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

Another year gone – good riddance again! Finally got in a few club games of 3-4 tables, but it's still sketchy. We'll try resuming Wed games in January. At least the D21 Board will get to meet face-face in Monterey Jan 8 – for that reason, I won't have a game Jan 7, as my relief director has yet to decide to return to play/direct.

Not much on the in-out front – we got a couple transfers-in & a couple new members. We lost another long-time denizen late October – Bob Post died at age 88 (he didn't look that old!) He played regularly on Wed w/his wife of 64 years Barbara; on Fridays with a variety, mostly John Love. Terrific guy – he was the only club player close to being as tall as I am (6'5").

49ers are struggling, but the W's are kicking butt – by the time you see this, Steph Curry should be the all-time NBA leader in 3's. Sharks are a work in progress – playing better than last year with much-improved goaltending. Long way to go, so we watch & enjoy when we can.

So ... enjoy the rest of the holiday season, & don't blow your diets too badly. I'm not doing my usual LA gig (high gas prices & I think it'll be a wet week). May MMXXII be a marked improvement & may there not be any more COVID variants! Stay safe!.

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

What Are You Hiding?

We're cooking on all four burners. It's exciting to be playing in person. Everyone is fully vaccinated and happy to see a smiling face. Hidden behind a mask makes in nearly impossible to recognize our friends. Of course, many still adorn the assorted face coverings, but a nice Hi, or a big smile, helps us to "Make our Day".

Holidays

It maybe the gift-giving time, as we near the season of buying presents.

Some hide them under a tree, others celebrate for days, or mail them, and some just don't care.

Not everyone celebrates Christmas, but if you do, December is upon us and winter





is near, so clean out your closets and bring out the cheer. Santa's, panda's and all the cute toys, put up a tree and have some tea, if you've got the energy. How about a Hot Toddy! Remember when lots of us celebrated the holiday season with this special drink? It seemed to warm your heart and give us comfort, all in one cup. Hum, I'm getting thirsty; it must be 5:00 somewhere!

So, what should you be hiding? It's your bridge hand. If you don't cover your cards, and you don't think folks won't take a peak, you're not cookin' on all four burners.

I've done it, not intentionally, but I try and swiftly turn away, and tell the opponents to hide their cards. (most of the time). I've really only seen one pair cheat, pretty blatantly, and they were dismissed from the bridge center. Of course, there are the Italians, who during a world championship, after winning; were discovered cheating. The directors reviewed a video of the game, and just with a minimal separation of their fingers, that indicated what card should be returned. Of course the title was taken away.

So. It's imperative to be cautious at the bridge table, and don't assume someone can't see your cards OR overhear the bidding and outcome of the game. Even when I groan, make a face, roll my eyes, or take a deep breath, their all give always. Poker face is what we need, so you don't reveal what your hiding.

Wishing you all, a Happy, Healthful Holiday.

East Bay By Joye Sidoti (502)

I am happy to let you know that Unit games are back. Unit games, on the first and third Sundays each month, will be the only Sunday games offered at EBCBC. All other Sunday games, both online and at the center have been cancelled. Game time is 1 PM and the fee is \$8.

I am writing this column the first week of December after the Omicron variant has been reported in the United States. For the most accurate information, check the East Bay Community Bridge Center website.





Below is the schedule of games offered at EBCBC.

Currently proof of vaccination is required and masks are optional.

Sunday – F2F – game time is 1 PM – Fee is \$8.00

Open pairs

1st and 3rd Sundays only (December 5 and 19, January 2 and 16)

Monday – F2F – game time is 12 PM – Fee is \$8.00

Open pairs

Monday – Online (BBO) – game time is 6:30 PM – fee is \$8.00

Beginner and Intermediate

Lesson followed by non-sanctioned game

Tuesday – F2F – game time is 10:30 AM – Fee is \$8.00

Open and 299er

Tuesday – F2F – game time is 6:30 PM – Fee is \$8.00

499er pairs

Lesson at 6:00 PM, Game is 6:30 PM

RSVP in advance to ensure enough players

Wednesday – F2F – game time is 12 PM – Fee is \$8.00

Open pairs

Thursday – Online (BBO) – game time is 12 PM – Fee is \$6.00

Open pairs

Friday – F2F – game time is 12 PM – Fee is \$8.00

Open and 299er pairs





The Piedmont Bridge Club games are:

Monday – Online (BBO) – game time is 7:10 PM – Fee is \$5.00

Open pairs

Wednesday – Online (BBO) – game time is 2:10 PM – Fee is \$5.00

Open pairs

Thursday – Online (BBO) – game time is 7:10 PM – Fee is \$5.00

Open pairs

Welcome to new Unit 502 members Isaiah Kahn, Katherine Reinke, Stephen Soong, Katherine Thompson, Madeline Buty and Elena Silva.

Congratulations to the following members on their recent rank advancement: Marina Kong, Corlyne Recht to Junior Master, Lawrence Currie, Bert Carelli, Harrison Pollak to Club Master, Eric Lindquist, Matthew Kreeger, Nancy Zhu to Sectional Master, Sandi Davis to Ruby Life Master, and Edwin Seputis to Sapphire Life Master.

Many years ago, the Bulletin published new lyrics for 'Jingle Bells' which I would like to share with you.

Jingle Bells, Bridge Style

Verse 1

Dashing to the club, I can't wait to play

I pick up my hand and the bidding's underway

If we are both in tune and we communicate,

On our way to bid a slam, so let's not hesitate.

Chorus

One notrump, two notrump, three notrump to play

Four notrump, five notrump, we're going all the way





Six notrump, seven notrump, we thought we'd found the place
But our system got screwed up cause, cause, heck we're off an ace.

Verse 2

But never give up hope, our opponents may revoke
This is the time of year when miracles appear
Tonight is party night, so let's all have a ball,
Keep your spirits nice and bright, Merry Christmas one and all.

Chorus

One notrump, two notrump, three notrump to play
Four notrump, five notrump, we're going all the way
Six notrump, seven notrump, we thought we'd found the place
But our system got screwed up cause, cause, heck we're off an ace.

I hope everyone enjoys their winter holidays and has a Healthy, Happy New Year.

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

Fresno By Laura Da Costa (522)



Happy Holidays Everyone,

Last time I wrote this article, the clubhouse had just reopened. We now have had two full months of play. We continue to see more of our friends return to the clubhouse each month. We have reintroduced the Wednesday evening Open game to go along with the initial games we had started: Monday afternoon Open, Tuesday afternoon 750, Thursday afternoon 750, Saturday afternoon Open and 99er, and the occasional Sunday afternoon Open game. Not at full capacity, but we are getting there. Under Don Austin's teaching, Saturday morning lessons are doing great with 3 to 4+ tables every week.





On Sunday, October 17th, we had a Pro-Am Club Appreciation Swiss Team game. Six teams were created by having the captain draw names for his or her teammates. The payout was paid with 5% gold masterpoints. First place with 3.5 wins was Bill Glass (Captain), Cyndi Tingey, Larry Miller, & Ed Hampton. All but one team earned at least a fraction of a gold point.

The Annual Christmas Party/Unit General Meeting took place on December 12th



after a one-year break--probably the first year without a party in decades. Even though it was the middle of December with a rainstorm expected just a day away, we decided it was time to have a barbecue. Unit President Don Austin was out grilling up hot dogs and burgers. Special thanks to those who volunteered food, cleanup, and set up: Don Austin, Laura Da Costa, Gloria Fitzgerald, Steve Johnson, Mary Lou Pease, Belva Quattrin, Barbara Thacker, and Cyndi Tingey. Also special thanks to those who brought in their own goodies to share with everyone. We had two sides in this Sectional Tournament at Clubs (STaC) game with both an Open and 299er sections. There were 9 tables in the Open game with the winners being Lowell Gist & Barbara Thacker (N/S) and Bill Glass & Gary Nelson

(E/W). There were 3 tables in the 299er game with the winners being Jeremy Newel & Lois High. It was a great day, a great lunch, and a wonderful chance to see many friends who had not played at the new clubhouse until this game. I hope you enjoy just some of the many pictures taken by our photographer for the day, Marion Austin.





The Christmas Party also marks the day that Board elections ends. Our newly voted in board members are Don Austin (re-elected), Gloria Fitzgerald, Sally Stern, & Matthew Wilkins. They will be joining Margot Cegielski, Laura Da Costa, & Steve Johnson. We want to thank former board members Jonel Mueller, Deb Petersen, & Anthony Toto for their service at a difficult time—the pandemic, the breaking of our former lease, and the search for our new clubhouse.

One last note from the party, Steve Johnson was awarded the Distinguished Service Award for 2021 for all his hard work. His work directing multiple games and getting the clubhouse organized has been greatly appreciated. Thanks, Steve.

We had two 70% games in October and one in December. The two in October were both earned by Larry Miller in the Thursday afternoon game. Larry and Andrew Graves had a 72% game on 10/7, and Larry and Steve Johnson had a 71.88% game on 10/28. Matthew Wilkins & Maura Pennington were our December pair when they earned a 71.88% in the 99er game on 12/11.

About the time we have the next issue of this newsletter, we will be having our Winter Sectional. This tournament is scheduled for President's Day Weekend (February 19-21). This year it is scheduled to be a Saturday-Monday tournament.

We would like to give a big welcome to new member, Pearl (Lynn) Storey.

Lastly, we lost a member since our last issue was published. Our sympathies to the family and friends of Sydney Bluestone.

Livermore Valley By Rosemarie LaFrancesca (501)



This is the holiday season; so whatever you celebrate, have a good one!

The only news to report is the cancellation of the Livermore Sectional. A lot of work and dollars for low turnout rates is not feasible. We also want to keep our members safe.

Take care and we will see you on BBO.





Marin By Gail Haar (508)



The Annual Holiday Party and Homeward Bound Fundraiser is right around the corner. Please take a moment to bid on an item or donate to Unit 508's effort to raise money for HOMEWARD BOUND to help in its mission to end homelessness in Marin.

Click [HERE](#) to bid or donate. All winning bids and donations will be double matched. All credit cards, debit cards and PayPal accepted. To make a monetary donation, click on the green "Donate" button in the auction site, or send a check directly to Homeward Bound of Marin, being sure to put in the memo line on the check "Marin Bridge 508."

THE GAME - December 19: By popular demand, we added a 299'er game to the celebration. Both games will play the same boards. The Open game begins at 1:00 p.m. and the 299'er game begins at 1:05.

To sign up, go to BBO Online, (Bridgebase.com) between 11 am and 1 pm, click on "featured areas" and then "virtual clubs" and you'll see Unit 508 Holiday Game. Then choose the Open or 299'er game.

Immediately following the game, we will meet on Zoom and hear from Mary Kay Sweeney and Paul Fordham of Homeward Bound, followed by a discussion led by Gene Simpson and David Smith of a few of the interesting hands we played.

A hearty welcome to new members Steve Scheid and Beth Niles. Apologies to anyone I may have missed, communication is hard and accurate communication even harder.

Repeating myself from last month, we've had so many ups and downs with COVID that it's enough to make a player dizzy. After getting our hopes up for F2F bridge, it turns out the transition is going to be a little rockier than expected. Some of Marin F2F games are surviving, barely, but others have been cancelled for lack of turnout. Now that booster shots are becoming more widely available maybe that will turn around, maybe not so soon. My crystal ball is pretty cloudy. There's lots of good information about scheduled classes and games at marinbridge.com and be sure to read the weekly Blast for any late breaking changes.





Modesto By Ray Adams (529)

The unit had three new individual advances in ACBL rank in November. Garrard Marsh became an NABC Master, while Pat Gallo achieved the level of Silver Life Master, and Lee Maddocks advanced to Sapphire Life Master. Congratulations to you all!

There was sadness in our unit also, however. Gold Life Master Margaret Quinn passed away on the last day of October. For over four decades, Margaret played in games from Merced to Atwater to Turlock to Modesto and even to Stockton. She was very well liked by all her partners, and indeed, by everyone who knew her. She will certainly be missed.

Top game of the two months was 71.88% turned in by Wes and Judy Remmers on October 3. Second were Lee Maddocks and Bruce Ruskin at 69.64% – just missing that elusive 70% mark – on November 9, and third were Ray Adams and Cindy Rodgers with 68.75% on October 10.

High pointers for both October and November were A, Frank Frohman, first with 17.71, second was Bruce Ruskin at 15.80, and Ray Adams came in third with 14.09. In B, Libby Longstreth was first with 11.84, Cindy Rodgers came in second at 11.13, and Pam Mayne was third. In C, Garrard Marsh came in first with a nice score of 8.09, while Marcia Laird was second, and Jim Laird followed in third.

We will have a STAC week beginning with the game on the seventh and ending with the Invitational.

Game's Christmas Party on the eleventh, a Saturday. It should be noted that this game is limited to players with fewer than 1000 master points. The party will feature a potluck at 11:00 AM, followed by a bidding contest, with prizes awarded to top contestants, and then an exciting afternoon of bridge will follow. It should be a lot of fun. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

Monterey By Mary Block (530)

By the time you are reading this, our first Unit Game/Holiday party will have taken place (fingers crossed). Unit Games and the Sectional Tournament are the Unit's only fund-raising events aside from the table rents paid by the club owners. It is not surprising that the table rents are down by a substantial amount as so many people





have not yet returned to face-to-face bridge at the Bridge Center. The Unit has been losing money ever since the Center was forced to be closed for fifteen months. While we hope that more people will return to face to face play after the first of the year, the Unit is facing financial hard times. Some members and club owners have donated money above and beyond the required table fees and rents. We encourage any of you who want to have a functioning Bridge Center to do the same. Please contact any of our Board of Directors members if you have any questions.

As of this writing, there are two NLM games at the Bridge Center on Wednesday and Friday mornings and one open game on Thursday afternoon. Proof of vaccination is still required, but coffee, snacks and soft drinks are now available. If you haven't played in person yet since the lockdown, you may have forgotten what a good time we have. Emojis can't replace human interaction.

Consult the Unit website for other in-person and virtual games.

The following changes in status have been reported by ACBL: Jesse Kahn is a new member. Colleen Sizemore has transferred here from Denver. Przemyslaw I Reysner has transferred from Silicon Valley.

Don McIntyre is a new Junior Master. New Sectional Masters are: Eleonore Gutierrez, Susan Osborne, Paula Robichaud, Sarah Bouchier. Paula Cole and Laura Gamble are now Regional Masters. Bob Champion has reached Life Master status. Joel Reimnitz is now a Bronze Life Master and Jeanette Stern is a Silver Life Master.

Walt Conley passed away.

As always, be sure to check our Unit website at bridgewebs.com/montereyunit530. Joe Truskot is doing a wonderful job of maintaining and expanding this site to keep our members up to date. A new feature of the website is a partnership registry to assist members who do not have a regular partner or whose regular partner is unavailable. Contact Mano Singham at mano.singham@case.edu to be included in the registry.

In addition to being our webmaster, Joe also sends out e-mails of interest to our membership. Some of you may have your spam filters set so that e-mails to a mailing list go into your junk folder, so make sure that members@bridgewebsemail.com is in your on-line address book.





We are <https://www.bridgewebs.com/montereyunit530/>. The Bridge Center is 831-747-1650. I am maru0407@comcast.net. The Foundation is <http://montereybridgeeducation.org>.

Napa/Solano/Sonoma By Sigrid Price (512)

The Latest from Unit 512



There have been a lot of changes lately. Please remember to thank John Shribbs and Roger Bohl for their hard work putting together a new website for our unit. If you haven't already, go to aclunit512.org and check it out. Their efforts have improved the website tremendously and now answers to most of your questions are just a click away.

In case you haven't yet heard, Vintage Duplicate Bridge Club's Monday and Wednesday games are officially

located at the Moose Lodge located at 20589 Broadway, Sonoma. Forgive a bit of nostalgia from me, but I find the Moose Lodge so homey and reminiscent of our days at the Sea Scouts building in Napa, which many of you will remember. The Lodge lends itself to hospitality and best of all ... it has a bar! Games begin at





noon and proof of vaccination is required, masks optional. The Tuesday game for 499ers remains at the Vintage House for the time being, games start at 1:00. The games have yet to reach pre-covid levels for tables, but the numbers are improving, and we all know, there is nothing like face-to-face bridge. Enjoy the pictures of the last day at Vintage house and first day at the Moose Lodge.

Special thanks to the Board of Vintage Duplicate Bridge Club who facilitated the move to the Moose Lodge. The current board is Barbara Lemme (pres, Victoria Bonnington (vp), Carol Werne (sec), Barry Walner (treas) and Rick Davis, Sandy Hicks, Joanne Wegsten and Eileen Holsten.

Clyde Smith's Friday game at Napa Senior Center is thriving and remember, Clyde guarantees that if you come without a partner, you will play. He often fills in and anyone should be glad to have a game with him; he makes directing and play at the same time practically seamless. The Friday games begin at 12:45.

Here's the latest about the Mini-McKenney and Ace of Clubs:

Masterpoints: Mini-McKenney	Ace of Clubs
0-5 Cynthia Cope/Laura Shaw	Laura Shaw/Cynthia Cope
5-20 Robert Bruce/Carole Kupsoff	Same
20-50 Larry Pollard/Jean Behse	John Coulson/Jean Behse
50-100 Sylvia Landt/Jody Bugg	Jody Bugg/Marge Sheridan
100-200 Cynthia Crawford/Kathy Ann Wilson	Same
200-300 Helen Bohl/Chiong-Yuan Han	Same
300-500 Claudia Sims/Gwen Davey	Same
500-1000 Carol Fraser/Rick Davis	Same
1000-1500 Lilyan Frank/Barbara Lemme	Same
1500-2500 Dan Harp/Kathleen Smith	Same
2500-3500 Clyde Smith/Anita Pensler	Same





3500-5000 Joanne Wegsten Same

5000-7500 Tom Jacobson/Neil Stern Same

In the 50-100 category Jody better get busy, Marge is inches away from overtaking her; Cynthia Crawford has a strong lead in the 100-200 category, as does Helen Bohl in the 200-300 (my money is on them); Rick Davis will have to go into overtime to catch Carol Fraser. The "too close to call" races are the 1000-1500 and 1500-2500 categories: Barbara Lemme is snapping at Lilyan Frank's heels and Dan Harp's lead of .20 ahead of Kathleen Smith is in serious jeopardy; it's anybody's guess who will take the prize. Tom Jacobson has only a 1.59 lead over Neil Stern. Winners will be announced in the next edition of the DIR.

Congratulations to Jean Behse and Ted Quayle who are now Sectional Masters and Robert Bruce who is now a Club Master. Please join me in welcoming Sylvan Karfiol, Tammy McDonald, Don Moor and Robert Stinson, all of whom recently transferred into Unit 512. And a special welcome goes to Timothy Crew of Rio Vista, a new member of ACBL and our unit. John Krebs of Rio Vista recently passed away and will be missed at the tables.

Season's Greeting to you all...however you celebrate the holidays we wish you joy, good health, good times, good friends and good food! Hope to see you all in Monterey at the regional the first week in January!

Palo Alto By Judi Gentry (503)

Dear Members (and friends) of Unit 503



I am personally so proud of our unit for the way we have stayed active and supported our club during the past two years. There is so much happening in Unit 503! I encourage you to take advantage of bridge activities; whether face-to-face or remotely.

On Saturday, December 18th, we will have our Second Annual PABC Virtual Holiday Party. The festivities will begin at 12:15. Frank Smoot will make a repeat appearance as our emcee. There will be a few announcements and a couple of fun games: "Two Truths and a Lie" and Bridge Trivia. There will be prizes for the winners. In addition to Frank, the planning committee is





Stephanie Youngquist, Kathy Wheeler and Paul Davis. Thank you all.

The unit's annual holiday charity game follows at 1:00. It is a pairs game (a 499er and Open section) with Will Watson directing. If you join in the holiday party and make a donation, you will get one free in-person play at the PABC during Q1 of 2022. Please donate to CSA or to Second Harvest of Silicon Valley. You can go online to donate to these organizations or send a check or gift card to one of these organizations by mailing it to: Palo Alto Bridge Club, PO Box 391206, Mountain View, CA 94039

Obviously, the one thing we will miss is the wonderful pot luck buffet that has been a tradition pre-pandemic. Hopefully, we can look forward to sharing a wonderful meal in 2022.

And there's lots more coming up in 2022.

Monthly Lecture Series: On Tuesday, January 19, Ed Zuckerberg will offer our first lecture of 2022 on the topic of Declaring Difficult No Trump Hands. Lectures start at 9:30 and are free as part of our ongoing education opportunities.

Celebrity Seminars: We have scheduled quarterly celebrity seminars. Gavin Wolpert will kick off the series with a virtual lesson on Dealing with Overcalls on Saturday, January 29th at 9:30am. Register in advance (cost \$25.)

A big event: The Non-Life Master Sectional will take place at the Bridge Center during the weekend of February 19 and 20. Line up your partners and teams and earn those silver points! We look forward to seeing you then. There's lots of information on our website.

Along with gaining points in this tournament, there are prizes to be won. (To more experienced members, you can help! They still need more prizes. Newer players can use short term mentoring. It could be as simple as reviewing a player's convention card, sitting as a fourth at a table of players - whatever is comfortable for you. If you'd like to help, or have questions on how you can help, please contact the directors directly at diannegiancarlo@gmail.com and/or at lizkoh4bridge@gmail.com.)

If you want to learn more about our mentoring program as a mentor or mentee, check on our website or contact Jim Hulseman.

Speaking of NLM tournaments, following is a delightful true story shared by a





member about being a newbie playing in a tournament:

A year or two after we returned to bridge in 2015, my wife and I went to an evening session at the Santa Clara Regional, planning to play in a 99er or 299er game. At the purchase desk, the person said "we're looking to fill a table in the Gold Rush - would you like to do that?" We said yes.

Then she said "you can't win the overall," presumably in case we didn't understand that it was a 2-session event.

I smiled and said "everybody knows that, but you're the first one who's had the courage to say it to us out loud."

She was briefly chagrined, then saw my smile, and we all laughed heartily together.

- Thanks to Phil Abrahamson for sharing this story.

Announcing new board officers for 2022:

President David Merenbach

Vice President Stephanie Youngquist

Treasurer Marc Cervellino

Secretary Eli Wismer

Thanks to these people and the many others who generously offer their time to make all these bridge opportunities possible.

... and wishing you all a wonderful 2022. Judi Gentry

Reno By Jill Wallace & Sandra Haslem (473)

While 2021 brought many challenges with COVID issues, cancelled sectionals, and returning to in-person bridge games, we feel that we are finishing the year on a positive note. Unit 473 has one ACBL Duplicate Bridge Center, the Mathewson Bridge Center (formerly the Reno Bridge Center). The following statements apply to this Bridge Center.





- From 2018 to 2021, the tables counts increased significantly from a total of 3045 tables (2018) to a projected 3550 (2021), a 14% increase.



- We've recruited 13 new ACBL members just in the last 6 months from the Learn to Play Bridge 1 and 2 Courses, that run for 8 weeks every 3 months. Saturday in-person practice sessions for the students in these two courses have also been instrumental in recruiting these new players.
- The Unit Board sponsored several events in support of our membership, including the return of the annual picnic and the holiday party. The Barbara Seagram Seminar on Oct. 4th was attended by over 100 people and the game that followed had 28 tables, filling up our Bridge Center.

- On Dec. 7th, our Unit Members elected three new Board Members, who will take on leadership roles on the 2022 board: Marie Ernst (Hospitality Chair), Curt Follmer (President), and Ali Tognoni (Tournament Co-chair). These three replace Board Members Jacquie Mall, Jill Wallace, and Judy Robyns, who have given several years of great service on the Unit Board.

Ending on a high note in 2021 inspires us to look forward to 2022 and we have some wonderful events coming up, including:

- The 2022 Reno Spring NABC tournament, March 10-20. Several of our Unit Members are chairing tournament committees.
- May 17-20 Unit Sectional, held at the Mathewson Bridge Center. This will be our first Sectional Tournament since Feb. 14, 2020.
- June (date TBD) Chuck Mathewson Memorial Game. Chuck Mathewson died on Oct. 24th. Chuck was a valued member of our Bridge Community. His love for the game and his generous donation is why we are now playing bridge in our beautiful new location. Chuck was a titan of industry and former CEO of International Games Technology, but he never forgot his bridge-playing friends. He often said, other than family, his two loves were the game of bridge and a good martini.
- Aug 9-12 Unit Sectional, held at the Mathewson Bridge Center.





One of the many things that 2021 has taught us is to appreciate our Bridge Community even more and to enjoy events we once took for granted. A quote that is descriptive of this year is "Life is about accepting the challenges along the way, choosing to keep moving forward, and savoring the journey." (Ray Bennett, *The Light in the Heart*)

San Francisco By Kimberly Fanady (506)

As a new year approaches, bridge in San Francisco is hanging in there. QuickTricks continues to lead the way, holding weekly in person games on Monday nights since its reopening last July. The club will celebrate the holidays with its annual holiday party and game on December 20 and is and hoping to resume its very popular beginner lesson program early in 2022. The Sunset and Chinese American clubs also have reopened and are playing in person several days a week. Unit 506 has or will hold three in person games this year, culminating with the annual holiday game and party on December 18. And of course all the SF clubs have online games every week. Delta and omicron notwithstanding, we're still here and still playing the best game in the world!

Congrats to our most recent ladder climbers: new Junior Master Kavita Khanna, Sectional Master David Lansky, LIFE MASTER Neil Vaz, Silver Life Master Carol Doll, Gold Life Master Mike O'Hara. Welcome to our newest member, Tom Richards.

One of our unit members is newly famous! Unit 506er Jocelyn Startz and her longtime partner Catherine Harris launched a bridge podcast several months ago, named *Sorry, Partner*, and it's taken off like a rocket. Their listenership grows every week, and they just received a glowing mention in the ACBL's online newsletter. Catherine and Jocelyn have interviewed rising new stars (Giorgia Botta), longtime experts (Barry Rigal), shining lights of ethics and conduct (Boye Brogeland) and a host of famous players from around the globe. But first, they kibitz! Tune in and give *Sorry, Partner* a listen – it's informative, fun, and homegrown right here in SF.

Lots of San Franciscans are planning to attend the very welcome revival of my very favorite tournament, the Monterey Regional, in the first week of January. Your faithful columnist hopes to see you there. Unfortunately, Unit 506 was forced to cancel the Winter Sectional, traditionally held in January, due to financial constraints, but hopefully the Summer Sectional will return in June.



Happy holidays, Unit 506ers! Hope everyone has a wonderful Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, winter solstice, Christmas, and New Year's. Here's to better times and more bridge in 2022!

San Mateo By John Selin (498)

We welcome new and reinstated Unit members:

- Greg Hui San Mateo
- Janice O Brien Pacifica
- Jiajun Wu San Carlos
- Wendy E Wooddrow Woodside
- Emmett R Miller Millbrae
- Alexander Bagerman San Carlos
- Elisabeth Brandin Woodside
- Marlene Chroman SanMateo
- Sook Jung Menlo Park
- Julie Navid Foster City
- Phyllis J Rodighiero San Mateo
- Irwin Kwatek Menlo Park
- Toni Middleton El Granada
- Baron Wang San Mateo
- John Watson-Williams San Mateo





Congratulations to our new Master Achievements:

Junior Masters

- Denise M Marks
- James T Wilkerson

Club Masters

- Jean Peers
- Carmen A Keenan

Sectional Masters

- Charles M Simmons
- Seva Sokolov
- Gail L Murayama
- William Pade
- Kent P Taylor

Regional Masters

- Marilynne Bachli
- Lucy H Ballard
- Carl Ebeling
- Kathy A Hamilton

NABC Masters

- Vivien Moyer

Bronze Life Masters

- Mrs Linda L Duncan
- Lorelei Greenfield

The Villa has proved itself a good venue to play bridge. Compared to our previous site, it is quieter, the temperature is comfortable, and the lighting is excellent. Raad Bunni's personal effort to upgrade the lighting made it perfect for bridge. Air circulation is good, and filtration has been added to improve safety during the COVID situation.

This year the ACBL gave districts the option to cancel unit NAP qualifiers, and our governing district (District 21) exercised this option one week before our game was scheduled. Like ourselves, District 21 is trying to manage the re-start of live bridge amid the unpredictable peaks and valleys of the COVID situation.

Our September mentor-mentee game comprised a total of 10 tables. Section 1 winners were Jeanne Urich and Kal Aziz (64.5%), followed by Jeffrey Schubiner and Jennifer Stern (63.0%). Carl Ebeling and Debra Martinez (64.0%) won in Section 2. Second place in this section was a photo-finish. James Van Ness and Nancy Hoeck





(57.7%) were the runners up in the B stratum, while Carmen Keenan and Hamid Motamed (57.22%) edged out Maryann Hinden and Nancy Rutledge (57.18%) in the C stratum. Congratulations to all, and thanks to Art Quey for directing.

Unit 498 will hold our annual meeting and election of directors on Saturday, December 11th. This year we will return to the tradition of combining the meeting with a holiday party game in person. The meeting and game will be at the Villa in San Mateo. We will provide a Zoom link so that those unable to be present at the Villa can participate in the meeting.

Our Halloween party game at the Villa drew 10 tables. This was the largest live game we have hosted since the COVID shutdown, and it was great to see some familiar faces (from the eyes up) that I had missed for almost two years. Some players saw partners with whom they had paired up on BBO for the first time. Congratulations to the overall winners Claude Hughes & Anne Javer (E-W 64.3%) and N-S winners Gail Cameron & Carl Ebeling (63.4%). Runners-up were Jennifer and Phil Kuhn (N-S 60.1%) and Siuling Ku & Kenneth Hui (E-W 63.1%).

Our last mentor-mentee game of 2021 was on October 28. Section 1 winners were Elizabeth Molumphy & Marcus Ballinger (63.9%), followed by a two-way tie for second at 55.6% between Barbara Lewis & Fred Chasalow and Jeanne Urich & Kal Aziz. Ties were the theme of the evening. In Section 2, Kit Reitman & Jennifer Kuhn split first place with Debra Martinez & Carl Ebeling (60.2 %), followed by Mary Smith & Mary Bates (59.3%).

Five members of Unit 498 have qualified to play in the national finals of the NAP competition by placing among the top four pairs of their flights in the District 21 tournament. They are Marcus Ballinger (B flight), and Pete Goldsmith, Bob Farkas, Maureen Martin, and Melanie Mauldin (C flight). Congratulations to all, and best wishes for victory at the Spring NABC in Reno.

We are also going to use the occasion of the Spring NABC to honor a couple of our former members by dedicating a game to each. Ted Richmond and Marc Renson volunteered years of service to our unit in addition to being outstanding bridge players. They are missed by those of us who had the opportunity to either play with them or against them, and all who enjoyed the unit's events under their leadership. The games to be held in their honor will be listed in the NABC tournament bulletin, so look for them





if you will be in Reno this March.

Competition from the D21 NAP qualifiers and the Thanksgiving holidays kept us from holding a unit game or mentor-mentee game in November. Our next unit game will be on December 11 at the Villa. It will start immediately after we conclude our annual unit meeting and election of officers and directors for next year. Three directors will retire at the end of 2021, Janelle Van Rensselaer, Suzanne Vuko and John Selin. Please join me in thanking all of them for their service. Barbara Lewis headed a nominating committee that identified three able successors, Melanie Mauldin, Janice Carter, and Jim Bolton who will be up for confirmation at the meeting. Come and meet them on December 11.

The mentor-mentee game will resume in January. Whether we continue this game on BBO or move it live to the Villa will depend on preferences of those who play in it. We are also considering changes to the method of assigning mentor-mentee pairings to continually improve this game, so your suggestions are welcome. As always, the number of available mentors limits the size of this game, so please let us know if you would like to help someone learn better bridge.

Club games at the Villa grew in November. Several of those who saw the location for the first time in October have become frequent players. If you haven't been there yet, I hope to see you on December 11.

Unit 498 raised \$17,430, for ACBL's Longest Day, 9th amongst the ACBL Global Teams, during another year of Covid!

During the "shortest month" of December, we are kicking off our 2022 campaign. You can join us by visiting our "Unit 498 & Team Peninsula" page on the Alzheimer's Associations' longest Day website. There you can make a difference toward cure and care by making Honoraria and Memorial donations, and our unit will get credit towards next year's fund raiser.





Santa Cruz By Rick Zinman (550)



Our unit will continue to follow COVID health and safety guidelines provided by Santa Cruz County. Currently, masks are required at all times (except when eating or drinking) and all players must have proof of vaccination on record.

Face-to-Face games are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 10AM. Bring your own lunch!

Several classes are either ongoing or about to begin. To find out about these classes you can contact the individual instructor via our website:

https://santacruzbridge.org/SCBC_Clubs/clubInfo/bridgeLessons.htm .

High Scoring Games

Date	Pair Names	Score
10/29/21	Ken Gamble - Ken Llacera	70.8%
11/1/21	Susan Dietz - Margareta Hodzic	71.2%
11/4/21	John Walker - Jonni Faircrest	70.6%
12/3/21	Ken Gamble - Ken Llacera	70.3%

Scoring Milestones

Name	Rank
Sheri Norbosh	Sectional Master
Ken Gamble	Sapphire Life Master

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. Also, be sure to take a moment to visit our Facebook page.





Santa Rosa/Petaluma By Cecelia Zachar (509)



October 2021 (Oct 8 2021 - Dec 7 2021)

We've been chugging along, enjoying a little face to face bridge, playing a little at our virtual club, and looking forward to bridge returning to normal.

Our big news — our Spring Sectional has been scheduled for the weekend of March 5 and 6 at the Petaluma Community Center (see the duck pond).



Right now we're looking at requiring proof of Covid vaccination for sure, and we'll announce whatever other restrictions are needed to keep everyone safe when it's closer to the event.

Water and soft drinks will be available for purchase. This will be our first event at the Petaluma Community Center. There's lots of parking, Starbucks and McDonalds across the street, and plenty of good restaurants in the area. The room is huge and well-lit. Players with 0-20 masterpoints play free Saturday afternoon if they pay for the morning session. For more information, see <https://tournaments.acbl.org/schedule.php?sanction=2203310>.

Two of our three clubs have face-to-face play. Players at our Oakmont club (which is by invitation only) must be completely vaccinated. Our Petaluma Bridge Club had games for a few months and is now closed for the holidays, scheduled to reopen January 13. Our 3rd club, the Bridge Gallery in Santa Rosa, has opted to be on the safe side with no face-to-face bridge, but Kathy Venton still runs 6 virtual games a week.

Here are the 70+% Virtual BBO games at the Bridge Gallery in October and November: Robert Goetzing and Lawson James scored a huge 73.41% on October 20; John and Patty Shribbs, 70.01% on November 20; and Mark Hersko and Cecelia Zachar, 70.08 on the 30th.

In Oakmont, on October 22, we had two big winners in the same game. Playing





NS, Fikry Galal and Hugh Kellogg scored 71.50%; and EW, Ellen Fulton and Ann Schneider scored 70.50%. On November 23, Ann Schneider and Pat Veuve scored 72.22%.

Here are our players who have flown up in rank since October: our newest Junior Master is Richard Thayer, our newest Club Master is Terence Brown, and our newest Regional Master is Mark Rude. CONGRATULATIONS!

Silicon Valley By Ray Yuenger (507)



Approaching mid-December, it's time for what is becoming a bi-monthly Unit 507 column.

COVID continues to affect playing bridge face-to-face. In the last two weeks the omicron variant has arrived, creating anxiety as its effects are being studied. On the topic of reopening the San Jose Bridge Center, at a special meeting in November the Unit Board agreed on 10 preconditions to reopening that were recommended by the reopening committee, now consisting of Norman Marks, Lynn Yokel, and me. One of those preconditions involves lining up enough directors willing to hold at least four games a week. Another precondition is for federal and local health authorities to lift mask requirements for indoor groups. Your guess is as good as mine as to when this will occur, but at least we have a framework for when to take action that is designed to minimize the financial risk to Unit 507 of becoming the club manager for the first time in its history.

While there is no club site yet, the Unit did hold a sectional in October in a Campbell church hall. We had 32.5 tables of pairs on Saturday and 12 Swiss teams on Sunday. Such a turnout is much less than half of pre-pandemic sectionals, but on the other hand the tournament was organized later than usual, so we were pleased to provide a place for vaccinated people to play mask-to-mask. Norman Marks did a good job, aided by Judy Fisher, verifying proofs of vaccination.

In the sectional events, Lynn Shannon & John Miller were first overall in the two-session open pairs game. Songtao Zhang was first in his stratification. Pamela Meckenstock & Barbara Roupe were first in the side pairs. Manoj & Radhakishin Thawani were first in their side pairs strat. The Swiss team with Betsy Wagner &





Carolyn Dozdiak was first in their strat.

Unit members continue to advance through the ranks. Congratulations to the last two months' worth of new Masters: Robert Pruitt, Bernard Shung, Li Zhang (Junior); Dimitry Goder, Kumar Ramaiyer (Club); Tan Hussain (Regional); Betsy Wagner (NABC); Joanne Cornbleet (Life); Cathy Struck (Bronze); Audrey Mitchell, Vilas Namjoshi, Linda Nemmer (Ruby).

District 21 held its North American Pairs qualifiers online. In flight B, Pangjie Xu placed first, while Jung Hu placed third. In flight C, Shailesh Sampat & Milind Girkar were first and Yannie Zhao was second.

A number of unit members were brave enough to travel to the Fall Nationals in Austin this year to play in a vaccinated and masked environment. Lynn Shannon & John Miller were on a team that placed sixth in the Mitchell BAM. Michael Fleisher's team was tenth in the Mixed Swiss. In regional events, Rich Reitman's team won a Swiss event. Susan Dietz's team tied for first in their bracket in a different event.

Anne Bossange and Robert Dean recently retired from the Unit Board. Anne has been a member since July 2017 with Bob joining a year later. Thanks to both of them for all their service. I'm sure we'll continue to see them in volunteer roles. Thanks especially to Anne and her husband for helping me transport tables and other supplies away from our last sectional on a rainy evening. I was elected to fill Anne's position of Secretary. (I'm now the Secretary of D21, U507, and another bridge group. Good thing I don't mind typing.)

I'm very sorry to report the passing of Loretta Flynn.

I wish you all safe and happy holidays and a happy new year. If you want to give back to bridge, consider volunteering for the unit board.





Stockton By Debbie DeZarn (510)



It was a nice second half of 2021 with most of the Clubs in Unit 510 back to their regular in-person schedules. Attendance has been steady but lower than pre-pandemic in Stockton so here is hoping that 2022 brings more online or inactive members back to live play.

STaC games the first week and Club Championships all month seem to be helping with that so far in December. Two pairs from the December 6 STaC Open game in Stockton scored high enough to place in the District overalls for enhanced points. Congratulations Cissy Hilken and Barbara Smart for a 66% game which garnered 5.28 Silver points. Glo Klinger Williams and Mort Horn got a slight point bump to 1.67 Silver for their 62% game. Don't forget there is a bonus STaC game on Sunday, December 12 at noon at the Stockton Club.

The Stockton Club is adorned with a new Winter themed wall quilt created by Maryanne Sievers. Thank you for sharing! The snack table has changed decor to Poinsettias and snowflakes thanks to new tablecloths and decor put up by Toni Hillman. We got a new coffee pot as well! The Holiday potluck lunch and Unit Game will be December 19 with dining at 12 (or earlier as the food arrives) and play beginning by 12:30.

Oak Park Bridge Club had its annual potluck buffet lunch on December 8. This is



Director Korey (standing) makes pre-game announcements

the only time of year that "real food" is enjoyed as with an 11 a.m. start time most players bring their own sandwiches and try to find a time to eat it between rounds of play. The party was also the time for "Director Appreciation" to thank Korey for all the work of bringing the computer, bridgemates, and all other

equipment and supplies each week to the Senior Center. Thank you to his reliable helpers also: Joan Garcia and Ken Hillman who set up tables and do other heavy lifting that generally those of us in our 70's and early 80's hope to



Joan and Ken, worker bees





avoid. But we are the “young ones”. Thank you, too, to Jerry Barnes who brings homemade cookies more often than not.

Let’s congratulate two new Masters: Frank Klo is now a Club Master after a run of wins with partner Terry Nagode in Stockton. The other is Margaret Stovall, who plays mostly online, and has reached NABC Master. Well done, both of you.

Hanukkah is over, but Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all the Unit 510 players in the foothills and the valley. We are still here and enjoying our favorite game. Good luck to everyone who will be playing in the Palm Springs and Monterey Clambake Regionals which are the next opportunities to win those final Gold Points needed for your next rank. Remember to alert!!

