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East Bay By Tom Pajak (502)



Holiday greetings to all! I have no idea where this year has gone, and I'll bet it's the same with you. Someone once told me that the calendar whips by twice as fast after you retire and it's so true—I look back and wonder how I ever had enough time in the day to work!? Anyhow, we're here in the final weeks of 2024 so let's make the best of what's left.

I only have one rank advancement to broadcast: we have a new Junior Master and her name is Portia Munn. She's been attending Betty Kael's mentoring sessions at the East Bay Community Bridge Center and they're obviously paying off. Portia and several of her fellow mentees are learning the ins and outs of this fantastic game and returning to fill their heads with more and more stuff to learn and remember, all courtesy of Betty and Sandi Davis leading them along. If you'd like nearly personal instruction and experience towards improvement in your bidding and play, let Betty know you'd like to join a mentoring group—everyone is welcome.

The unit has CANCELLED the first game of the year (January 5th) to allow players enough time to pack their bags and prepare for travel to the 2025 Monterey Regional tournament. Afterwards, Unit 502 will hold their usual Sunday Club Championships on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, beginning at 1:00 pm and that includes a light lunch and beverages—all for \$10. Plan to show up on January 19th for the fun and extra masterpoints that a Unit Championship awards.

The Unit's holiday game and banquet was held on Sunday, December 15th with 20.5 tables in play. In the open section, "Big" Lavanakul & Shelley Lapkoff came in 1st N/S and were awarded 3.07 masterpoints. East/West finishers were Cris Barrere & Bob Thomson getting 5.47 masterpoints for the overall award. In the 499er section Haig Agigian & Gayle Harlow took first place in a Howell movement earning 1.17 points each with a 64.81% game. Well done, everyone.

Then there's the banquet! Volunteer chefs provided hors d'oeuvres, desserts, nibbles, baked ham, roast turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes & gravy, green beans, cranberry sauce, rolls, and all the other trimmings that made this one helluva great banquet for players to enjoy following the game. And enjoy they did! Take a look at the photos to see them playing a duplicate game and chowing down the goodies. Let me thank those



Unit 502
Holiday Banquet





who contributed: Sherry Larsen-Beville, Libby Silver, Betty Kael, Sandi Davis, Nadine Levine, Tim Underwood, various others who brought cakes, cookies, brownies, and other desserts for all to gobble up. Tatum Kael and her sidekick were the kitchen help who kept the food containers full and the line moving along. Special kudos to our director, Fred "Santa" Schwartz who managed the mob in his red hat and huge bowtie. I guarantee that nobody left hungry.

I wish all the readers a happy, safe, and rewarding New Year filled with successful slams.

Fresno By Laura Da Costa (522)



Happy Holidays Everyone! We will soon be saying good-bye to 2024. There were a lot of memories connected to this year: three sectionals, a Longest Day Marathon with a fly invasion, surprise computer breakdowns, the loss of many treasured friends, but also the welcoming of many new players and members.

Past Events

Christmas Party/General Meeting: Our annual Christmas Party/General Meeting was on Sunday, December 15th. Unlike the past couple of years, we decided to not cater the lunch but to arrange it with the help of many volunteers. Our lunch's main dish was lasagna that Anthony Toto volunteered his wife Patty to



make. Patty and her friend Enrica did an amazing job making 6(!) lasagnas for all of us. We had some amazing members add all of the side items: meatballs, garlic bread, salads, fruit, deviled eggs, vegetable dishes, and many desserts and snacks to keep the clubhouse eating for days after. Others contributed with money (always appreciated). A great lunch for all of us in attendance.

**Unit 522 Christmas Party
December 15th**

The General Meeting involved a quick discussion from Don Austin





(president) welcoming us all and thanking outgoing board member/Secretary Margot Cegielski. Margot started when the Board of Directors met on Zoom sessions during the COVID shutdown, so she was present for the decisions that led to our first few years at our present location. Thanks for all you did Margot! Don also welcomed new board member; Linda Arredondo. Linda is one of our newer members who started with the beginning lessons just over a year ago. It is always nice to have a fresh outlook to these meetings, so we are very happy to have Linda join us on the Board of Directors.

Lowell Gist, Treasurer, announced that the clubhouse is financially still doing well, though we may be dropping a bit in the red at the end of this year because of the yearly increase in rent of the clubhouse and a recent purchase that we had to do a few weeks ago. The recent purchase was a new computer as the one we bought in March of 2010 (still often referred to as the "newer" computer) decided it had enough. Thankfully we limped along with the usage of the "older" computer until we could buy a truly new computer.

I was happy to be the one announcing 2024 Distinguished Service award winner—Howard Arquette. Howard has been a major help with our new members for years. Even back in the previous clubhouse, Howard would often be the substitute teacher for lessons, and even now will often come to assist with our beginning players taking lessons or do an amazing job mentoring during the mentor lessons/games. His name has been added to our Distinguished Service plaque. Thanks Howard.



The Party's games were Membership games. We had 7 tables in the Open game with the winners (N/S) Robert Durbrow & Gail Vick and (E/W) Naguib Abdallah & Victor Greener (Overall winners). We also had 6.5 tables in the 499er game with the winners being (N/S) Ann Keag & Doris Myers (Overall winners) and (E/W) Rita Gladding & Kathryn Miller.

Thanks to Maura Pennington for the photos of the day.

Royal Sectional Tournament at Clubs: This STaC tournament ran from November 18th-24th. Listed here are people placing outside of the clubhouse results.

Mon. Aft. Open Game (95.5 tables)

- 1st Barbara Thacker & Bill Glass (received 15.53 mps, 25% of it gold!), 15th Victor Greener & Kim Morris

Tues. Aft. <750 Game (21.5 tables)

- 2nd Mary Gullo & Lois High, 5th Madeline Lynes & Judy Pierre, 6th Rita Gladding & Kathryn Miller





Sat. Aft. Open Game (81 tables)

- 8th in C, Gail Vick & Sandy OwYoung-Chu

Congratulations to all of the ones who won in the clubhouse and beyond.

Upcoming Games

Early New Year's Celebration: We voted to have a potluck/game to celebrate New Years Eve on Sunday the 29th. We will have the potluck dinner at 4 pm, Open pairs game will be at 5 pm, and we should be done around 8:30 pm. This was a very successful event last year when we actually had it on New Year's Eve, but the 31st, being a Tuesday, did not work well for most of us.

Pro-Am Team Game: We have scheduled a Pro-Am Team Game for Sunday, January 26th. If you have not participated in a team game, this event is a great way to learn how team games work. It is Pro-Am, so you do not come with a partner. Teams will be drawn before game time.

Member News

New Member: A big welcome to Susan Schweda and Michael Tarvin.

Change of Rankings: New rankings for October & November 2024

Junior Master

- Joan Clark

Regional Master

- Sandy Owyong-Chu

Silver Life Master

- Susan Vildosola

Ruby Life Master

- Laura Da Costa





70% Games: We have some special games to report, 70% and above

Pair	Percentage	Game
Irene Davis & Debbie Aivazian	75.00	Wed. Aft. <20 Game (10/16)
James Moore	70.00	Wed. Aft. <20 Indiv. (10/30)
Joan Clark	70.00	Wed. Aft. <20 Indiv. (10/30)
Howard Arquette & Ray April	75.00	Sat. Aft. Open Game (11/9)
Donna Raven	70.83	Wed. Aft. <20 Game (11/13)
Pat Heckathorn	73.61	Fri. Aft. 99er Indiv. (11/22)
James Moore	80.00	Wed. Aft. <20 Indiv. (12/11)
Irene Davis	70.00	Wed. Aft. <20 Indiv. (12/11)
Loris Henry	70.00	Wed. Aft. <20 Indiv. (12/11)
Pat Heckathorn	73.86	Fri. Aft. 99er Indiv. (12/13)

Don Austin will be starting another series of beginning bridge lesson through Clovis Adult School in January. If you know someone interested in learning, this series will run from Jan 15th to Feb 26th and will be on Wednesdays (2 pm – 4 pm).

Keep up to date with all events great and small on our website at fresnobridge.org.

Gilroy/Morgan Hill/Hollister By Jim Craig (524)

The holiday season is upon us, and that changes a lot of things: parties, Unit Games, closed facilities, and some added, moved, or canceled on-line “virtual club” games. All the while leading up to the Monterey Clambake Regional, North American Pairs District Finals, and Grand National Teams. Not to mention the change in limits for the Thursday Open Pairs game in Gilroy.

Here is what you need to know right away (depending on when this is published and when you read it, of course.)

1. The Tuesday face-to-face game at Casa de Fruta will be CLOSED on December 24 and December 31, returning on January 7, 2025.
2. The Thursday face to face game at the Gilroy Senior Center will be CLOSED on December 26 and January 2, returning on January 4, 2025.
3. The online STONE’S GAME, normally every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday on Bridge Base (1:25 pm) will have a revised schedule for Christmas week and





New Year's week. With local clubs being closed, online games have been added for every weekday except Christmas day. Christmas week there will be games on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday (Dec 23, 24, 26, 27) with no game on Christmas day. New Year's week, there will be games EVERY day (Dec 30, 31, Jan 1, 2, 3), including New Year's Eve Day, and New Year's Day.

4. The Monterey Clambake Regional will be January 6 – 12 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel and Spa. See elsewhere in the "Diamond in the Ruff" for information, and the District website for the tournament flyer. There are LOTS of events for novice and intermediate players, including outstanding lectures by well-known national teachers.

Now on to the rest of the report.

Unit Christmas Party

Our annual Christmas party was held at the Old City Hall restaurant in Gilroy on December 8. We had a great turnout, with everyone decked out in their holiday best, sharing good cheer. First came the annual meeting, including the election of officers. Four out of five of our incredible officers will continue in their roles, and one new member was added to the team. Our officers for 2025 are:

Unit President – Linda King (incumbent)

Vice President – Patty Stone (incumbent)

Secretary – Marianne Wucherpfennig (incumbent)

Treasurer – Ken Johnson (incumbent)

Membership Chair – Lesley Waltner (newly elected!)

At noon the game started, with 16(!) tables in play for this Unit Game rated event. When the dust settled, the restaurant crew moved in, rearranged all the tables while the bar remained open, and then dinner was shared. One of the topics was "who won?"

There were 7 tables in play in the Open section.

N/S A (and B) Mark Moore & Vinny McLoughlin

E/W A Jim Craig & Ed Logg

E/W B Norm Dow & Chuck Wilson



**9 tables in the 499 section.**

N/S A	Janet Bernhardt & Marianne Wucherpfennig
N/S B (and C)	Sheila Holt & Don Montag
E/W A (and B)	Pat Kelley & Ernestine Hicks
E/W C	Jim & Kathy Krause

Congratulations to the winners and HAPPY HOLIDAYS to ALL!

North American Pairs (NAP)

A reminder to those who qualified for the North American Pairs (NAP), ACBL-wide event that starts at the club level and concludes with a finale at an NABC, in three flights (Open, <2500, <500). **Follow the report in the main body of "Diamond in the Ruff" for details** and conditions of contest. Next up for those who qualified are the **District finals (for all levels) at the Monterey Clambake Regional, January 11 & 12, 2025**, with the winners going on to the NABC.

Sectional Tournament at Clubs (STaC)**November 18 - 24, 2024**

The November STaC event included clubs in Districts 19, 21, 22, and 23. Unit 524 had 3 games during that time frame: the Tuesday Buena Vista game at Casa de Fruta, and the concurrent Open and 499er games Thursday for Stone's game at the Gilroy Senior Center. This was a "Royal STaC" week, meaning that overall awards were 25% each gold/red/silver/black. The size of overall awards are based upon total attendance at all of the games running concurrently, which varied widely. We had a number of participants from Unit 524 who did very well.

The Tuesday (November 19) Buena Vista was included in an event of 9 ½ tables over 3 clubs, including British Columbia and Alaska. Our local winners, with a score of 64.58%, were Jim Craig and Win Stone, good enough for FIRST PLACE overall and a prize of 3.75 MPs. The local players finishing in the overalls included:

First overall: Jim Craig – Win Stone (3.75 mps)

Second overall (tie): Liega & Patrick Arnett (2.46 mps)

First in C: Arlene & Steve Greenberg (1.67 mps)

Fifth in C: Barbara Earley & Suzanne Proctor (.53 mps)

The Thursday (November 21) 499er game in Gilroy had 6 tables and had no other clubs matching the same playing criteria at that time. There were still some overall





awards for it being Sectionally rated:

First: Sue Comporato & Anna Gervacio (1.50 mps)

Second: Barbara Earley & Geoff Kinn (1.13 mps)

First in C: Maria Schalk & Bob Wiedlin (1.05 mps)

Second in C: Arlene & Steve Greenberg (.79 mps)

Third in C: Ernestine Rice & Pat Kelley (.59 mps)

The Thursday (November 21) Open game in Gilroy had 6 tables, but the full competition included 53.5 tables across several clubs. Rosemary Erwin & Diana Dragt tied with Lorrie Scott and Mary Legrand for 7th place in flight B, for the top result from our club. Here are the local results for Gilroy players in the event, and Masterpoints awarded:

N/S 1: Mary Legrand & Lorrie Scott (1.50)

N/S 2: Ken Johnson & Graham Kelly (1.05)

N/S 1 in C: Skip Pack & Chuck Wilson (.64)

E/W 1: Rosemary Erwin & Diana Dragt (1.50)

E/W 2: Mark Moore & Norm Dow (1.05)

Rank Advancements

Several members moved up in rank over the past few months. Be sure to congratulate them when you see them at the table!

Lennart Naslund has reached the rank of Junior Master!

Nancy Sampson is another new Junior Master!

Merrill Wolfe is also a new Junior Master!

Maria Schalk has attained the rank of Sectional Master!

Joanne McLoughlin is now an NABC Master (200 MP)!

Well done all!

Unit Games

We can't really call it the "Monthly Unit Game" when there was no game in September, THREE games in December, and a plan for irregular additional games at Casa de Fruta. What we had over the past few months was: Unit Games in Morgan Hill





on October 20, November 17, and December 15, a Christmas Party Unit Game at the Gilroy "Old City Hall" on December 8, and a Hollister Unit Game at Casa de Fruta on December 10. Over the next few months, plan on monthly Sunday Unit Games (12:30 pm) at the **Centennial Recreation Center** (CRC) in Morgan Hill on January 19 (2025!), February 16, and March 16. Skip will tell us about additional Unit Games on various Tuesdays at Casa de Fruta (11:00 am), so be alert for those announcements.

October Unit Game in Morgan Hill (10/20/24)

The Open section was 7 full tables

N/S A – Margot Kakalec & Dave Jackson

N/S B – Joanne & Vinny McLoughlin

E/W A & B – Carol Nicoletti & Suzanne Proctor

The 499er section was 4 ½ tables

First in A & B – Lesley Waltner & Lennart Naslund

First in C – Merrill Wolfe & Rebecca Sanchez

November Unit Game in Morgan Hill (11/17/24)

The Open section was 6 1/2 tables.

First in A – Sally Hale & Jeff Rogers

First in B & C – Skip Pack & Ivan Godard

The 499er section was 4 tables.

First in A – Lesley Waltner & Arlene Greenberg

First in B – Pat Kelley & Ernestine Rice

There was a 2-table 99er section won by Vicky Sexton & Leishman

Christmas Party Unit Game (see separate section)

Casa de Fruta December Unit Game (12/3/24)

A – Joanne & Vinny McLoughlin

B – Steve & Arlene Greenberg





December Unit Game in Morgan Hill (12/15/24)

The Open section was 5 full tables.

N/S A – Margot Kakalec & Dave Jackson

N/S B – Linda King & Patty Stone

E/W A – Win Stone & Jonna Robinson

E/W B – Sue Comporato & Betsy Wagner

The 499er section was also 5 full tables.

N/S A – Lesley Waltner & Arlene Greenberg

N/S B – George Bitner & Marilyn Bankert

E/W A – Dennis Rubida & Lennart Naslund

E/W B – Jim & Kathy Krause

Full results are available on the Unit website, and ACBL "Live for Clubs," both with hand records.

Club Games

The **Tuesday** game in **Hollister** (Buena Vista Bridge Club) is held at 11:00 am at Casa de Fruta, on Highway 152, at least for the time being. The game is generally 3 - 6 tables, and open to all. Winners over the past two months:

Oct 15 A – Liega & Patrick Arnett

B – Lesley Waltner & Lennart Naslund

Oct 22 A – Seala Fletcher-Kelly & Graham Kelly

B – Arlene & Steve Greenberg

Oct 29 1 – Jim Craig & Win Stone

2 – Seala Fletcher Kelly & Graham Kelly

Nov 5 1 – Seala Fletcher-Kelly & Graham Kelly

2 – Geoff Kin & Nancy Sampson

Nov 12 A – Jim Craig & Win Stone

B – Arlene Greenberg & Judy Henry





Nov 19 see STaC games section of report

Nov 26 A – Liega & Patrick Arnett

B – Arlene & Steve Greenberg

Dec 3 – see Unit Games section of report

Dec 10 A – Graham Kelly & Vinny McLoughlin

B – Barbara Earley & Suzanne Proctor

The **Thursday** game in **Gilroy** (Stone's Game) is at the Senior Center across from City Hall and adjacent to the Police Station, with a brief lesson at 10 am followed by play. There is an Open section and an intermediate section with a top limit of 199 MP effective the first of January.

Oct 17 (Open) N/S A – Ken Johnson & Vinny McLoughlin

N/B B – Linda King & Dave Jackson

E/W A – Jim Craig & Jonna Robinson

E/W B – Margot Kakalec & Patrick Arnett

(<499) A & B – Pat Kelley & Ernestine Hicks

C – Steve & Arlene Greenberg

Oct 25 (Friday!) (Open) A – Graham Kelly & Vinny McLoughlin

B – Mark Moore & Norm Dow

(<499) N/S – Lesley Waltner & Lennart Naslund

E/W – George Bitner & Maria Schalk

Oct 31 (Open) N/S A – Graham Kelly & Vinny McLoughlin

N/S B – Skip Pack & Ivan Godard

E/WA – Ken Johnson & Dave Jackson

E/W B – Sally Hale & Jeff Rogers

(<499) A – Joanne McLoughlin & Seala Fletcher-Kelly

B – Lesley Waltner & Lennart

C – Don Montaq & Julia Meader





- Nov 14 (Open) N/S A/B – Mark Moore & Vinny McLoughlin
E/W A – Ken Johnson & Graham Kelly
E/W B – Margot Kakalec & Mary Ann Ruggles
- (<499) N/S A/B– Lesley Waltner & Lennart Naslund
N/S C – Julie Burkart & Maria Schalk
E/W A – Geoff Kinn & Barbar Earley
E/W B – Barbara Miller & Marianne Wucherfennig
E/W C – Merrill Wolfe & Rebecca Sanchez
- Nov 21 (see STaC section of report)
- Nov 28 - Thanksgiving
- Dec 5 (Open) N/S A – Jim Craig & Vinny McLoughlin
N/S B – Patrick Arnett & Lorrie Scott
E/W A – Sally Hale & Jeff Rogers
E/W B – Skip Pack & Carol Nicoletti
- (<499) N/S A– Lesley Waltner & Lennart Naslund
N/S B/C – Don Montag & Julia Meader
E/W A – Bob Wiedlin & Dennis Rubida
E/W B – Pat Kelley & Ernestine Hicks
E/W C – Vicky Sexton & Rebecca Sanchez
- Dec 12 (Open) N/S A – Ken Johnson & Graham Kelly
N/S B – Don McCown & Patrick Arnett
E/W A – Jim Craig & Win Stone
E/W B – Margot Kakalec & Mary Ann Ruggles



- (<499) N/S A – Lesley Waltner & Lennart Naslund
N/S B – Steve & Arlene Greenberg
E/WA – Bob Wiedlin & Joanne McLoughlin
E/W B – Jim & Kathy Krause

Full results are available on the Unit website, and ACBL “Live for Clubs,” both with hand records.

Local Online Game

Win Stone, who operates the Thursday game at the Gilroy Senior Center, also hosts Bridge Base (BBO) online games, Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays at 1:25 pm local time. Turnout has risen slightly lately with the addition of players from outside the Unit, and in some cases from all over the world, on an apparently random basis. But generally, it is made up of Unit 524 members and their friends. Usually, 4 to 8 tables of friendly competitors each day. Look for “Stones Game” at 1:25 (local time) on BBO. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. There is a special schedule for the week of Christmas and the week of New Year’s, detailed at the beginning of the report. Refer back there for scheduling your online club games.

And in closing:

Everybody have a terrific two months, with holidays and family time, and don’t forget the Monterey Clambake Regional! Hope to see many of you there!

Marin By Melanie Haddad (508)



Welcome New Unit Members! Unit 508 is delighted to welcome our newest members! Please join us in saying hello to Suzanne Cunningham, Rebecca McEfee, and Julianne Wilhelm. We also extend a warm welcome to Carol Buchanan and Susana Hegstrom, who recently transferred into Unit 508. We’re thrilled to have you and look forward to seeing you at our bridge games.





Rank Advancements! Congratulations to our Unit 508 members on their rank advancements:

- Junior Master: Joseph Greenberg
- Club Master: Victoria Lang
- Sectional Master: Wayne Gilbert
- Regional Master: Kris Liu
- Ruby Life Master: Matthew Quint

Annual Holiday Party and Fundraiser for Homeward Bound of Marin. Our Annual Holiday Party on Sunday, December 15, at the Terra Linda Recreation Center was a tremendous success! Unit members brought their signature potluck dishes, creating a festive feast, while demonstrating remarkable generosity for Homeward Bound of Marin.



We had 13 tables in the Open section and 8 in the 499er. Congratulations to Vince Mueller and Peter Sagar who came in first overall in the Open game, followed closely by Nancy Gunn & Sarita Mathiasen and Andrea Ventris & Cyrus Ansari who were second and third respectively. Linda Fong & Kathy King placed first overall in the 499er game, with TJ Campbell-Lucas & Paul Leake and David Kramer & Evan Scott not far behind at second and third overall. The scores were all close. Congratulations all.

A huge thank you to Elaine Kitano, for her outstanding leadership in organizing the event, and to Steve Levinson, who manned the bar, Paulette Moe who made the table cards and decorations, Peggy Strong for directing, Andrea Ventris for putting together partnerships...and to Unit 508!

It's not too late to contribute to Homeward Bound of Marin! Donations received by December 31 will be double-matched.

- **Online:** [Click here to donate](#) and type "Marin Unit 508" in the comments box.
- **By Mail:** Send a check to Homeward Bound of Marin, 1385 N. Hamilton





Parkway, Novato, CA 94949, with "Marin Unit 508" written on the check.

[Watch this short video](#) to learn about the incredible work Homeward Bound is doing.

Amazing Volunteer! We're thrilled to share that Judy Leedy has been honored with a 2024 District 21 Goodwill Award! Judy's countless contributions—serving on the Board, chairing sectionals, and writing our weekly newsletter—have made a lasting impact. Her positivity and dedication enrich our Unit. Congratulations, Judy! Well deserved!

Amazing Games! Oops, no games. A quick reminder that the Terra Linda Community Center is closed for the holidays and will reopen on January 6, 2025. Games will resume as follows:

- **Henry's 499er game** on Mondays and **open game** on Wednesdays.
- **Peggy's open game** on Fridays.

David's 4,000 game at 11 am at Tiburon Town Hall starts back in January.

Check the [Unit's website](#) for the up-to-date schedule.

Peggy's virtual 2,500 game on Mondays at 11:40 am on BBO continues through the holidays and ongoing into the new year, uninterrupted!

Marin Sectional: Our Marin Sectional takes place on March 29 and 30, 2025, at Marin Catholic's beautifully refurbished gym. Thank you to Sectional Chair Shirley Ehrlich for securing this fantastic venue.

Don't forget that D21 NAP finals will be held at the Monterey Regional in January 2025 and it's time to put your teams together for Grand National Teams.

Amazing Opportunity! Are you looking to improve your bridge skills? Peggy Strong is offering a fantastic class on Major Suit Rases at the Strawberry Recreation Center from January 15 through February 12. Click [HERE](#) for more information and to register.

Here's another chance to elevate your game. Vince Mueller, one of our experienced players, would love to partner with you for a day at the Wednesday or Friday games in Terra Linda. This is a great opportunity to gain valuable insights and tips from a seasoned player. To schedule a playing date, give Vince a call at 415-342-3331.

Share Your Stories! Do you have an amazing game, a memorable hand, or a funny story from the bridge table? We'd love to hear from you! Share your experiences with the Unit by dropping us an email at marinunit508@gmail.com.



Stay Connected! Are you subscribed to The Blast, our weekly newsletter? It's packed with the latest Unit news and updates. Sign up [HERE](#). Don't miss out!

Modesto By Ray Adams (529)



October saw the Modesto Unit stage four club appreciation games. The Monday game was led the first week by Rose and Mike Epting with a 62.7% game. Judy Johnson and Nedra Voorhees followed. In the second week, Dana Dempsey and Colleen Blackman won with 63.54%, while Lynn Pont and Lynn Brooks were next.

The Saturday game saw Jaime Hamilton and Ed Jeffers finish first the first week with a dominating 70% game, while Debbie DeZarn and Paula Monroe of Stockton won the second week with a 60.32% game.

Top scores in the four open club appreciation games went to Bruce Rusking-Garrard Marsh at 66.67%, with Roger Smith-Ray Adams second at 64.81%, and Lee Maddocks-Garrard Marsh third with 62.96%.

Barbara Page – a B player – won the most master points won for the entire two weeks of club appreciation games. Next came three A players: Lee Maddocks, Ray Adams, and Frank Frohman. The two B players following Barbara were Garrard Marsh and Pam Mayne. In C, Jim Page led, followed by Tom Au.

The October Unit game was dominated by Judy Remmers-Sheela Wani who were first in both A & B. C leaders were Marcia Laird-Jeanne Russo. The November Unit Game was captured by Garrard Marsh-Lorraine Bocks who finished first in both A & B. Barbara and Jim Page were first in C.

October's best games (outside the club appreciation games) were 67% by Ralph Jungwirth-Trelle Uhl, with Galen Neptune-Ray Adams second with 64.58%, and Roger Smith-Gary Capwell third at 64.06%.

Lynn Pont and Lynn Brooks (or the "Two Lynns" as they are commonly known) had a very good month at the Monday game, winning both times, once with 65% and once with 61.2%. Nice going, ladies!

The B's took control of STAC week in November. Gary Capwell was a clear first, Cindy Rogers finished second, and Sharon Cole came in third. The A players were led by Frank Frohman, with Ralph and Telle second, and Sheela Wani third. In C, Jaime Hamilton won a grand total of 4.67 points making him first in this group. He was followed by Jim Page and Ed Jeffers.

Leading point winners for the two months were: A, first, Ray Adams; second, Frank Frohman, and third, Sheela Wani. In B, Barbara Page led, with Garrard Marsh



second, and Gary Capwell third. C saw Jaime Hamilton lead all others, with Jim Page second, and Tom Au third.

Readers will recall that Marcia Laird-Jeanne Russo won the C stratum in the October Unit Game. Apparently, this was just a tune-up for the December Unit Game Christmas Party on December first. They won handily, racking up a 64.81% game and finishing first in A, B, and C.

The Saturday Invitational game had its annual Christmas party December fourteenth. The bidding contest was easily won by C players Robin Johnson-Ken White, with Cindy Rogers-Nancy Lilly coming in second, and Debbie DeZarn-Debbie Greenberg finishing third. There were many nice prizes for the leaders, but all who attended got at least one prize as the participating bridge buffs were generous in their donations. The event was won by Libby Longstreth-Terry Sciabica with a 61% game, while Mike and Rose Epting were first in C, B, and second in A. Sharon Cole-Joyce Rudesill were third, and Tom Au-Joe Castiglione came in fourth.

Bruce Ruskin led all Modesto players at the recent Las Vegas Nationals. He finished thirty-second in the prestigious Kaplan Blue Ribbon Pairs, competing against the best players in the world. He also won a total of around 50 platinum points. Lee Maddocs won close to 30 points, about five of them platinum. And finally, Garrard Marsh-Lorraine Bocks picked up close to 10 points.

Have a happy holiday season! See you all again in the new year!

Monterey By Ed Schrenzel (530)

The Unit 530 Monterey Bridge Club was proud to announce that Joe Truskot, our Membership Chair and Webmaster, was named a D21 Goodwill Award recipient. Joe is a beloved member of our unit and will be feted at the Clambake in January.

As always, the center had a busy two months.

On Wednesday October 30th, the Club celebrated Halloween with a holiday cake and other goodies and a 10-table game. The most popular costume of the day was, of course, a bridge player!

On Sunday, November 10th, we hosted our monthly Lunch and Bridge Unit Game with a Thanksgiving theme. Turkey croissants were served for lunch along with cranberry salad, deviled eggs, and a dessert buffet. Unit treasurer Ray Mok reported that the 12-table event, which was directed by Lyde McReynolds, netted the club \$950, including \$169 in donations.





The next Unit Game, on Sunday, December 8th, celebrated the upcoming holidays with a baked ham, meat pie, sides, salads, and, of course, desserts. The 12-table event, directed by Doug Halleen, netted \$782, including \$82 in donations.

The December game also was the final day for our 25-item Silent Auction. It was a great success, setting a new club record with \$4,300 in committed bids.

Those funds along with the donations that we receive is helping the club offset its costs and revenue that was lost when the center was forced to close during the pandemic.

As always, guests from neighboring communities and visitors to the Monterey Peninsula are welcome to attend any of our events as well as our regular bridge games. Lunch at the Unit Games is served at 12 noon. Bridge begins at 12:30 and ends at about 3:45. The fee for both lunch and bridge is \$20.

Our next Unit Game will be Sunday, January 19th. In the meantime, we invite all bridge players to join us at the Clambake the week of January 6, 2025.

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Palo Alto By Dianne Giancarlo (503)

Season's Greetings from Unit 503!

As 2024 comes to a close, we want to take a moment to express our gratitude to our bridge community, especially our incredible volunteers. Your dedication and hard work make the Palo Alto Bridge Club a welcoming, supportive, and, of course, fun (and competitive!) place to play. From organizing special events and tournaments to creating a vibrant atmosphere for all, we couldn't do it without you.

Upcoming Holiday Event

We have a few festive events lined up before the year ends, and we hope to see you there!

Holiday Party – Sunday, December 15

Dust off your most "festive" (or "ugliest") sweater and join us for our annual Holiday Party! The game is FREE and begins at 12:00 PM, with sign-in and appetizers starting at 11:30 AM. We'll have light snacks, desserts, and a prize drawing (must be present to win). Special points will be awarded. This event always fills up quickly, so please RSVP as soon as possible to reserve your spot. In lieu of game fees, we are collecting donations for the **Community Services Agency (CSA)** and **Second Harvest of Silicon Valley**. If you need a partner, please email Alex Narasin at anarasin@yahoo.com and include a brief description of your experience.





Doubleton Club Retirement – Wednesday, December 18

Join us to celebrate **Lori Spaeth** and **Marolyn Imaoka** as they retire from running the Doubleton Club game on Wednesday nights. Their years of dedication have helped build a wonderful bridge community, and we want to send them off in style! The Newcomer/49er game starts at 6:45 PM, and the Open Section game begins at 7:00 PM. Before the Open game, we'll enjoy cake and festivities in their honor. Please sign up for the game here: [SignUp Wed Night](#). If you need a partner, contact Lori at lespaeth@gmail.com or 650-906-3987.

More Upcoming Events

- **Daily Club Games** (Monday – Friday): Join us for regular games—sign up now!
- **Gold for Good Fundraiser:** Play and donate to charity to earn gold points during the two-week event (December 9-14, 16-21). More info and registration online: [Gold for Good](#).
- **Grant National Teams (GNTs):** Palo Alto Bridge will be hosting some of these events on February 8-9. Call your partner, form a team and register! For more info and to sign up: [GNTs on D21 website](#)
- **Monthly Swiss Team Games:** Our Monthly Swiss Team games continue to take place at 11:30 am on the second Monday of each month. Team games are another way of enjoying bridge with more than just your partner! And our games provide the added convenience of boards already shuffled and hand records at conclusion. If you need a partner, or help to be matched with another pair, let us know. Ten teams played on October 14 – congrats to the winning team: **Ken Rosenfeld - Frank Xie - H Paul Davis - Denise Pitsch**. Eleven teams played on November 11 – congrats to the winning team: **Ronald Powell - Steve Hubbell - Robert Dean - Marcia Dean**. Ten teams played on December 9—congrats to winning team: **Edward Lechner - Dale Kramer - Rob Boucher - Jackie Lowenberg**.
- **Saturday Club Games:** Does it look like rain or cold weather on Saturday? Don't stay home and watch it rain all day. Rain or shine, plan to have fun playing bridge with your friends at the Palo Alto Bridge Center. Upcoming play dates: December 21, January 18 & 25. Sign up here: [Rainy Day Saturday Sign Up](#).
- **Frank Smoot's Intermediate classes:** Frank Smoot is a longtime bridge teacher at the Palo Alto Bridge Center and has agreed to teach a series of classes targeted at intermediate bridge players. Frank is an excellent bridge teacher. His content is fabulous and is delivered with humor that makes the ideas "stick." This first series involves six classes on Intermediate Bidding. The





course is for players who are familiar with the basics of bridge and would like to either brush-up or move to the next level. You will learn powerful and practical bidding concepts. You will be amazed at what you will learn, even if you've played for years. The course is taught at the Palo Alto Bridge Center on Thursday evenings starting January 16 – register online: [Frank Smoot classes](#).

- **Kathy Harper's classes:** If you started your bridge career at Palo Alto Bridge you probably took classes from our beloved Kathy Harper. She has been teaching beginning and intermediate students for over twenty years. Her teaching credentials include the American Bridge Teachers' Association Master Teacher as well as an American Contract Bridge League Certified Teacher. She is currently offering classes at the Bridge Center on Monday evenings and Tuesday mornings – register online: [Bridge classes](#).
- **Find-a-Partner game:** We're trying something new-- a common challenge of bridge is finding more compatible bridge partners. Find-a-Partner game is similar to "speed dating", where players play several hands and switch partners. For more info and to sign up Wednesday mornings on January 15 and 22: [Find-a-Partner games](#).
- **New-X game:** Another new offering from the Club—we match a newer player to partner with an experienced player (like a Pro-Am golf tournament). This is a great way for newer players to learn from an experienced player. Details to follow.
- **Celebrity Seminar with Amber Lin:** Saturday, January 25 via Zoom. Amber was recently chosen to be the ACBL's 2025 Honorary Member of the Year. In addition to being an expert player, having won a gold medal in the World Mixed Teams Championships in 2023 and a silver medal in 2022, the Freeman Mixed Board-a-Match Teams in 2022 and the European Under-31 Pairs Championships in 2023 with Kevin Rosenberg, Amber serves as the chair of Silicon Valley Youth Bridge, and volunteers in many capacities in the bridge community. Join us at Amber's lesson and let's find out what she is teaching all those kids! Details coming soon.

Save the Dates for 2025 Tournaments! Mark your calendars for these upcoming tournaments at the Palo Alto Bridge Center:

- **Grand National Teams (GNTs):** February 8-9
- **Palo Alto Unit Sectionals:** April 24-27 and May 15-18 and October 23-26
- **Palo Alto Unit Open Sectional & NLM Regional:** July 9-13
- **District 21 STaC Week:** May 5-11 and August 18-24 and November 17-23





- **San Mateo-Redwood City Unit Sectionals:** March 8-9 and November 1-2
- **Silicon Valley Unit Sectional:** April 4-6

Recent Highlights

On the international scene, several Unit 503 members have come home with top results. Congratulations to **Susan Zhang and her teammates - Geoff Hampson, Daniel Korbel, Janice Seamon-Molson, Sylvia Shi, Eddie Wold, Bob Morris** (captain) - for winning Bronze at the World Bridge Championships in Buenos Aires! They were representing the USA in the Pablo Lombardi Transnational Open Teams. Also, congratulations to Unit 503 member **Olivia Schireson and her teammates Lynn Baker, Cecilia Dwyer Rimstedt, Jill Meyers, Sandra Rimstedt, Kerri Sanborn, Joe Stokes** (captain), **Sam Dinkin** (coach) for winning Bronze in the Women's Teams at the World Bridge Championships in Buenos Aires.

The recent Las Vegas Fall NABC drew a competitive group of top players from around the world. We would like to recognize all our Unit 503 who earned a large share of the total masterpoints awarded. Special congratulations to three of our members who came within the top 300 highest master point earners: **Ming Sheng (96mps)**, **Susan Zhang (85mps)**, and **Vinita Gupta (73mps)**.

Halloween Party: Thanks to everyone who joined in the fun at our annual Halloween Party, featuring a great lecture by **Phil Abrahamson, 3**



sections of play, and some spookily creative costumes! Special thanks to **Stephanie Youngquist, Marc Cervellino**, and Phil for organizing the event. Attached are a few photos of our scariest members!



Fall Sectional Tournament: Congratulations to the 252 players who won a total of 912 silver points at our Fall Sectional! Special shout-out to **Ron Powell**, who took first place with 24 masterpoints. Thank YOU for coming to our tournament and making it a success. A huge thank-you to the tournament Chairs, **Marc Cervellino** and **Lucy Ballard**, and their team of volunteers: **Stephanie Youngquist, Liz Koh, Dianne Giancarlo, David Merenbach, Josephine Ventura, Judy Huckabay, Dana Shelley, Phil Abrahamson, Randy Ryals, Steve Carr, Bill Bushnell, Craig Lewis, Beth Majchrzak, Tricia Steele, Virginia Dare, David Murray, Raymond Ochoa, Pearl Renaker, Sólveig Kjartansdóttir, Ilya Sherman**, and **Kevin Rosenberg**. Some of **Amber Lin's** SiVY kids also came to play.





Royal STaC Week: Thanks to all who participated in the Royal STaC week in November. Our top masterpoint winners were **Tomasz Pawlowski, Ken Rosenfeld,** and **Gary Macgregor.**

Unit Board Election: Congratulations to the newly elected members of the Palo Alto Unit 503 Board: **H. Paul Davis, Alex Narasin,** and **Dana Shelley,** and to the re-election of **David Merenbach, John Schwartz,** and **Stephanie Youngquist.**

Welcome New Members

A warm welcome to the newest members of Palo Alto Unit 503: **George Guo, Margaret Lawrence, Anna Corson, Gloria Darke,** and **Nersi Nazari.** We're so glad to have you with us!

Support Our Future

As the year comes to a close, consider making a tax-deductible donation to the **Peninsula Bridge Education Foundation (PBEF)** or **Silicon Valley Youth Bridge (SiVY).** Your support helps preserve and grow our bridge community. Donations can be made online or by check to ACBL Unit 503, PO Box 391206, Mountain View, CA 94039.

Looking for New Year's Resolutions?

We still have volunteer opportunities for special event organizers, marketing committee members, and more! Contact our Volunteer Chair, **Gerry MacDonald,** at geraldinem@aol.com for more information.

Novice Games

If you're a newer player, don't miss our novice/0-50 masterpoint games on Tuesdays at 10:45 AM and Wednesday evenings at 6:45 PM. A Thursday game will be starting in January! It's a great way to gain experience in a relaxed and friendly setting. [SignUp](#)





Congratulations to Our Recent Rank Achievers!

Congrats to the following Palo Alto Unit 503 members who achieved a new ACBL Rank in **October**:

Sectional Master: Dale Kramer.

Regional Master: Don E Barkley.

Life Master: Carl Wolf.

Bronze Life Master: Paul Davis.

Silver Life Master: Carl Wolf, Cynthia Yock.

Ruby Life Master: Charlene Friedman.

And congrats to the following Palo Alto Unit 503 members who achieved a new ACBL Rank in **November**:

Junior Master: Kenneth Wu.

Club Master: Anna Ivanovskaya.

Sectional Master: Ilya Sherman.

Regional Master: Marion M Krause.

NABC Master: Debra Willrett, Rebecca Zhang.

Silver Life Master: Marc Cervellino, Tomasz Pawlowski.

Sapphire Life Master: Henryk Szejnwald.

Thank you all for being part of our vibrant bridge community. As we look ahead to 2025, let's continue to **Play, Laugh & Learn** together at Palo Alto Bridge!

Happy Holidays and see you at the tables!

Reno By Martha Hildreth (473)

Ending the Year with Lots to Celebrate

At the Mathewson Bridge Center our members certainly got into the spirit of Halloween and the holiday season.





Shelly and Jeremy North, and Karen Lind did a fantastic job of organizing an elaborate Holiday Party on December 10: we all had a great time thanks to your efforts. The day ended with a big pile of toys under the tree for donation.



**Unit 473
Halloween**



In 2024 a number of club members reached new Master Ranks; Congratulations to you all.

New Life Masters: Jon Probst, Frederick Kelley; Christine Kahn, Frances Bruun-Anderson and Stella Marino Russell.

Bronze: Bob Langson and Donna Neff.

Silver: Carol Barr, Barbara Mickle and Brad Stone.

Ruby: Linda Averett, Karla Reynolds and Ed McClure.

Gold: Jim Paschal and Susan Powell.

Sapphire: Paul Kushner.

Congratulation also to Diane Todd who was recognized in the Bulletin for her contribution to the ACBL charities.

Our program of tournaments will continue energetically in 2025. As always, folks in the region, and throughout the ACBL, are whole-heartedly welcomed to join us.

Sanctioned Tournaments: April 24-27: Open Sectional; August 14-17: Open Sectional/NLM Regional.

Sanctioned Limited Sectionals [0-499 and 0-750 NLM] will be held January 25, March 15 and June 14.





The following limited sectionals are awaiting sanction status: July 12, September 13, and November 8. For more information, please contact the club at renobridge.com/unit-473.

San Francisco By Tom Stillman (506)

Time certainly flies by. Unit 506 has had three tournaments since our last report.

October 19th

Dan Kroll gave a talk on "Two-way Minor Forcing."

We had a special event with an Ice Cream Social in the middle of the game. Vanilla and chocolate were available with a variety of toppings. A good time was had by all. As far as results go:

Open Game

C Stratification Winners

Al Cavagnaro & Partner N/S

Raymond Ochoa & David Murry E/W

A & B Stratification Winners

Ryan Gossiaux & Andy Straus N/S

Prashanth Sriram & Shazia Makhdumi

499er Game (Howell Movement)

1st: Paul Blain & Andrew Bye

2nd: Tom Pelliccioni & Mary Castiglia



November 9th

We tried something new for our unit game: Mystery Pairs. Twenty players participated by putting their name in a hat and getting picked by a "mystery" partner. Everyone who participated had a great time.

Following was our annual team game with an amazing 17 pairs.

1st Place Team:

Gail Gabiati

Martin Kaye

Lillian Trac

Judy Soong

2nd Place Team:

Lea Salem

Ari King

David King

Thuy Tran

Sunday, December 15th

Unit 506 celebrated the Holidays on the Third Sunday of Advent at St. Mary's Cathedral. As is our tradition, it was a potluck affair where people brought their favorite culinary specialties. Somehow we managed to get a game in after an hour of food and drink worthy of Henry VIII.

Eighteen tables played 26 boards each, and we had two tables of "Social Bridge."

C Stratification winners

Raymond Ochoa & David Murray N/S

Christina Lo & Kevin Babcock E/W

B Stratification winners

Judy Soong & Martin Kaye N/S

Prashanth Sriram & Shazia Makhdumi E/W (A Strat. & Overall winners)

A Stratification winners

Don Friedman & Gary Near N/S

San Francisco Sectional January 18th & 19th There will be a 2-session pairs on the 19th and teams on the 20th. [See Tournament flyer.](#)





Unit 506 had many participants in the **NABCs in Las Vegas and the Palm Springs Regional** the following week. If you are a member of Unit 506 and did well at a tournament outside the unit, please let me know at tjsbridge@gmail.com.

Unfortunately, Unit 506 faced some devastating news in November. Long-time friend, player, and director Stan Chow passed away on November 11th after almost a year of illness.

Marilu Donnici, President of the Chinese American Bridge Club wrote:

He was a genuine and very caring human being.

A dedicated member to all of the Bridge Club communities in the San Francisco Bay Area.

He will be missed.

We wish peace to his family and friends.

May he rest in peace.



And this from his long-time friend, Cathy Hildebrand:

His daughter, grandson and I were at his side [at the time of his passing]. Thanks for being his friend and bridge partner. Stan requested no service, but we hope you will remember him fondly and keep him and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Personally, I am going to miss Stan very much. He had a wonderful sense of humor and was always a joy to be around. He was known as one of the fastest players in the area, and I enjoyed playing with him as we could finish a round with many minutes to spare. We used to tease each other about playing slow all the time. One time I was running a game that was particularly sluggish. I thought if Stan could play some hands, the round would move much quicker. I mentioned this to him. To this day, I don't know how he did it, but he managed to be declarer in all three hands and catch up the slow pair. Stan was also willing to lend a hand whenever he was available. I could often count on him to fill in with me if we needed a pair to complete a half table at the Sunset Bridge Club. Those who knew and loved him will miss him deeply.

On January 15, 2025, the Sunset Bridge Club will host a Celebration of Stan's Life. The Celebration will occur at 855 Brotherhood Way, San Francisco. Lunch will be served at 11:30, Remembrances at 12:00 noon, and bridge at 12:30 pm (expect a couple of rounds of fast pairs in Stan's honor). Price of lunch and bridge is \$30. Reservations are due by Tuesday, December 31, 2024, and should be given to Gail Gabiati, gail@intrinsicdevices.com.





San Mateo By Lauren Rosen (498)



Happy Holidays and Happy New Year from Unit 498!

We hosted a record crowd at our Unit game and Holiday Party on December 14th. In addition to bringing a festive ending to the year, it gave us a chance to thank Janice Carter for her leadership and accomplishments as Board President. We also thanked retiring Board members Danna Sorenson, Past President and Barbara Lewis, Membership coordinator and leader of our Longest Day fundraising efforts.

We installed the new Board and wish them much success in 2025.



We're looking forward to a full schedule of Club and Unit games at the Villa in San Mateo in 2025. Our first two Unit Games are on January 25th and February 22nd. Our first Sectional of the year will be at the Palo Alto Bridge Center on March 8th and 9th. Please join us!

We were extremely saddened to hear of the sudden passing of longtime Unit 498 member Janice Nakao. As PDBC Director Jenny Kuhn described her at our December Unit Game,

"Janice was a tremendous bridge player and a wonderful mentor to players young and old. She was always very positive with everyone she played with, and she could beat you and still put a smile on your face."

Please visit our Unit 498 website for more news on new members, rank advancements, results and schedules for our Unit and Club Games and more.

www.unit498.com





Santa Cruz By Leslie Davidson (550)



Happy Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Season's Greetings, District 21!

The Santa Cruz Bridge Club has been having a great fall and early winter. Our Events Committee initiated a wildly successful "Come as you aren't" Costume Party and Potluck. Held on October 30th, there was great food and eight full tables filled with all types of characters! A Good Time was had by all.



Unit 550
"Come as you aren't"
Costume Party
Potluck
October 30th

Our Annual Holiday Party, Member Meeting, and Dolores Abrams Memorial game was held December 7th. Dolores Abrams was a member, director, teacher and benefactress of the Santa Cruz Unit. Each year the club celebrates her generosity by giving a free game to the members in her name. Top scorers of the game have their names inscribed on **The Dolores Abrams** plaque.



Unit 550
Holiday
Party
December
7th

The Board of the Directors takes this opportunity to include the entire membership in the yearly meeting and host a brunch and a game.

This year, with the suggestion from Heather MacGregor, (who prepares and creates the newcomer luncheons and our monthly brunches), to ask for volunteers from the membership to cook the meal. Several members stepped up to set up, cook and clean; with direction from Heather all went smoothly. The food, comradery and game were FANTASTIC! Two games coincided, an Open game and a 299er game, thanks to director Ken Llacera.

Everyone enjoyed themselves.





Welcome to Our New Members:

Bob Goldstein

Jondi Gumz

Kelly Buhr

Elisa Swanson

New Milestones: 8/31 to 11/1

New Junior Masters:

Cindy Sedey

New Life Master:

Jacci Sterling

Jane Barr

New Ruby Life Master:

Peter Barr

Carol Avenmarg

70+% GAMES 11/05 to 12/10

11/05: Jane Barr - Peter Barr

11/11: Robert Hartman - Tony Nelson

11/12: Ken Llacera - Mick Friedberg

11/25: Alok Mohan - Nancy Mohan

November 18 - 25 Stac Week Winners:

November 19: Mick Friedberg - Ken Llacera

November 20: Andrew Calciano - Marilyn Calciano

November 21: Diana Schilling - Leslie Davidson

November 22: Ken Gamble - Ken Llacera

November 24: Lynn Shannon - Diane Shannon

Heather MacGregor - Gary MacGregor

Happy Holidays to All!





Santa Rosa/Petaluma By Cecelia Zachar (509)



"Our 2024 Unit 509 Holiday Party and Annual Meeting was enjoyed by twenty tables of bridge players. We had 13 tables in the Open Game and 7 in the 499ers. Lombardi's provided the buffet lunch, and there were plenty of leftovers to go around. The Cookie Bar was abundant in variety and quantity, and all seemed to find treats to enjoy. Evelyn's excellent directing made for a smooth transition from lunch to playing bridge and it kept us on track the whole afternoon." (Thanks Maxine Reagh for this Holiday summary)



In the Open game, E/W 1st Overall and 1st in A and B winners were Jane De Briyn and Ron Chestnut with 65.71% followed by Jeff Sacher and Jerry Besses, 1st in C, with 45.99%. Sitting N/S, 1st in A were Sara Rothmuller and Bob Klein with 63.14% followed by 2nd B and C Abbe Cohen and Eleanor Wales with 61.06%.

In the 499er game, 1st Overall and 1st in A were Karen Rice and Wendy Merget with 63.75% winning 1.58 black points followed by 1st B and C Steve Harold and Mark Nelson with 56.67%. 1st N/S were Katherine Schram and Stephanie Poley with 57.50%; 1st in B, Winifred Whooley and Cathy Netz; and 1st in C, Bonnie Barnes and Connie Pearson.

Quite a few of our players went to Las Vegas to try their luck and skill at the NABC.



Many did us proud. Our top winner was Sara Rothmuller, playing with Tom Jacobson from Unit 512, placing 8th in the NABC+ Mixed Pairs winning 30.77 platinum points on December 6. Sara and Tom were 8th overall in the 2-day event with a 55.19%. Well done, Sara. Also on December 6, Tony Jackson and Kathy Venton took home 10.19 gold for 1st place in bracket 13

of a team game. Our friend from Sonoma, David Mendel, was one of their team of 4. Another big win for Unit 509





was Kate Hill's performance with Tom Jacobson on December 2 taking 20th place in a 2-day Super Senior Pairs game for 9.6 platinum. Other U509 winners include Andy Andrews, Carol Morse, Conrad Larkin, Denis Racine, Ed Flowers, Frances Schneider, Gerald Besses, James Reed, Janice Flowers, Jeff Sacher, Judy Duport, Laurie Vree, Lynn Blumenthal, Mark Marty, and Michael Kieli.



Unit 509 is known for our Unit Games. We start with a lesson, eat a great lunch (usually thanks to Jackie Ortiz, Dana Murphy, and/or Tony Jackson), and then play an open game or a 2-section open/499er game. On November 9, Tony Jackson taught a class titled Hand Evaluation: Beyond HCP. More than forty-five people attended the lesson, and sixty-four of us feasted on Jackie's luncheon of fruited chicken salad, pizza, green salad, eggplant, and big oatmeal raisin cookies made by Tony.



After that great lunch, 14 tables played in an open game. First overall were Bob Klein and Asher Nathan with 66.10%. Hard to beat that! First in B N/S were Patty Harberson and Helene Gay, and first in C were Winifred Whooley and Cathy Netz. Playing E/W, first were Evelyn Holtz and Lynn Blumenthal with 64.96%, and first in both B and C were Lawson James and Jeremy Brott.



We had a few 70+% games since our last article. On 10/29, Carol Morse and Andy Andrews had a big 70.63% game. On 11/26, Howard Neckel and Nancy Rude scored exactly 70%.

On BBO, on 10/1, Terry and Madeline Welsh started our October with a big 74.98% score (wow!) to come in 1st out of 67 pairs in a 499er game. On 10/29, Kathy Venton and Tony Jackson racked up a 71.44% game to come in 2nd out of 172 pairs. On 11/8, Mark Hersko and Debbie Tesler scored 71.54%, 4th out of 138 pairs.

Congratulations to our players who advanced in rank since the last article. Dr. Susan P. MacDonald and Janice Flowers became Bronze Life Masters; Hans Van Boldrik, a Silver Life Master; and Gary Robinson, a Diamond Life Master.

Silicon Valley By Ray Yuenger (507)



It has been a little over seven weeks since my last column and in that period of time, Unit 507 ("U507") held our fall sectional and the ACBL held a NABC in Las Vegas. I'll be reporting on those events in this column.





Wintertime Unit party

Looking ahead, save the date of Saturday, January 18 for our wintertime unit party. It is becoming a new tradition of U507, instead of trying to shoehorn another party into the busy holiday season, to hold our wintertime party in January. The plan is to provide a lunch from Bucca di Beppo at 12:30 PM following by a stratified pairs unit championship, with a separate limited section if attendance allows. The site will be where our weekly game is held at the Campbell United Methodist Church at 1675 Winchester Blvd. Table fees will be \$10 to defray the cost of lunch. Feel free to bring a dessert or something to drink. Registration will be available on our website.

The tournament trail

Looking back to the tournament trail, at a four-day U503 sectional, Xin Ge won a two-session pairs event. Arif Janjua & Avi Mukherjee and Michael Callahan had stratification tops. Section tops went to Lynn Shannon & John Miller, Norman Marks, Arif Janjua, and Chung Lau. Pamela Meckenstock & Barbara Roupe were first in a single-session non-Life Master pairs game and had a section top in another one. A team with Lynn Bartz, Brenna Wundram, & Joe Chui won their bracket.

At the U507 fall sectional the following weekend, Li Zhang won a two-session silver rush pairs event and Liao Zhang had a section top. Norman Marks & Jung Hu had a strat top one day and the next day Norman did it again with another partner. Aravind Alwan also had strat top in a pairs game. Teams with Xin Ge & Wanwan Ren; Stu Goodgold & Songtao Zhang; and Michael Callahan each won in their respective brackets.

At the Puerto Vallarta regional, Lynn Shannon & John Miller had section tops on two different days in one of the three sessions of a choice pairs event (which combines the best two of three sessions).

At the East Bay sectional, Kayden Ge's team was first in its bracket.

In an online regional, Li Zhang had a section top in a Gold Rush pairs event.

Moving now to the North American Bridge Championships, in national events, Michael Bodell was first in the under-10,000 Fast Pairs! Tien-Chung Yang was second in the under-6,000 mini-Blue Ribbon pairs. In regional team events, first in their brackets or stratifications were: Michael Callahan; Wendy & David Fotland (twice, the second time with Mary and Allen Samuels); Li Zhang; Sriram Ganesan; Frank Xie; and David Helmbold. Strat tops in pairs events went to Aravind Alwan and Joel Singer. Li Zhang had three section tops in Gold Rush pairs. Robert & Marcia Dean also had a section top in a pairs game.

At the Palm Springs regional, John Miller & Lynn Shannon's team was first in its bracket. Barbara Roupe & Pamela Meckenstock won a gold rush pairs event.





Advancing players

Congratulations to U507's newest Masters: Mary Albanese, Ye Chen, Kathy McKenzie (Junior); Gary Levinson, Valerie Hamilton (Club); Henry Koransky; Sumiye Minami (Regional); Avi Mukherjee (Silver Life); and Mike Cailean (Sapphire Life).

Other news

If you haven't played in the Wednesday morning game lately, you might want to learn that our landlord, the church, has recently installed a new HVAC system, so the temperature of the playing area will be better regulated, as much as a large room with a lot of windows can be heated in the winter and cooled in the summer.

I hope you are enjoying the holiday season and looking forward with gladness to a new year.

Stockton By Debbie DeZarn (510)



Happy Holiday Season to all of the supportive bridge players, teachers, and prospective new members in the Stockton, Mother Lode, Gold Country and Sonora Bridge Clubs. The Oak Park Club, formerly operating out of the Oak Park Senior Center in Stockton, is holding its final Wednesday games at the Stockton Bridge Center before ceasing operations at the end of the year. An additional sanction is being sought for a Wednesday game to be added at the Stockton Bridge Center beginning in January 2025. At the November Board of Directors meeting, it was decided that the game fee for all SBC sessions would roll back to \$9.

STaC (Sectional Tournament at Clubs) games were held in November this year and several Unit 10 members placed high in the Western Region overall results: On November 18 Stephen Tu and Michael Wells had a 64% game for 13 in A but were not eligible as Stephen was a playing Director.

In the Nov. 20 Oak Park game, Maryanne Sievers and Barbara Smart were 1st overall in the Region in A and B earning 14.58 Royal points (1/4 each of gold, silver, red, and black) followed by Mary and Michael Wells, 2nd overall in A and B. Terry Nagode, and Walter Jones placed overall 4th in C.





D I A M O N D I N T H E R U F F

The Nov 22 Stockton game hosted visitors Libby Longstreth and Ray Adams from the Modesto club who took 3rd in A. Father and son Stockton players Walter and Earl Jones were 1st overall in C. Congratulations to all who had outstanding games that special week.

Some Rank Advancements need to be recognized: Herbert Pike became a Junior Master and Sherrie Barakatt achieved Silver Life Master! Congratulations. Sherrie has been traveling and earning lots of points at tournaments.



New members are being invited to duplicate bridge through classes offered by Mary Wells in Copperopolis (including a 49er satellite game) and Wendy Buchanan in Stockton, who completed her 8-session class and held two additional "practice games" at the SBC. She will continue with new lessons in January which will introduce some simple conventions such as Stayman and transfers. The Unit website has info on Mary's class and games. Wendy teaches through the SICL program of Delta College.

The Unit and some of its member clubs have developed an alliance with Grouper which works with your supplemental health insurance to get you reimbursed for your annual ACBL dues. You will see periodic emails from your clubs and there is also information on the Unit 510 Website: www.bridgewebs.com/unit510.

I also want to remind you of our affiliation with SE Carolina Virtual Club online games which continue four times a day (also four different games: 499, 799, 2500, and Open) and are awarding 25% gold points during Stardust Week, Dec. 16-22. For early birds, start times are 6:15-6:38 am and for the rest of us the mid-morning games start between 9:45 and 10:10. Early afternoon games begin between 12:15-12:30 and the late games are at 3:45-4:07. Sharon Ritchie's local online Hwy 49ers Virtual Club game continues as well on BBP. Again, check the Unit website for all kinds of interesting info and photos.

After those "commercials", it is party time! The Foothills clubs held their Christmas party and game at Camps restaurant in Angels Camp on December 11. Lots of photos on the website but here are the "Three Amigos."



The Directors of the mountain clubs are Alan Hamilton, Mother Lode Club, Sharon Ritchie, Gold Country Club, and Mike Wells, Sonora Club





DIAMOND IN THE RUFF



Sue channels the spirit of her late father in his plaid Christmas shirt while Treasurer Rose takes money and Director Debbie prepares the game

The Stockton club had holiday themed games on Sunday and Monday, Dec. 15 and 16, with a potluck and lots of wine. Sue Barnes is a 2nd generation Unit 510 member who played alongside both of her parents in Stockton and is really in the holiday spirit.



Stockton reindeers ladies (Sue Barnes, Mary Sievers, Toni Hillman, Zulka Dozier, Shirley Dozier, and Sue Vogtlin) celebrate the season in front of Maryanne Sievers' lovely Christmas quilt

Our next gathering will be to celebrate the life of Bill Mitchell, who passed away right after his birthday and the election on November 11. Bill was a well-liked player who returned to the game a few years ago after retiring from a long career as Director of the San Joaquin County Health Department. He was diagnosed with cancer about a year before the pandemic and kept playing throughout 4 years of various treatments until he finally had to keep to online play only for his last 6 weeks. He was an active Unit 510 Director until resigning in September.

