



D21 President's Report

Jim Coke, President, District 21 Board of Directors

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Relationships

When I retired, I had a seven-month lead up to the actual retirement which gave me time to decide what I wanted to prioritize in my retirement. I eventually decided that there were three things that I wanted to emphasize for a successful retirement – keep my brain exercised, build & maintain relationships, and exercise my body. Bridge does the first two but definitely not the third. (And no, sitting E/W doesn't count as exercising the body!)

So, you might be wondering, what triggered this? I just finished writing the article for the North American Pairs report where the lead is the stunning double first place finish in the Championship and A Flights. After writing the article, I was doing a search for a bridge related question when the one of the results was the article celebrating Amber Lin being named ACBL Honorary Member of the Year in the March 2025 Bridge Bulletin. Just for the fun of it, I reread the article and was reminded just how much relationships matter. As part of the article, she listed many of the friends who work with her in Silicon Valley Youth Bridge among other efforts. The lists are a Who's Who of the young generation of bridge players in District 21 and includes Brent Xiao who was one of the winning pair in the NAP Championship Flight this year.

The other trigger for this was that in February my brother wound up in the ICU because of a fall and about two weeks later my mother passed away, so I needed friends to cover for me while I was gone and gave up a bunch of dates to play bridge. They did all this with tremendous understanding and sympathy. So, I really won in two ways because the time spent with my family improved my ties with them and when I came back the love shown by friends in the bridge community made those relationships better too.

One of my consistent recommendations to non-bridge players is to take up the game both for the mental aspects of the game as well as the relationships that come from the players you meet and befriend. I hope you are willing to make this recommendation to your non bridge playing friends as well.

Jim Coke
ACBL District 21 President