Games and will have no fee through July 16. Beginning on July 20, there will also be a 10 a.m. Open Game to which you are encouraged to bring your own lunch for this one. Food and snacks are not provided but there will be a short lunch break for those bringing their own food. Food may not be consumed at the bridge tables while play is underway. Coffee, water and a limited assortment of soft drinks will be available and may be consumed at the bridge tables.

Are you ready for a really significant "first" in Unit 550? Jim Slinger is our FIRST EVER Emerald Life Master. What an accomplishment by a wonderful man, who is both respected and loved in our club.

Congratulations to the following members who have achieved Master Milestones since February: Carol Avenmarg, Silver; Rachael Spencer, Bronze; Kris Smith, Life and Bronze; David Harken, Life; Jacci Sterling, NABC; Lester Loops, Regional; and Linda Downing, Barbara Tidmore, Pete Thomas, Janet Loops and Carolyn Wilson, all achieved their Sectional Master rankings.

The following is a long list of names, but it's been months since our last issue and I feel it's important to give kudos to folks on their achievements. So here goes...

High scores in both vClub and F2F games were earned by: Robert Johnson & Jonni Faircrest, 70%; David Pankratz & Abby Cohen, 70%; John Walker & Jonni Faircrest, 70%, 71.25%, 71.43%, 73.75%, 77.5%; Josh Karter & Dick Wasserstrom, 70.37%; Susan Benich & Kristin Smith, 70.14%; Sal Turano & John Hullman, 70.56%; Rick Zinman & Carol Avenmarg, 70.56%; Ken Llacera & John Walker, 71.3%; Teresa Loftus & Larry Bazinett, 71.3% twice; Rich Hill & Robin Evenden, 71.43%; Susan Slinger & Robin Evenden, 71.43%; Mick Friedberg & Ken Llacera 71.5%, 75%; Bob Price & Ken Gamble, 71.53%; Dana Brown & Diane Shannon, 71.53%; Dick Wasserstrom & Josh Karter, 72.22%; Mike Modest & Lester Loops, 72.5%; Susan Dietz & Margareta Hodzic,





72.5%; Greg Gauthier & John Stremel, 72.92%; Jim Slinger & Kristin Smith, 73.15%; Ken Llacera & Ken Gamble, 75% twice; and Sydney Reuben & Kristin Smith, 75.93%.

A high score was achieved by the team of: Mick Friedberg, Ken Llacera, Susan Slinger & Jim Slinger, 71% in the first Swiss Teams on February 10.

In the Winter Wonderland online event, Kristen & Steven Smith came in 1st out of 1070 pairs, with a 71.46% game. Amazing! Also of note is that in the February Hollywood Magic Regional, John Wesolowski, Angie Millslagle and David Harken all finished in the top 15% of Masterpoint earners.

I'd like to welcome our newest member, Chander Malhotra, who comes to us from Riverside, CA. Now that the club is re-opening, we can welcome you in person.

On a sad note, our condolences go out to Laura McCabe and her family for the loss of her dad, Gerald Kibbey. Jerry joined our Unit in December, was a wonderful bridge player and a lovely man, as anyone who had the privilege to meet him will testify. You might remember that in the July 2019 column, Laura and her dad were congratulated for taking a first at the California Capital Region Tournament Friday Daylight Pairs event.

As a reminder, now that it has reopened, the SCBC is still a fragrance-free venue. Please use unscented, non-perfumed products. To see the Unit 550 schedule and calendar, please visit our website at www.santacruzbridge.org

Santa Rosa/Petaluma By Cecelia Zachar (509)



It's been a VERY long wait for our bridge lives to start up again. But before I get into how our bridge clubs are planning to open, let me start by reporting a little bit of joy in our unit since the last newsletter.

Most of us weren't invited to the party, but Unit 509 players got to celebrate (albeit, most of us were at home alone, reading the unit newsletter) the marriage of Jan Gullarian and Ed Flowers in May. The happy couple had this to say: Mutual friends introduced us, and on our first date, I





mentioned that I had discovered bridge and I loved it. Ed said he did too, but he hadn't played for years. The rest is history. We were married at a private ceremony in our home. Kathleen and Michael Capella, who introduced us, stood up for us, and Jane Bender officiated. Her husband, Jerry, was our photographer, and after the ceremony, Kathleen took pictures too. We celebrated afterward with a luncheon at Ca'Bianca Ristorante. We both feel so fortunate to have

found each other, and we couldn't be happier.

Now getting back to the mundane.

As to masks or no masks required: We have 3 clubs in Unit 509. All are reopening this summer. All are asking for proof of completed covid vaccination. The invitational Oakmont Duplicate Bridge Club and the Bridge Gallery require proof of full vaccination in order to attend and do not require masks. The Petaluma Bridge Club requires proof of vaccination in order to play without a mask and allows playing with a mask if not fully vaccinated, but the Petaluma Community Center where they play requires masks be worn in its public areas and restrooms. The Bridge Gallery and the Petaluma Bridge Club will share a list of vaccinated players, so providing proof of completed vaccination with either one, one time, is sufficient to play without a mask at either. My but it gets complicated!

Our first club to open was the Oakmont Duplicate Bridge Club, an Invitation Only club for residents of Oakmont Village, a 55+ community. Proof of vaccination required. Their first game was on Tuesday, June 22. All is well at the ODBC.

The Petaluma Bridge Club opens on July 15. At this time Nancy Gunn will be holding one game a week, Thursdays at noon. It will be an open game for all interested bridge players and will be stratified depend-ing upon the masterpoints of the players. Bring a partner and plan to ar-rive a few minutes early to find your seats. Again — all must be vaccinated or wear a mask when playing, masks required in public areas. If you have questions, please call Nancy Gunn at 707-480-9659 or email her at petalumabc@sonic.net.





The Santa Rosa Bridge Gallery will open Monday, August 2, with 7 games a week Monday through Saturday. Again — all must be vaccinated, masks optional. More information is available at <http://santarosabridge.com>, by email at bridgegalleryca@gmail.com, or by calling Kathy Venton at 707-591-5015. Kathy would be glad to help you find a partner.

Many of you know about Tony Jackson's excellent online classes. He will be teaching two live classes at the Bridge Gallery every week starting in August. One class will be on Friday, and the other has not yet been scheduled. These class will be on-going throughout the year and will not require sign-up.

Kathy Juarez will resume the Gallery supervised play games on Thursday mornings. Supervised play offers a wonderful opportunity for those who have already completed Bridge Basics 1 and 2 and for those returning to bridge after a long hiatus. The class begins with a half hour lesson, then moves into a duplicate bridge game with supervised play. No sign-up is required.

Also at the Gallery, Kathy Juarez will be teaching an Absolute Beginners Bridge class on Monday mornings, beginning on August 16. There are eight sessions, 9:30 to 11:30, ending September 4. The cost is \$80. If you sign up, you can also purchase Audrey Grant's Bridge Basics One for an additional \$15. For more information or to register, go to <https://form.jotform.com/203320813021032>.

Enough for our three clubs. In the Wine Country we've had to cancel both our



Spring and Fall 2021 sectionals, but we've started planning our Spring 2022 Sectional on March 5 and 6 at 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.

Every newsletter I list our 70+% games and players who've gone up in rank. Kathy Venton's Virtual BBO bridge games at the Gallery have been very successful. I love playing in her games since I get to say hello to old friends. Here are our latest big games: On February 1, Jeremy Brott and Joni Conner scored 71.99% in a 5 table game -- and can you believe it, they came in 2nd! Another pair scored 74.31%. On March 12, Christine Haedt and Melanie Haddad scored





73.41% in a 12 table game. At the Vintage House Mark Hersko and Debbie Tesler scored 72.8% on March 31. On April 26, Lynette Erlach and Linda Hutson scored 71.30% in the Monday < 300 game. On June 12, Mel Krohn and Karen Pershkov brought in a 70.38%.

I ask our BBO players to let me know when they get a big score. On February 5, Abbe Cohen and Dave Pankratz scored the big 70.0% playing in a 6 table Virtual Club game in Santa Cruz. Later that same day, Panette Talia scored a very sweet 75.22% to come in first out of 466 pairs with partner Tom Jacobson. On February 15 Panette and Kathy Venton scored 72.11% in a field of 72 pairs. On March 9, Roy Redlich and Hans Van Boldrick had their finest BBO game yet -- 77.7%, 1st out of 248 pairs. Wow! On April 25, Mark Hersko and Debbie Tesler scored 70.89%, coming in first out of 390 pairs. On May 14, John Shribbs scored 71.02% in an ACBL Daylong Individual game, coming in 10th in a field of 544 players. Gary Robinson played with the robots in April, mostly in games where there are 12 tables. In his last 20 games in April, he's come in 1st overall 14 times, 2nd 3 times, 3rd 2 times, and 4th 1 time. Not exactly a big game, but lots of wins. He racked up over 176 points in the last few months and talks about retirement.

Even though we couldn't play live at our clubs, our players have been racking up the master points. The following have flown up in rank since our last newsletter: Junior Master: Sandy Kriegsman; Club Master: Paul Downey, Dr. Prakash Devaskar, Linda Hutson, Victoria Broward, and Stephen Cotler; Sectional Master: Jeremy Brott and Jean O'Donnell; Regional Master: Stephanie Poley; NABC Master: Harley Conner, Judy Duport, Ed Flowers, and Robert Goetzinger; Life Master: Dana Murphy; Bronze Life Master: Conrad Larkin and Hans Van Boldrick; Silver Life Master: Howard Balfour; Ruby Life Master: John A Oswald; Gold Life Master: Larry Spanier; and Emerald Life Master, Sara Rothmuller. CONGRATULATIONS!

Silicon Valley By Ray Yuenger (507)

It's been five months since my last Unit 507 column, so I've got a few months' worth of news to report.



Regarding the possible reopening of the San Jose Bridge Center, some of our directors have been actively looking at potential sites for the bridge center. It's been a





surprise to me that there aren't more vacant commercial sites available at bargain prices. From my brief glimpse, it's as though the pandemic has had no effect on real estate prices. Due to uncertainty about how many people are eager to return to face-to-face bridge in our club, it seems to be more realistic to not look for a space that would be dedicated full-time to a bridge club. Instead, setting up and taking down tables for occasional games at a church, senior center, or community center may be more affordable. So if you know of such a site, please contact me or Lynn Yokel. Our contact information is available on our website, sjbridge.org.

Without face-to-face games to report, there is limited news about our local online club games. From our website, it appears there are two 599er day games and one Tuesday evening open game weekly, with other games occurring when attendance justifies them.

Nevertheless, our unit members are finding places to play online, as evidenced by our latest harvest of Masters (five months' worth), who deserve our congratulations: Reena Abrol, Cynthia Bitner, Christine Bumgarner, John Dieckman, John Dugan, Richard Johannsen, Padi Maamari, Prashant Mehra, Jason Scott (Junior); Joan Albers, Beth Clark, Dave Clark, Tiralisa Kaplow, Padi Maamari, Bruce Peetz, Michael Young (Club); Shashi Agarwal, Inderjit Aulakh, Warren Kaplan, James Locke, Ellen Railton, Archana Rathnakar, Gay Roper, Kathy Vita (Sectional); Ann Blach, Michael Cohn, Mike Friedman, Jan Pffifner, Susan Ritz, Rishabh Singh (Regional); Jayesh Goyal, Gerald Hewitt Jr. (Life); Jayesh Goyal, Gerald Hewitt Jr., Judy Kaplan (Bronze); Anne Dudman, Han-Yu Chang, Jung Hu, Melanie Kakalec, Jory Segal, Chee Tung, Anne Wilson (Silver); Lynn Bartz, Sally Hale, Michael Hughes, Andy Scott (Ruby); Ken Imboden, Barbara Luttrell (Gold); Michael Bodell, Paul Nelson, Bruce Scott (Sapphire); Judy Fisher (Diamond).

Unit members have had notable successes in online "regionals" (offered by the ACBL, not the districts) and "nationals." Since my last column, there have been three online regionals and one national. On three consecutive days in the Hollywood Magic regional, Ashwini Datar & Vilas Namjoshi placed first, second, and first overall in mid-flight pairs events. The first day their winning percentage was over 6% higher than the second-place pair. Beth & Dave Clark took first in a 99er pairs event. While I don't normally report the results of side pairs events at regionals, first in a 30-table event by Pangjie Xu seems worth mentioning.

In the Stay@Home, Play@Home regional, Lu Ann Walker & Robert Brunkhorst





took first in a Gold Rush pairs event. Kathy Vita was first in one 99er pairs event and second in another one. John Stremel was first out of 38 tables in a side pairs event and had a section top in a Gold Rush pairs event.

In the recent Endless Summer regional, Ashwini & Vilas did it again, taking first in yet another mid-flight pairs event. This time, their winning percentage of 67.28% was almost 9% higher than second place. Kevin Rosenberg dominated a top-flights pairs event. His percentage of 69.19% was over 11.5% better than the second-place pair. Beth & Dave Clark were first in a 99er pairs game. John Stremel had two section tops in a Gold Rush pairs event en route to placing fourth.

In the Spring NAOBC four-session Premier Pairs event, Kevin Rosenberg placed second and Jason Chui placed third. Again Ashwini & Vilas did well, placing second in the four-session 0-5,000 pairs event. Joel Singer ended up second in the four-session 0-5,000 IMP pairs. (This last event was notable because the pair leading the event at the half-way point was suspended from playing before the start of the second day and later found guilty of cheating by a panel of the Online Ethical Oversight Committee in a hearing report available [here](#).) Sarah Chen & Xin Ge had a sectional top in the Flight B North American Pairs event on their way to finishing sixth. (The Chen family has recently relocated out of Unit 507, so this might be my last opportunity to congratulate one of them.)

The Unit 507 Board of Directors continues to meet via Zoom every month, though there is little to plan without a club in which to hold unit games. We are discussing holding our fall sectional in October, but the high school that was our last site hasn't answered my inquiry about its availability. The Board does receive monthly reports from the ACBL listing the total membership. From the start of the pandemic in March 2020, our membership has dropped from 660 to 588. I'm sure that some members who don't like playing bridge online have cultivated other interests while bridge clubs have been closed for 16 months and more. I'm concerned about what the new normal will be for duplicate bridge. ACBL headquarters is currently imposing special restrictions on holding tournaments (mandatory masks and proof of vaccination), though they are likely to change before it is time to attend a local tournament.

I was saddened to hear of the passing of Mindy Foos, a regular opponent and sometimes teammate. I asked Michael Fleisher, her regular partner and husband (they





really could keep a secret) to share some memories of Mindy. I'll quote what he wrote in the next three paragraphs.

"My partner in life and bridge is gone. Mindy Foos passed away on May 7th after a long battle with cancer. I met her at the bridge table when I moved to the Bay Area in 2001. I immediately noticed her and made it a plan to partner her as soon as I found the opportunity and the courage to ask. I am very happy the plan worked!

"One of her repeated questions was – 'What do people who don't have bridge do with their time?' She loved the game, and was good at it. We played hundreds of bridge sessions as a pair and I enjoyed every moment competing with her as my partner across the table. Her competitive nature, mixed with her sensitivity led to what can only be described as excellent table feel. She used it well.

"I am thankful for the years we had together and the loving relationship that materialized for us as a result of playing bridge at Unit 507. I miss her very much."

George Pledger, one of Mindy's partners before Michael, also passed away recently at the age of 85.

In other news, a couple of unit members were elected to be officers of District 21 at a District Board meeting on June 29. Lynn Bartz, already the Chair of the District's Finance Committee, was elected Treasurer in an uncontested election. Ray Yuenger was elected Secretary by one vote in a contested election.

I don't know when the next issue of this newsletter will be ready, so I've tried to give you something to read in the meantime. Please keep your eyes open for a potential site for the San Jose Bridge Center.

Stockton By Debbie DeZarn (510)



Welcome back to "face to face" bridge at the Stockton Bridge Club and Oak Park Bridge Club. Stockton play resumed Friday, June 18, for all Covid 19 vaccinated players (bring proof the first time you play). The Club is no longer providing lunch so the entry fee is back to \$8.00 for now. Coffee is still provided and bottled water/soda is for sale out of the refrigerator. Open games are currently scheduled for 11:30 on Mondays and Fridays as before, but there have been requests to revisit that starting time** since lunch will no longer be included.





Non-Life Master games will be 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 11:30. Sunday games are at 1 p.m. but there will NOT be a game held on July 4th. The first week went well with a total of 23 tables and 59 unique players. Week 2 brought back an additional 6 former club players

**If you haven't already, please let Wendy Buchanan know your preference for a Monday and Friday starting time: 11:30, 12:30, or 1:00 or don't have a preference at all.

Just a reminder to all that parking is in the BACK of the parking lot or on the street near the Stockton Club. The parking at the front of the lot is reserved for Allstate Insurance and the business across from it.

Oak Park hopes to resume play Wednesday, July 14, with a new time of 12:30. This is still tentative but Korey will keep us updated regarding Oak Park via email. Make sure he has your email address for news as well as sending results from the Wednesday games.

There have been many Rank Advancements since the last newsletter in February. Joan Canepa and Carol Roth became Junior Masters while Arnold Roth and Lorraine Munoz advanced to Club Master. Margaret Stovall has gained a ton of points during the past year and recently earned the needed silver to reach Regional Master. Mary Westin joined Carole Seed as an NABC Master. Both ladies qualify under the "old" rules so Life Master is their next goal needing just their remaining Silver and Gold points. Also reaching NABC Master is Shirley Womack who placed high in a Gold Rush game at the last online Regional. Debbie DeZarn is now a Bronze Life Master and Lorna Crooks achieved Sapphire Life Master: one of only 6 current members of the Stockton Unit to reach 3500 points.

You may have noticed that the Stockton Bridge Center/Unit 510 website is gone due to the resignation of our excellent former webmaster Ann Nutting. If you (or your kid/grandkid) would like to step up and create and maintain a new site, please contact Ken Hillman. Having a website helps new players find us. Our first game had 3 new players: Mike and Mary Wells and Nancy Batie who learned of us through the former website.

A few more kudos: Jerry Baba and Carol Hakeem were thrilled to place 1st in their section in A and 1st overall in C in a May 4 BBO Open game of 484 pairs. Their reward





was 4.0 masterpoints. Debbie DeZarn placed 1st in a June 13 NAP game with a pick up partner and they each earned 7.0 masterpoints, the most ever in a club game for Deb. Other news is that Barbara Smart and Aurene Schene moved to O'Connor Woods and live across the hall from each other. They have a weekly (or more) game with other vaccinated players so never got hooked on BBO, but have returned to live play at the Stockton Club.

We lost two members over the past few months with the deaths of Sharon Metcalf in April and Marv Privack in May. They played mostly at Oak Park and will be missed.

With club play resuming people may be playing less on BBO but I am one of those who was very grateful to have it as a viable alternative. It is not going away, but I will close this column with a poem by Joan Garcia acknowledging the important role BBO played during the "year that wasn't".

I'm on my computer, the site's BBO....
that's the place all my friends go,
with bids and alerts and partners galore.
How could I possibly ask for more?
Then someone questions, "What does it pay?"
And this is what I always say:
"If I did it for money I'd always be broke,
not even a dollar to buy me a coke...
no food in the fridge and a cupboard so bare,
scarcely a crumb to be found in there.
If I did it for money, I'd be out on the street,
with a barrel, suspenders and cold bare feet.
But it keeps me alert, keeps Alz on the go....
and IF I win, it's "Thanks, BBO!"

