

Southern California

# Bridge News

Volume 61, #10

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*by John Jones*



I had a meeting during the Ventura Regional and went over details about the 2025 regional. The meeting was attended by Carolyn Hannas (Tournament Manager), Margie Michelin (Tournament Chair), Kim Wang (Caddy Master), and Laura Gastelum (Hospitality). Carolyn and Margie are combining to do the job that Peter Benjamin was doing. The ACBL lists these as two jobs. Peter did a great job, and I am certain that Carolyn and Margie will do an outstanding job also. We should have a flyer out soon.

On Sunday we had an ALACBU Meeting. It was in person at the Long Beach Bridge Center, and over the Internet by several unit representatives. A full report will be in the next Newsletter, but here are the highlights. A possible merger with D22 was discussed. There are some people in favor of pursuing a possible merger, and some people against this possible merger. We have agreed to try to help D22 with the plans and pretournament work for their upcoming national.

A quick review of what happened at the meeting. A full review with minutes from Lillian Slater (Secretary) will be in either this or the next edition of the Newsletter. The 2024 Long Beach Regional made money. Stan Holzberg (Treasurer) presented a financial report. The recently held NAP also made money, Mojo presented a report. The district now has a little over \$28,000 in reserve. I would like that number to be closer to \$50,000 as we have to deposit about \$45,000 before our regionals.

A phone call from the Hilton confirms that the 2026 regional will have to either move sites or dates. They offered the week after we would normally have Long Beach Regional, but that week has a conflict with

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## Regional Director's Report

*by David Lodge*



This is the time of year that the league's Director of Finance, Jennifer Webster, is knee deep in coming up with next year's operating and capital expenditure budgets. The Budgets are key management documents. Each month as Jennifer prepares operating financial statements, she is obligated to explain to the board major variances between actual results and budgeted amounts. The budget will be presented to the full Board of Directors (BOD), at the fall NABC in Las Vegas which starts in a few weeks. Budget creation is, in many areas, more of an art than a science. When an organization changes methods by which they conduct business, there are many unknowns about the impact of those changes on revenues and expenses. Certain assumptions have to be made. As the head of the finance committee of the BOD, Jennifer provides me with the assumptions that she and her colleagues have come up with in order to get my input. There will be a few major changes in 2025 that will impact our revenue stream. Our relationship with BBO will probably change. Right now, we are operating under a contract with them that expires at the end of

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the ACBL Summer Nationals in Minneapolis (we wouldn't be allowed to have that week even if we wanted to). Contract negotiations for the 2027 Long Beach Regional are moving at a fast pace because the Hilton has another party who wants that date. The contract will likely be signed next week.

It was on our agenda to run a sectional to support getting stipends to our GNT teams. Our NAP pairs get stipends for our first and second place finishers in each flight (\$700 for first, \$300 for second). However, the GNT team winners do not get stipends. The only financial help they get is waived card fees in the lower flights (Championship Flight doesn't even get that). However, after investigating the projected amount that would be raised from a sectional comparing that to the number of individuals we would be sending to the GNTs (it would amount to about \$100 per person), it was decided not to hold a GNT sectional. I would like to somehow come up with stipends for our teams. Other districts manage to give some help to their teams.

Last month included a list of previous D23 Goodwill winners. I thought the list was complete, but I now have my doubts. Rand Pinsky's name was not on the list, and I think I remember his being a Goodwill winner previously. More on this at a later time. However, we still congratulate Mitch Dunitz and Tom Lill on their awards.

On January 12, we will be testing a new bridge format. The format is a hybrid game that combines both online play with the club. To play you will bring a laptop or similar device to a participating local club. Currently the local clubs that are signed up include: Pasadena BC, Long Beach BC, South Bay BC in Lomita and the 750 Bridge Club in Woodland Hills. There will be no masterpoints awarded at this trial event. Players can win a free game or lesson from one of the several top LA players who have volunteered their time. The game will be played on RealBridge (a competitor of BBO). See the flyer in this newsletter.

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June, 2025. Under that contract, they operate like any other Virtual ACBL game (VACB) and pay us a per table fee for the games they run in which the award masterpoints. As consideration for having an almost exclusive right to host online games in which ACBL masterpoints are awarded, they also have been paying us \$550,000 per year. In all likelihood, that exclusivity will no longer exist in any new arrangement we make with BBO, so we will lose the \$550,000, but we will be

able to take advantage of many other electronic platforms in order to expand our offering. The other significant change also involves online play. Starting in January, the VACB's will only offer black masterpoints. All other pigmented points, which we refer to as "glitter points" will be offered through the ACBL Clubhouse. The Clubhouse is a recent addition to our product offerings. It's running online games for limited players that don't have access to games that fit their schedules. The concept will be expanded to include players of all levels for these events that offer "glitter points", e.g. Silver Linings. For most of her income line projections, Jennifer, conservative by nature as is typical of all accountant types like me, has kept income levels flat from 2024 to 2025. The items that she has budgeted as flat are Tournament Director fees at regional and sectional events, club F2F table fees, tournament table fees, Educational programs and services, Bulletin advertising and other revenues. Membership dues will be down an immaterial amount in that no rate increases are in the offing and are rate of decline of membership is now less than 1.5% a year, Revenues from NABC's will be down due to less desirable locations. VACB revenues are budgeted at 2/3 of this year due to them only offering black points. Revenues from the Clubhouse are budgeted at \$1 million. Once the budget is finalized, it will be available to be viewed by all on the ACBL website.

I just returned from one of my extended ocean fishing trips. Sadly, two of my fellow anglers suffered dramatic personal tragedies recently, in which they both lost long-term spouses with virtually no warning. Contemplating their very sad circumstances made me appreciate how fortunate I and my family have been. It also made me think about our game. And while most of us take it seriously because of our natures of wanting to improve and liking competition, it is after all, only a game. Games are meant to elicit joy and pleasure. Let's keep this in mind when we next sit down to play. It's a game. Make it enjoyable for yourselves and others.

Hope to see many of you in Las Vegas and all of you at our great D22 Palm Springs Regional in December.

## The Teacher's Corner

### Case for The Defense by Daniel Oakes

Last month, we took an overview of signaling, including the three general types of signaling (attitude, count, and suit preference). This time, we're going to look specifically at attitude signals. To refresh your memory, I'll be assuming standard carding (high = encouraging; low = discouraging), so if you play upside down signals, make the appropriate adjustments. Let's start by clearing up a widespread misconception, which I'll recite almost verbatim from memory, though unfortunately I can't tell you where I read it (long, long ago): *The purpose of attitude signals is to direct the defense, not to confirm or deny the presence of specific high cards.*

Much of the time, your choice for how to direct the defense will be based on the high cards you have (or lack), but that's secondary to the primary purpose. Let me give you an easy example to illustrate the difference. Let's say you're defending 4♥ with ♠K9652 ♥A74 ♦J8642 ♣----. Partner lays down the ace of spades on opening lead, and a strong, balanced dummy appears. So strong, in fact, that you're certain that the ace of spades is partner's only high card. What card do you play? Well, if your idea of attitude signals is to mindlessly encourage with high cards and discourage without them, you might play the 9, so show partner your king of spades. Partner plays a second spade, which you win, and at some point, you get the ace of trump, for -620.

But the priority of your trick one signal when partner holds the lead isn't to tell partner whether or not you have the king of spades; it's to tell partner whether, with the information you have available, it looks best for him to continue the suit that was originally led, or to try another suit. That decision might, on another hand, be *informed* by whether or not you have the king of spades, but you don't want partner to play another spade; you want partner to play a club for you to ruff. Then if the king of spades cashes, declarer is down 1 – you get two spades, the ace of trump, and the ruff. So even though you have the king of spades, the correct card to play is the 2, discouraging.

This brings us to a second area of confusion. Sometimes when newer players learn about suit preference signals, they start seeing them everywhere.

So they get the idea that the play of our lowest spade (the two) is a signal for partner to play the lowest suit (clubs). That happens to work out nicely here, but it's wrong. With very limited exceptions, our signals send one message (attitude, count, or suit preference) at a time. If our clubs and diamonds are reversed, so that we wanted a diamond ruff at trick two, we would still play the deuce, telling partner, "From my perspective, it looks best if you play a different suit." It's up to partner to figure out what the best suit to switch to is. Unless the appearance of dummy makes a trump switch apparent, partner will consider whether a club or diamond switch makes the most sense.

How does partner make that decision? In addition to partner's signals, the other main sources of information available to the defenders are the auction, the cards in their hands, and the dummy. As the hand progresses, they add the information received from the cards played by partner and declarer. In future months, we'll look at how to formulate plans, as well as some special circumstances.

Just as a signal is not generally a confirmation or denial of specific cards, it's also not a command. Think of the trick one attitude signal by the opening leader's partner as sending one of two messages: 1) "From my point of view, it looks best if you continue this suit" (encouraging), or 2) "From my point of view, it looks best if you switch to a different suit" (discouraging). An important thing to keep in mind is that while some information is shared by the defenders (the cards in dummy, the auction), other information isn't. For instance, let's say declarer is in a suit contract, and dummy has AQT86 of a side suit. The opening leader has a small doubleton. How many tricks is dummy's suit worth? The opening leader has no idea (unless the auction has suggested otherwise). If partner has nothing in the suit, it could give declarer 5 tricks. If partner has KJ972 behind dummy, it will give declarer 1 trick. Partner is the one who knows whether or not there's anything to worry about, and the opening leader will have to take cues from partner's play.

I mentioned above that the 2 of spades (low card) wasn't specifically a suggestion to switch to clubs (low suit), because this is an attitude situation, not a suit preference situation. So how, exactly, do we know when we're in an "attitude situation"? Generally, when partner is the first one to lead a suit, whether it's on

opening lead or later, it's an attitude situation. If we're not playing a card to try to win the trick (in the above example, partner's ace was high, so our card would not be an attempt to win the trick), then we're in an attitude situation, whether it's partner or dummy that will win the trick. The most common exception is when dummy is winning the trick with the Q or lower; if we can't beat the Q, it can usually be assumed that we don't really like the suit, so we can signal count, instead.

If partner leads a low card, and dummy plays low, then we usually play 3<sup>rd</sup> hand high to try to either win the trick or force out one of declarer's high cards to promote partner's cards. It's when we're not competing for the trick that our card is a signal.

Honor sequences are very useful for the defense, because they combine safety and aggression. For instance, if we have the KQJ of a suit, then knocking out the ace potentially (barring declarer being able to ruff) sets up two tricks for us, and because the sequence is solid, we're not risking giving up a trick the way we would if we lead from the KJ, not knowing if partner holds the Q or not. But the standard honor lead only requires a 2-card sequence. In other words, we lead the K from KQx(x) whether or not we have the jack. Usually, when partner leads an honor, we signal

encouragement when we can continue the sequence. In other words, if partner leads the K, implying the Q (assuming you lead the A from AK(x) sequences), then we encourage with the J. The J is, in effect, a "high card" when we know partner has the K and Q. If partner leads the Q, implying the J, then we encourage with either the K or the T. This all assumes that there's not another suit we really want partner to switch to. So, in summary:

- When partner leads a suit for the first time and partner or 2<sup>nd</sup> hand will win the trick, we generally signal attitude.
- Exception: if declarer is winning the trick with the Q or lower, we expect partner to infer our attitude, so we signal count.
- Attitude signals are suggestions, not commands.
- Attitude signals in these situations let partner know whether it looks right to us for her to continue, or to switch suits.
- If we suggest that partner switch suits, that suggestion doesn't come with a message about a specific suit; partner uses the available resources to figure out which suit to switch to.

See you next month!

### District 23 Rank Changes October 2024

#### Junior Master

Nancy Braden-Parker  
Bill Chertok  
Susan Y Hitchcock

#### Club Master

Brad Abajian  
Alison Bosdet  
Patti Chertok  
Kenneth Farhang  
Ellen M. Goodwin  
Girija Reddy  
Jerry Simonoff

#### Sectional Master

Barbara A. Barschak

#### Sectional Master

Nancy Bornn  
Fraser L. Perkins  
Stephen Reiss

#### Regional Master

Regi F. Block  
Billy W. Lo  
Gwen Pollyea

#### Advanced NABC Master

Carolyn E. Byrnes

#### Life Master

Seymour M. Stoll  
Beverly S. Sugimoto

#### Bronze Life Master

Gloria M. Rommel

#### Silver Life Master

James P. Alstad  
Michael Piken  
Elizabeth M. Ryan

#### Ruby Life Master

Joan C. Oliver

#### Gold Life Master

Janet R. Cooper

#### Platinum Life Master

Peter Knee



## New Feature for the SCBN

### by Mike Marcucci

One of our District 22 neighbors has written an interesting series of bridge articles over the last few years. Bob Gruber from Camarillo noticed that there were an increasing number of newer players in his Ventura Unit and decided to help out with their bridge education. Starting in May 2023, he wrote and distributed an article a week covering such subjects as ACBL structure, the different kinds of duplicate bridge, the origins of the game of bridge, and stories on some of our more famous players from the past. Bob has given us in D23 permission to publish those articles in the SCBN. They should be interesting to ALL our players.

In the way of background, Bob has been playing for many years and is presently fast approaching Diamond LM status (5000 masterpoints, for our newer players reading this). He has been a certified Director since 2007 and has been an ACBL accredited Bridge Teacher since 2009. He and his wife, Linda, love to play tournaments. Don't we all??

Bob's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> articles are attached. We are going to do 2 each month to cut down the suspense from 2 years to 1 year. There are actually going to be more than 20 by the time we are done. The series will benefit newer players more than seasoned veterans but a little brush-up never hurt anyone. Please enjoy!

## FYI Part 1: What is the ACBL



by Bob Gruber

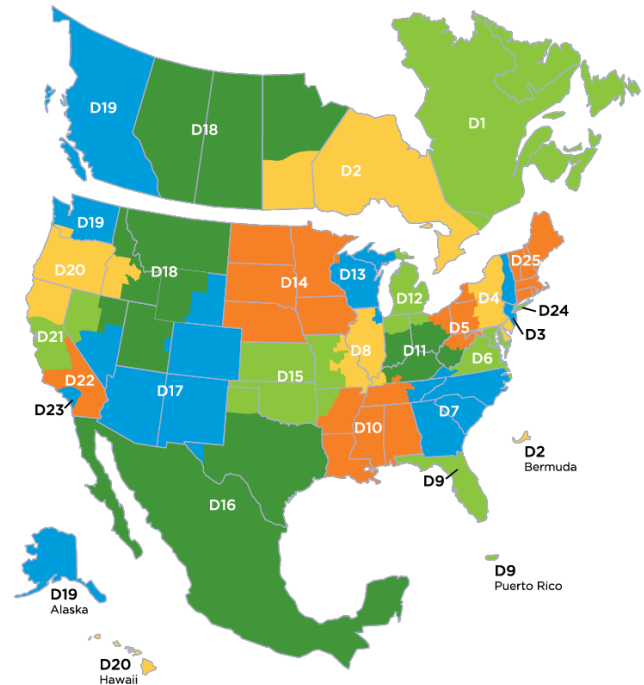
### What Is the ACBL?



What is the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) and what does it do? First, a little history. Ely Culbertson, a shameless self-promoter and showman, popularized bridge in the 1930s. So much so that at that time, bridge in the United States rivaled baseball in terms of interest in the game. Part of that popularity was that Culbertson

headed a team of U.S. experts to play a British team of experts, who, of course, thought they were the better team. When that proved not to be the case, bridge was ascendant in the U.S.

The ACBL was granted a Certification of Incorporation by the State of New York on December 23, 1937 and grew to become the primary sanctioning body of duplicate bridge in all of North America, including Canada and Mexico. North America is divided into 25 geographic areas called Districts.



Within each District are smaller geographic entities called Units. Within a Unit there will be one or more clubs conducting duplicate bridge games on a regular basis. These clubs may be open to all comers or may be restricted in some way, e.g., skill level, age, gender, or membership in a group.

The League collects yearly dues for which it provides a number of services. It teaches and certifies those willing to become "directors," a combination of manager and referee, who will oversee sanctioned bridge games. In these sanctioned games, people who do well earn prestige points, called Masterpoints®, and the ACBL accumulates these as a marker of a player's ability/skill level.

The ACBL also teaches and certifies bridge teachers. Free bridge lessons have been available on CD and now are available on the ACBL web site ([www.ACBL.org](http://www.ACBL.org)). For those promoting bridge, the League provides materials, suggestions on advertising

and even some funding.

The League publishes a monthly bulletin that contains news, advertising about bridge events and multiple lessons written by national experts in the categories of beginner, intermediate and advanced players. A whole host of other services are provided/available, but most readers would find discussing those to be gilding the lily. But there is another item of interest—the ACBL Museum of bridge history, artifacts and even snippets of a TV show in the 1950s or 1960s. It's located at ACBL Headquarters. So, if you're ever in Memphis, you might consider a half-day trip to 6575 Windchase Blvd, Horn Lake, Mississippi, to tour the museum.

## FYI Part 2: Forms of Bridge

### by Bob Gruber



Are there forms of bridge other than two partnerships facing off against one another? Yes, there are quite a few.

Duplicate bridge has many tables in play simultaneously. Each table has its own set<sup>[1]</sup> of two to five boards. In the simplest movement (of players and boards), called a<sup>[1]</sup> Mitchell movement, when all tables have completed play on all their current boards, the Pairs designated as E/W are asked to move up one table. Pairs designated N/S stay at the table. At the same time, the boards move down one table. Each segment of play is called a round. Duplicate play typically continues in this manner for about three 1/4 hours.

The next most common duplicate movement is a Howell<sup>1</sup> movement. It's more complicated in that both E/W and many N/S pairs move each round. Not only do most pairs move each round, they typically do not go up 1 table, but move in what may seem to be a random order, but is really well designed to have as many pairs play each other as possible. Being this complicated, each table has a Table Marker (or Table Mat) with the Table Number and directions on where to play next for the N/S pair and the E/W pair.

Also, in duplicate bridge there's an "Individual Movement" where each player continually plays with a different partner and then at the end of the session,

everyone is scored on an individual basis.

At one time, Honeymoon Bridge, bridge for just 2 people, was popular. Apparently, bridge was so popular, honeymooners took time out from other activities to play bridge. There's also 3-handed bridge, and "Chicago-style" bridge for 5 or 6 or 7 players, wherein players rotate in and out on a regular basis.

And there are multiple forms of Team games. Team games are often called a Team of Four (4) because a team consists of two partnerships. Team A's N/S pair will play Team B's E/W pair at the same time Team B's N/S pair plays against Team A's E/W pair. Half way through the "match," the two (2) tables exchange boards so that at the end of the match both tables will have played the same boards/hands. Given that basic setup, one form of a team game is called Swiss Teams where every team is in the event until the very end. Another popular form of team games is a "Knockout," where a single loss means a team sits out the rest of the event.

There are other, more exotic forms of bridge games, but this should be enough to demonstrate that there are a variety of possibilities for playing bridge.

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<sup>1</sup> Many bridge movements—how the players and boards move during the game—are eponymous. For instance, Howell movements are based on the movements designed by Edwin Cull Howell for the game of Whist, a predecessor of Bridge and the game most closely related to it. Mitchell movements are another matter. No one is credited with creating the basic Mitchell movement, but like Howell movements, these probably arose from Whist and were described by John T. Mitchell in his book titled *Duplicate Whist*. So, best guess is he got the credit for the movement by virtue of writing it up.

## North American Pairs Finals

### Qualifiers

by Morris "Mojo" Jones

Many of the qualifiers ran for home before submitting to the photographer. The Flight A third place qualifier isn't finalized yet, due the combination of a tie, and an ineligible player (wasn't a District 23 member).

**Flight A – 1<sup>st</sup> Place**

Robert Shore – Mark Leonard (not shown)



**Flight B – 1<sup>st</sup> Place**

William Taylor – Jeff Grotenhuis



**Flight B – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place**

Robert Corry – Giacomo Beretta



**Flight B – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place**

Thompson Jin – Dan Lubesnik



**Flight B – 4<sup>th</sup> Place**

Leo Dittmore – Alan Flower



**Flight C – 1<sup>st</sup> Place**

Michael Lam – Larry Cheung





**Flight C – 4th Place**  
**Kim Gundlach – Toban Toban**



### Beer Card

The Beer Card is the Seven of Diamonds. It is not part of the official rules of Bridge, but there is a tradition among some players that if the declarer succeeds in making the contract and wins the last trick with the Seven of Diamonds, dummy must buy the declarer a beer of the declarer's choice. In the same way, if the opponents defeat the contract and one of them wins the last trick with the Seven of Diamonds, the opponent who wins the last trick is bought a beer by the other opponent.

The Beer Card tradition originated in Copenhagen in the 1950's or 1960's.

### Southern California Bridge News

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## Some Interesting Facts and Observations about Playing Cards *by Peter Benjamin*

The Chinese invented playing cards in AD 1000.

Did you know that the traditional deck of playing cards are a strikingly coherent form of a calendar?

There are 52 weeks in the year and there are 52 playing cards in a deck.

There are 13 weeks in each season and there are 13 cards in each suit.

There are 4 seasons in a year and 4 suits in the deck.

There are 12 months in a year so there are 12 court cards. (Those with faces, namely Jack, Queen, King in each suit.)

The red cards represent day, while black cards represent the night.

If you let Jacks = 11, Queens = 12, and Kings = 13, then add up all the sums of  $1 + 2 + 3 + \dots$  to  $13 = 91$ . Multiply this by 4, for the 4 suits, therefore  $91 \times 4 = 364$ , add 1 that is the Joker and you will arrive at the number 365 being the days in a year.

Is that a mere coincidence or a greater intelligence?

Spades indicate plowing, or working.

Hearts indicate "love thy crops."

Clubs indicate flourishing, and growth.

Diamonds indicate reaping the wealth.

There is a deeper philosophy than just merely playing cards.

The mathematical perfection is mind-blowing.



## SAVE THE DATE: JANUARY 12 (SUNDAY) 1 PM

### Play the New (experimental) online face-to-face format

- A face-to-face feel in an online format
- Audio and Video to/from partner and opponents
- Headphones required for audio

#### Participating Bridge Clubs

- Pasadena Bridge Club
- Long Beach Bridge Center
- South Bay Bridge Club
- 750 Bridge Club

Win a bridge date with one of Southern California's best players: Ifti Baqai, Mitch Dunitz, Ellis Feigenbaum, John Jones, Alex Kolesnik, Hemant Lall, Marjorie Michelin, Jill Myers, Walt Schafer. (No masterpoints awarded.)

#### Anyone Can Win

Four winners of the open event and four winners of the limited event will be awarded an online session with an expert bridge player. Two other players will also be awarded an online session based on a random draw.

#### How it works

The event will be played at multiple clubs but online on **RealBridge**. Both partners must be resident at a participating club, but not necessarily the same club.

You must bring a computer or tablet with at least 4 hours of battery life. The clubs will have some limited plug in ability but don't count on it.

If your device needs to be plugged in you must make a reservation for it at the club you are playing at.

The event will be stratified.

#### About RealBridge

Launched in 2020, RealBridge closely replicates the face-to-face environment with built-in audio and video.

The USBF JLALL and Reynolds Teams Matches are held using RealBridge.



Please note: This is not an ACBL event.

The Puzzle Page

Bridge Jeopardy  
by John Jones

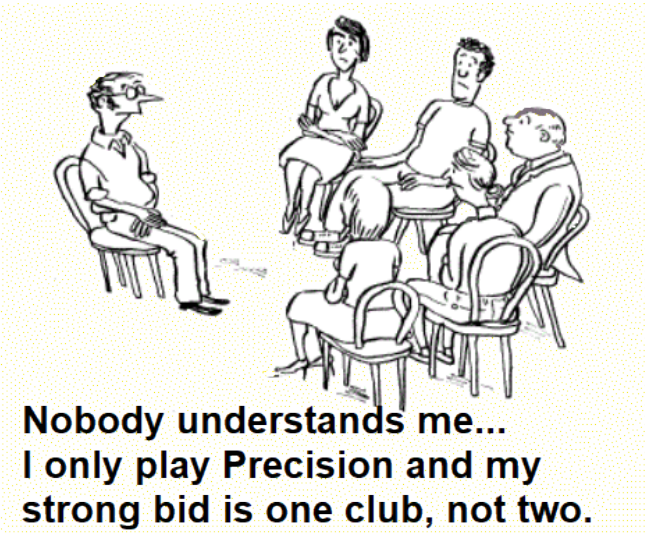
Category: Starting with X (each term begins with the letter X)

And the answer is ...

- \$100 – This symbol represents a small non-honor in a suit.
- \$200 – The red card in the bidding box. It is sometimes for takeout and sometimes for penalties.
- \$300 – The blue card in the bidding box. It is sometimes for rescue and sometimes used to increase the value of a making contract.
- \$400 – A convention invented by Orange County’s Joe Kivel. It is used as the fourth bid in an auction where the third bid comes at the one-level.
- \$500 – An abbreviation for Cross-IMPs, which is used to score IMP Pair contests. A pair’s score is compared to an averaged sum.

(Solution to Bridge Jeopardy is on page 14. No peeking!)

Submitted by John Jones



A cleaning woman was applying for a new position. When asked why she left her last employment, she replied, “Yes, sir, they paid good wages, but it was the most ridiculous place I ever worked. They played a game called Bridge, and last night a lot of folks were there. As I was about to bring in the refreshments, I heard a man say, ‘Lay down and let’s see what you’ve got.’ Another man said, ‘I’ve got strength but no length.’ Another man says to the lady, ‘Take your hand off my trick!’ I pretty near dropped dead just then, when the lady answered, ‘You jumped me twice when you didn’t have the strength for one raise.’ Another lady was talking about protecting her honor and two other ladies were talking and one said, ‘Now it’s time for me to play with your husband and you can play with mine.’ Well, I just got my hat and coat and as I was leaving, I hope to die if one of them didn’t say, ‘Well, I guess we’ll go home now. This is the last rubber.’”



## Around the Units in District 23



### Pomona – Covina by Tom Lill [www.acblunit551.org](http://www.acblunit551.org)

**La Fetra Games:** Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:45  
**Individual:** December 7, 10 a.m., Ontario  
**Unit Game:** November 16, 11:00 a.m., Ontario  
**NO UNIT GAME IN DECEMBER**  
**Unit Board Meeting:** 10:15 a.m. before the game

In the October Individual, the winner was Linda Tessier, scoring 61.36%. Close behind in second was Art Weinstein, followed by Clint Lew and Stephen Andersen.

In the October Unit Game, Judy Mogharbel and Yours Truly swept all before them, posting 61.69%. Peter Kavounas – Mary Ann Wotring finished second, followed by Vic Sartor – Linda Tessier, Fredy Minter – Amr Elghamr, and Roger Boyar – Eileen Finlay.

Advance warning: because of the nightmare December schedule of tournaments, we won't be having a December Unit game. Instead we'll be have TWO Unit games in January. The first one, the "extra" game, will be on the 11<sup>th</sup>, and will be our attempt at a Christmas party. Yeah, I know, but whaddaya gonna do? On the 18<sup>th</sup> we'll hold our regular 3<sup>rd</sup>-Saturday Unit Game. And all this means there won't be an Individual game in January.

We welcome Peter Kavounas to our Board of Directors. Peter has agreed to serve as Treasurer, replacing Susie Emminger, who has dropped off the Board.

There weren't any rank advancements this past month. *Quelle domage*:

Topping the charts in October was a truly *monstrous* 78.13% game posted by Fredy and Lulu Minter. (I guess the rest of us were playing some other game that day, maybe *Misere*?) Another whopper was posted by Patrick Finley and Caryn Mason, 71.76. The other two games breaking the magic 65% barrier just

did make the cut: Yours Truly – Judy Mogharbel at 65.28%, and Gary Atwell – Steve Andersen, 65.19%.

Your Unit's representative to the District Board of Directors (take a wild guess as to who that is) attended the recent District Board Meeting. Some items of interest: there doesn't seem to be much interest in having our District merge with District 22 (from either party); the Long Beach Regional actually turned a small profit, \$2400; the North American Pairs district final went well, except for the tie for the final qualifying spot.

Here's a hand that came some time ago, which I'm just getting around to reporting. We'll title it "An Exercise in Frustration." Not that *that* ever happens at the bridge table! It will be more fun, I think, if you can see the entire hand at once. West deals, no one is vulnerable, and you hold the North cards.

North			
♠ A K J			
♥ K 2			
♦ A K 2			
♣ Q 8 6 4 2			
West		East	
♠ 8 7 3		♠ Q 5 4	
♥ A Q J 9		♥ 10 8 7 6 5	
♦ Q 9 6		♦ 10 7 4	
♣ A K 5		♣ 10 3	
South			
♠ 10 9 6 2			
♥ 4 3			
♦ J 8 5 3			
♣ J 8 7			

Sitting North, you are all set to open 2NT ... when West opens 1NT. Arrgh! That leave 3-5 HCP for the other two players. If you bid 2NT, you are asking partner to bid a minor, probably not best (although you do have a 5-3 club fit, you would wind up in the 4-3 diamond fit). You could double, but South will take it out with that defenseless wonder, and how often do you expect to be in dummy to finesse against West? So you decide to pass. Of course, East calls 2♦, a transfer to hearts. That figures. South passes (really?), and West goes 3♥! I suppose a super-accept is OK with that hand, but although the trumps are certainly nice, the shape is terrible.

And you? You can probably beat 3♥ ...but suppose East has a singleton in one of your AK suits? Worse still, the way your luck is running, of those 3-5 missing HCP, suppose East turns up with the ♥A? Disaster? So you pass again.

When dummy comes down, ONE card you did NOT want to see is there to mock you – the ♠Q. (Well, the ♥A would have been worse!) As it turns out, 3♥ goes one down, you get your two AKs and the trump King. After the hand was over, West said he *really* meant to bid 2♥. Such is life at the bridge table.

So N-S get a lucky top score. Better lucky than good, as they say.

**Quote for the month:** “Problems worthy of attack prove their worth by hitting back.” (Piet Hein)



## Santa Clarita- Antelope Valley by Beth Morrin

Our Face-to-Face game is being held at the Newhall Community Center in Santa Clarita at 10:00 am on Fridays. The game is FREE but reservations are required as our space is limited.

For more information, please contact Ruth Baker ([rbaker1243@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rbaker1243@sbcglobal.net)) or Paula Olivares ([paola@pacbell.net](mailto:paola@pacbell.net)).

### Winners of the Friday F2F game:

Oct. 11			
N/S	John Langer – Kathy Flynn		63.57%
E/W	May Abagi – Hani Abraham		66.76%
Oct. 18			
N/S	Paula Olivares – Tomoko Stock		60.35%
E/W	Harry Randhawa- Alan Nueman		61.88%
Oct. 26			
N/S	George MacDonald – Ruth Baker		65.86%
E/W	Rand Pinsky – Kathy Swaine		58.04%
Nov. 1			
N/S	Donna Davidson – Bill Langlois		58.046%
E/W	Mark Brifman – Susan Strassner		58.33%

### Virtual Game Schedule

Monday:	12:15 PM	Open game
Tuesday:	6:15 PM	Open game
Sunday:	12:30 PM	Open game

**Contact our club manager at [virtualclub@bridgemojo.com](mailto:virtualclub@bridgemojo.com) for reservations. ACBL has increased the minimum entry fee to \$5. Virtual games are now available to all BBO players. Invite your favorite partner to play with you in one of our games.**

### Big Virtual Club Games (65+%):

Tues. Oct. 8		
Jin Hu – Zachary Madden		75.00%
Mon. Oct. 21		
Donna Davidson – Bill Langlois		73.26%
Tues. Oct. 27		
Paula Olivares – Bill Brodek		66.67%
Tues. Nov. 5		
Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky		68.06%
Sun. Nov. 10		
Jerome Paul – Margaret Shifley		70.83%

Next Board Meeting: TBA

## Pasadena – San Gabriel by Morris “Mojo” Jones [bridgemojo.com](http://bridgemojo.com)



We’re taking reservations for our annual holiday party! We’ll meet for a fabulous tri-tip lunch catered by Stonefire Grill and bridge at the **Arcadia Community Center on December 15**. The cost will be \$30 per player (same as last year!) for the fabulous meal and great bridge. We’ll be selling entries and taking reservations at the Pasadena Bridge Club. You’re welcome to pay using cash or a credit card, and **reservations will only be accepted up until December 5**, so we can get the count of attendees to the caterer. Lunch will be at 12:00 Noon, with bridge to follow.

There’s a fascinating phenomenon on the ridge of Mt. Wilson that’s often visible from our club. An artist and scientist collaborated on the installation of a device using prisms and mirrors at the top of the 150 ft. solar observatory tower. The tower itself is always



visible on the ridge, looking like a white matchstick to the right of the big grey TV towers.

The project is called Sunstar, and when it's active, the top of the tower glows brightly with a particular color of sunlight. I've pointed it out to players, thinking it was a reflection from the observatory itself. The fact that it's an art/science installation is quite delightful. If you Google for "mt wilson sunstar" you can find more information about it.

Meanwhile, it's been a great month of bridge at the Pasadena Bridge Club, with a couple of very well attended Unit Games, as well as the NAP District Final hosted at the club.

We had 12 tables on October 20. Winners N/S were a tie: Karmen Armoudjian with Jan Wickersham, tied with Yongkang Huang with Ming Hu. E/W was won by Mark Peters and Sin Orensztain.

On November 3 we had 11 tables, N/S winners: Caryn Mason and Patrick Finley. E/W winners: Paul Nason and Elliott Mazur.

Reservations are open for the November 17 and December 1 unit games. Contact Miriam Harrington, (626) 232-0558, [miratpf@aol.com](mailto:miratpf@aol.com).

The Pasadena Bridge Club will be offering four single-topic bridge classes using lesson material from Eddie Kantar on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, December 11-12 and 18-19. New courses will start up in the first week of January, with Competitive Bidding and Play of the Deal.

Congratulations to our players reaching new ACBL master ranks! With the new bridge news schedule, I'm going to congratulate both the November and December updates. (Each update is posted on the 6th of the previous month):

November:

- Club Master
  - Kenneth Farhang
- Bronze Life Master
  - Gloria Rommel

December:

- Club Master
  - Susan Claster
  - Fred Register
- Bronze Life Master
  - Nina Huang
- Gold Life Master
  - Dan Lubesnik

In December we'll hold a unit game on December 1, and December 15 will be the unit Holiday Party held at the Arcadia Community Center. The unit is planning a fabulous buffet, and it should be a great party! Save the date for now. The party will be \$30 per player (same as last year), and you'll be able to buy tickets at the Pasadena Bridge Club using cash, check, or credit cards, until December 8.

Congratulations to players achieving new ranks in the ACBL!

Junior Master

Robert Hunt  
Club Master  
Anne Buettner

Sectional Master

Carol Maffin

Regional Master

Liza Billington

Ruby Life Master

Diane Gulbrandsen

Sapphire Life Master

Joan Mesias



Long Beach  
by Lillian Slater

[www.acblunit557.org](http://www.acblunit557.org)

[www.LongBeachBridge.com](http://www.LongBeachBridge.com)

*Sorry, nothing from Long Beach this month.*

Downey-Whittier  
by Daniel Oakes

Jack Rainsberry and Bill Skupen got slightly the best of John Dobson and Barbara Horn in their four boards against each other, 62.5% - 37.5%, and that was the difference on October 2, as Rainsberry & Skupen finished 1st just a single matchpoint ahead of Dobson & Horn. Avice Osmundson & Kiran Kumar took third in

the Club Appreciation game. Payouts for the top 3: 2.68, 2.01, and 1.51.

On October 9, Mike Ventri & Dan Oakes led the way with 58.93%, ahead of John Petrie & Sankar Reddy (55.95%). Rainsberry & Skupen were 1st B, and Dobson & Horn came in 1st C, ahead of Bob & Linda Krause.

October 16 saw Rainsberry & Skupen post the first 60% game of the month, good for first overall in another tightly bunched field. Kumar & Osmundson were 1st E/W just half a matchpoint behind, and Ventri & Steve Hough were 2nd N/S and 3rd overall a single matchpoint behind Kumar & Osmundson. Dobson & Horn were 2nd B overall and 1st C, again just beating out the Krauses.

On October 23, Alan Flower and Jon Yinger put up the second highest score of the month, 62.47%, to take 1st N/S. Unfortunately, it came the same week that Petrie & Reddy had \*the\* high score of the month, 63.17% , to take 1st E/W and 1st overall. Yas Takeda and Robert Yu were 2nd E/W and 3rd overcall, and the Krauses were 2nd N/S and top B overall.

Another close one on the “pre-Halloween” game (October 30). This time it was Ventri and Hough 1<sup>st</sup> overall with 61.74%, a single matchpoint ahead of Rainsberry & Skupen, who were 1st E/W and 2nd overall. The Krauses again took 1st B.

Rainsberry & Skupen were Mistery Consistent on the month, winning their direction if not overall three times out of five, and scoring B prizes in the other two games, good for 9.12 masterpoints apiece. The Krauses found masterpoints four times in five games, as did Dobson & Horn three times in four games. Ventri found the winner’s circle with two different partners, and also got a silver medal.

On a special personal note, there was a notable absence (well, two notable absences) on October 9th, as club mainstays and unit board members Kent & Liz Burrell took a rare Wednesday off in advance of their granddaughter’s October 12th wedding in Crestline. The service was (reportedly) beautiful with the bride and her 15(?) attendants. Said her proud grandmother, “She didn’t want to leave anyone out!” There was one minor almost-forgotten detail...after the vows, the kissing of the bride, you know – all that stuff – as the new happy couple heading off, disaster was narrowly averted when an attentive guest yelled, “What about the rings?!” Laughter and the traditional exchange ensued.

Once again, the club was a perfect 5 for 5 in finding special games to give away extra masterpoints – Club Appreciation, Club Championship, Unit Championship..you name it, we run it!

## Bridge Jeopardy Questions

\$100 – What is x (lowercase)?

\$200 – What is X?

\$300 - What is XX?

\$400 – What is XYZ?

\$500 – What is X-IMPs?

# Problem Solvers' Panel

John Jones is moderator. Mark Bartusek, Mitch Dunitz, Rick Roeder, Mike Shuster, and Jon Wittes are panelists.

As always, panelists are playing 5-card majors, 15 - 17 NT, and 2/1 GF. Beyond that, except where indicated, panelists may use any reasonable methods.

# 1

Matchpoints  
Both Vul

East	South	West	North
2♠	X	3♠	pass
pass	???		

You, South, hold: ♠ Q ♥ AK10982 ♦ A2 ♣ AK42

What call do you make?

**Dunitz:** 4♥.

**Roeder:** 4♥. Partner can have some Yarboroughs where this contract will rock.

**Wittes:** 4♥. My heart texture is too good to consider anything else. Partner needs very little to get us up to 10 tricks.

**Shuster:** 4♥. Sure, we could miss a slam, but we might not even make. Is the alternative supposed to be double? The same action we'd take with ♠xx ♥AKxx ♦AKx ♣Axxx? Surely no panelist would torture partner with a double here.

**Bartusek:** Double. None of partner's bids will inconvenience me (including a pass). I will bid 4♥ over any bid partner makes. This will allow us to get to the best game contract and 5♣ if partner subsequently pulls my 4♥ (over their 4♣/4♦ response). My second choice is 4♥ which may or may not be the best spot (but is a practical bid).

*The first four hands were from an old Midwest panel. Thus, we have panel results on all of the first four, and partner's hand on one hand. The 15 Midwest panelists voted 9 for 6♣, 4 for 4♥, 1 for 4♠, and 1 for Pass (passing seems very strange). I'm with the 4♥ bidders. If I push on hands like this at matchpoints, my partner shows up with junk like ♠Jxx ♥Hx ♦KQxxx ♣Jxxx far too often.*

2

Matchpoints  
N-S Vul

North	East	South	West
pass	pass	1♦	1♥
X	pass	???	

You, South, hold: ♠ 10 ♥ AJ63 ♦ AQ1032 ♣ AJ7

What call do you make?

**Shuster:** Pass. No game our way is likely and the hand is a misfit. I like our chances of taking 8+ tricks with hearts as the trump suit - the opponents are probably perpetrating a Burn's law violation (*failing to have more trumps than the opponents*).

**Wittes:** 2NT. A slight overbid. Partner is a passed hand, but the opponents are at favorable vulnerability, so the right maximum for partner should give game a play.

**Dunitz:** 2NT. All bids have flaws - I can live with this.

**Bartusek:** 2♣. No good bid exists here. I reject pass because we might have a 9+ card diamond fit. 1NT just seems wrong with a stiff and extra high card points. So, if only I can get past this round!

**Roeder:** 2♣. It looks weird, but, it's the least of evils. If partner takes a call, you will be well-placed. The late, great Eric Kokish will be in my corner on this one. *Not to mention the moderator!*

*The Midwest vote was 7 for 2♣, 4 for 1NT, and 4 for 2NT. I am strongly in favor of 2♣ here. 2NT is too aggressive for my taste. Modern negative doubles don't show much.*



3

IMPs  
N-S Vul

North	East	South	West
1♣	1♠	X*	2♠
3♣	3♠	???	

You, South, hold: ♠ A762 ♥ A1097 ♦ KQ65 ♣ 8

What call do you make?

**Bartusek:** Double. Extra values with no clear bid to make. 3NT seems clearly wrong with no source of tricks and only one spade stopper. Partner might even bid 3NT holding solid clubs while assuming that I have a spade stopper! Partner might offer up a Moysian (4-3) heart fit or introduce a diamond suit.

**Dunitz:** Double.

**Roeder:** Double. Where are nine tricks if you bid 3NT? If partner has seven club tricks, the auction is not over. If partner has a spade void, a Moysian 4-3 Heart fit might play like a Dionne Warwick ballad.

**Wittes:** 3NT. I don't like my spade texture, but I can duck two rounds of spades, and even without a second spade stopper, we should have a reasonable play for 3NT even if partner's clubs aren't solid.

**Shuster:** 4♠. I'm going to aim for a high-level club contract, imagining something like ♠Void ♥Kxx ♦Axx ♣KQJTxxx. Take away the ♥K and our only game is 5♣ while they rate to make 3♠. 3NT is a big gamble on clubs being solid, when opposite solid clubs you'll probably make 5♣ anyways.

*The Midwest panel voted 10 for double, 3 for 3NT, 1 for 4S, 1 for 5C. This came from an actual hand and the winner would have been double, as partner held: ♠Void ♥32 ♦A8432 ♣AQT976. The pair bidding these hands got to a good 5♣ contract, which failed on a 5 – 1 club break. I am swayed to Shuster's position.*

<div style="font-size: 48pt; text-align: center;">4</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Matchpoints None Vul</div>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	pass	1♣	1♠	pass
	2♥	pass	???	
You, South, hold: ♠ K10876 ♥ A ♦ J742 ♣ KJ5				
What call do you make?				

*The panel is looking to get out of this escape room. The question is how? Do we pass 2♥, hope that 2♠ improves things or that 2NT will end the auction?*

**Dunitz:** 2♠. Pass will lead to a likely 5-1 fit. So, I'm begrudgingly bidding 2♠.

**Shuster:** Pass. I want to get off this train while there are still exits to plus scores. Yes, partner doesn't pass many hands with six hearts, but that is not the same as passing no hands with six hearts. Even opposite a chunky 5-card suit 2♥ could be best.

**Bartusek:** Pass. Get out early with a misfit. I don't see any spot that will improve the contract. I need more to bid 2NT, which partner might raise (and NT will likely play horribly). Partner might have five great hearts or 6 hearts and a hand that didn't want to open a 2♥ bid. A 2♠ rebid could easily be a worse spot than 2♥.

**Roeder:** Pass. Bob Dylan fans will recall the song "You Ain't Going Nowhere" and tap the table. Byrds' fans will feel "8 Miles High" as they relish the positional nirvana of their club honors. David Crosby was great but there is only one Dylan.

**Wittes:** Pass. Partner is a passed hand, couldn't open 2♥ or 3♥ and doesn't have a spade fit, so I see no future in bidding on.

*The Midwest panel voted 11 for pass and 4 for 2NT. I'm a passer.*

5

IMPs  
None Vul

South	West	North	East
1♦	2♣	2♥	pass
???			

You, South, hold: ♠ KJ3 ♥ J6 ♦ AK98 ♣ 9754

What call do you make?

**Dunitz:** 2♠. Tough problem. 2♥ is forcing. I'm holding my nose and bidding 2♠.

**Shuster:** 3♥. While this might overly encourage partner to press to a bad game, it might also get us to some good ones. I prefer to settle the trump issue and limit my hand rather than bidding a mysterious 2♠ on a mediocre 3-card suit or a stopper-less 2NT. All in all, what I have rates to be working, so I'll be an optimist.

**Roeder:** 3♥. Thank God that this call is non-forcing in a competitive auction.

**Wittes:** 3♥. Toughest problem in this set. If partner has a club stopper, 3NT could be right, but hopefully, my Jx of hearts will be useful to partner in 4♥.

*The man who helped me come up with this problem answers this way:*

**Bartusek:** 3♥. Impossible situation. 3♥ is non-forcing per BWS, and it seems like the least of evils. 3♦ must show longer diamonds, 2♠ should guarantee four spades, and 2NT should show some kind of a stopper. My second choice is a 3♣ punt, but both partners will probably assume that we're in a game forcing auction. It would be nice to have a partnership agreement that this is just a default nothing bid. Partner can now bid 3NT allowing me to pass.

*I made this problem up; well sort of. There is a problem in the December 2024 issue of the Bridge World's Master Solver Contest that is quite similar. I moved a diamond from their problem into the club suit, to make the problem more difficult.*