

Southern California

Bridge News

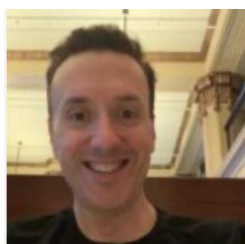
Volume 62, #11

December 2025

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Jordan Chodorow



Last month, I told you about the first of my 2025 nominees to the ACBL Goodwill Committee, Alex Kolesnik. This month, I am delighted to tell you about my second, Carolyn Hannas. Carolyn learned to play bridge

in 1999 and was hooked from the start. She went to all of the tournaments, including nationals, regionals and sectionals, where she worked in hospitality. Work got in the way and Carolyn had to put bridge on the back burner until 2023, when she came back and has gotten hooked all over again.

Carolyn is our D23 Tournament Coordinator and, with fellow Committee members John Jones and Alan Flower, has been diligently spearheading our efforts to find a suitable location for our 2026 Regional, which have been complicated by FIFA's ongoing hold at the Long Beach Hilton. More on those efforts in an upcoming column. Carolyn, thank you for all you do! The Goodwill Committee will be lucky to have you!

Please join me in congratulating my friend Om Chokriwala and former D23'er Joe Viola on winning the Super Senior Pairs at the just-completed NABC in San Francisco. Om and Joe jumped out to a meaningful lead early and never relinquished it. With past winners including Peter Knee, Ellen Anten and Steve Gross, one might say that District 23 owns this prestigious event!

Save the dates of March 9-15, 2026 for the D23 STaC!

Wishing you and yours all the blessings of the holiday season. See you at the bridge table in the new year!

Regional Director's Report

David has retired as Region 11 Director, being replaced by Cornelia Gould starting January 1. However, neither has submitted anything for this month's SCBN, we are sorry to say. We look forward to hearing from Cornelia next month.

Your SCBN Editor

Solve This

To fill up this white space, here's a little challenge for you. The contract is 4♠, the opening lead is the ♥A. If you duck the opening lead, West switches to the ♦Q. If you duck *that*, he switches to the ♣Q. And if you duck *that*, he reverts back to the ♥K.

The contract is makeable; the solution is on page 12.

♠ 8 7		
♥ J 9 6 4 2		
♦ A K 9		
♣ A K 9		
♠ 5 2		♠ Q 6 4 3
♥ A K 3		♥ Q 10 8 7 5
♦ Q J 10 8		♦ 4 2
♣ Q J 10 8		♣ 4 2
♠ A K J 10 9		
♥ —		
♦ 7 6 5 3		
♣ 7 6 5 3		

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New Life Masters in District 23



Dr Lewis Anten – Dec 24
Unit 562



Rajath Shourie – Oct 23
Unit 562



Rich Halverstadt – Jul 25
Unit 559



Angela Peters – Jun 25
Unit 559



Caryn Musicer – Oct 25
Unit 568

The Puzzle Page

Bridge Jeopardy
by John Jones

Category: When Bridge Isn't a Card Game

And the answer is ...

- \$100 – This mile long San Francisco suspension bridge connects the San Francisco Peninsula to Marin County.
- \$200 – This New York area cable-stayed suspension bridge shares its name with the former home of the LA Dodgers. Con men might have sold this bridge to gullible outsiders.
- \$300 – This English bridge spans the Thames River. According to a nursery rhyme, this “bridge is falling down”.
- \$400 – This Los Angeles County suspension bridge links San Pedro with Terminal Island and is named after the state assembly man who lobbied to get it.
- \$500 –. This “bridge” is a 1970 song by American folk rock singers Simon and Garfunkle. It won a Grammy Award in 1971.

District 23 Unit Presidents

The Presidents of our nine Units in District 23 do a lot to make *your* bridge experience better. They seldom get any thanks or even recognition. To help redress that imbalance, here is a list of the current incumbent Unit Presidents:

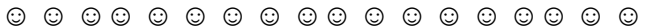
Unit	President
551 – Pomona – Covina	Eileen Finlay
553 – Glendale-Verdugo	Adam Barron
556 – Santa Clarita-Antelope Valley	Paula Olivares
557 – Long Beach	Leo Dittamore
559 – Pasadena – San Gabriel	Lisa Walker
561 – San Fernando	Joan Rubin
562 – West Los Angeles	Jordan Chodorow
564 – Downey-Whittier	Kent Burrell
568 – Torrance-South Bay	Carol Decordova

* Kent has resigned, but the election to replace him has not yet been held

(Solutions to Bridge Jeopardy are on page 7. No peeking!)



Submitted by Tom Lill



Around the Units in District 23



Pomona – Covina by Tom Lill www.acblunit551.org

La Fetra Games: Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:45
Claremont Bridge Club: Thursdays 9:30
Individual: January 10, 10:00 a.m., Ontario
Unit Pairs Game: December 20, 11:00 a.m., Ontario
Unit Pairs Game: January 17, 11:00 a.m., Ontario:
Unit Board Meeting: 10:15 a.m. before the game

Special Note: not many have expressed interest in playing at our club on the days after Christmas and New Year's Day, so the games scheduled for December 26 and January 2 are CANCELLED. Sorry about that. If I had my druthers But it is not to be.

Also, of course, there will be no games at the Claremont club on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

And another BIG ANNOUNCEMENT: after a hiatus of more than two decades (we held our last Sectional, a 299er affair, in 2003), we are going to try again. This will be a joint effort with Unit 516, the High Desert unit. It will be held at the Upland Women's Club (in Upland, if you had not guessed that), March 20-23. It will be a "Local Sectional," and guess who will be the DIC? Nope. Guess again. Details will be announced as they become available. The flyer is not ready yet, but should be soon.

In the November Unit Game, we had our best turnout in quite some time – enabling us to run an 8-table Mitchell! Perhaps the fact that it was our annual Holiday Party had something to do with it? Anyway, the overall winners were Art Weinstein – Nancy Stebbins, with 62.20%. In second we had a tie, Ramona Hernandez – Nona Stokes and Tim and Eileen Finley. Next came Judy Mogharbel – Yours Truly, and finally Wendy Wanderman – Rosalie Roberts.

In the December Individual, Serene "Cici" Mougharbel took first with a nice 65.91% game. She's been playing less than a year ... her teacher must be

something else. (Ahem.) Yours truly was second, Nony Bernal third, Tom Cusack fourth, and Kitty Moon fifth.

Thanks again to Patrick Finley, for collating the masterpoint statistics for November. At La Fetra:

1	5.58	Gary Atwell
2	5.51	Vic Sartor
3	4.49	Mary Ann Wotring
4	4.23	Steve Andersen
5	4.10	Tom Lill
6	3.73	Richard Parker
7	3.63	Ramona Hernandez
8	3.58	Lulu Minter
8	3.58	Fredy Minter
10	3.24	Nona Stokes

The totals are rather low because between election day and Black Friday, we lost a couple of games – we held only six games at La Fetra all month.

And at the Claremont Bridge Club:

1	1.59	Gary Atwell
1	1.59	Duane Woodman
3	1.30	Steve Andersen
4	1.26	Patrick Finley
5	0.97	David Ochroch
5	0.97	Kitty Moon

At La Fetra, only one pair topped the magic 65% benchmark: Vic Sartor – Mary Ann Wotring, with 67.36%. But there were lots of winners in very competitive games: Fredy and Lulu Minter, David Raymond – Gary Atwell, Caryn Mason – Vic Sartor, Nona Stokes – Ramona Hernandez, and Karen McCarthy – Yours Truly.

Over in Claremont, two of the three game-winners topped 65%. David Raymond – Gary Atwell had a monstrous 73.96% outing, and Peggy Diller – Steve Andersen turned in a nice 69.44% game. The other winning pair was David Ochroch – Kitty Moon.

There were no promotions last month, but we had quite a few players attend the Palm Springs Regional, so no doubt we'll see some promotions next time.

11 Unit members attended the Palm Springs Regional, and brought home a total of 85.92 masterpoints. Top winner was ... ahem ... Yours Truly, with only 10.17 of that total. Right behind was our

rising Junior star, Cici Mougharbel, with 9.32. Then came Judy Mogharbel, 9.03; Carl Silsbee, 7.73; and Steve Andersen, 7.51. That rounds out the top five, but there were seven players right behind, between there and 4.27 points.

The best individual efforts:

Cici Mougharbel, 1st in bracket 5 of the Sunday Teams.

Carl Silsbee, David Ochroch, Art Weinstein, and Steve Andersen, first in bracket 7 of the Saturday teams.

Richard Parker, 2nd in bracket 4 of the Monday teams.

Sofi Kasubhai, 2nd in bracket 8 of the Friday teams.

And Yours Truly with Judy Mogharbel, 2nd in bracket 5 of the Saturday teams.

For our hand-of-the-month, here's a TANJ (There Ain't No Justice) hand for you. Sitting South, as dealer, I picked up

♠ A 10 8 7 3 ♥ K 8 ♦ 8 ♣ A Q 9 7 4

Certainly, a normal enough 1♠ opening. LHO butted in with 3♥ (don't they always?), and partner, *never* shy at the table, chimed in with a 1430 Blackwood 4NT. I duly showed my two key cards, and partner placed the contract at 6♠. The opening lead was the ♠2 (!), and I found myself presented with these assets to work with:

North
♠ Q 9 6
♥ Q 3
♦ A K Q J 5 2
♣ K 8

South
♠ A 10 8 7 3
♥ K 8
♦ 8
♣ A Q 9 7 4

Oh, happy days, not only am I short two key cards, but the ♠J is out there, too. I like my partners to have faith in my dummy play, but not *that* much faith! Time to lie back and think of England, I guess.

But, as I say, when you have two chances – slim, and none – try for slim. If LHO has three diamonds in addition to his announced seven hearts, I

can pull this one off, perhaps, discarding my two hearts on those luscious diamonds in dummy. RHO cooperated by playing the ♠J as I played low from dummy, and that's one hurdle overcome. I won the ♠A (not having bet on the opponents to win), and played the top three diamonds. On the ♦Q, LHO showed out (oh, no), but *didn't ruff*. It turned out that Slim had brought his little brother along: LHO had led his singleton trump! Away went my two hearts, and now that I know the trump position, 6♠ rolled home for an uncontested top.

This hand was played on BBO, and when the round ended I asked my partner (privately) what the story was, bidding slam *knowing* we were off two key cards? She replied: "my kibitzer urged me into it!" Where does TANJ come in? For the opponents, of course: the contract is pretty much hopeless, but the opening lead gave me a chance, and I grabbed it gratefully. The lead of any minor suit card, or the ♥A, gives me no hope whatsoever. (OK, on a minor suit lead, if I guess that LHO has a stiff trump and cash one round finessing the 10 (or covering RHO's card), it goes the same way – with some very inspired guessing. What are the odds?)

Better lucky than good!

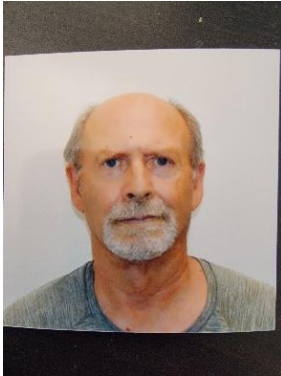
This isn't exactly a hand of the month, but it's a story too good not to tell. Believe it or not, as you like. Last year, playing a team event, in round 2 I shuffled and dealt only board 17. When I picked up my cards, I held a lone 10, and 12 smaller cards. Oh well, you pick up awful hands from time to time. Next round, at a different table, I again shuffled only board 17. I picked up my cards ... and again found only a lone 10. Partner henceforth forbade me from ever again shuffling that board. Quite a coincidence, but the best is yet to come.

In Palm Springs, in the Sunday teams, while waiting for the last few boards from our teammates, we got to chatting. Before the boards came, I related the "board 17 story" to my table mates. I got a few chuckles. When I then picked up my cards for board 17: you guessed it! I had one lone 10 and 12 smaller cards! I'm glad I told the story *before* getting the board, as no one would have believed it otherwise. (I still don't believe it!)

They say that once is happenstance, twice is coincidence, but the third time, it's enemy action! Ooooh.

Quote for the month: "It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles: the less

they have in them, the more noise they make in pouring it out.” (Alexander Pope)



Santa Clarita-Antelope Valley by Don Dachner

The Santa Clarita Bridge Club has games at the Newhall Community Center usually every week, but the holidays bring schedule changes.

There will be a 24 board open game on December 5th, 19th and 27th.

There will be a 12 board open game on December 3rd, 10th and the 17th.

The Wednesdays games are mainly for people in the learning stage, but all are welcome. You can take back your bid, for example, or ask any question about what's happening. There are mentors at all the tables to help out. We usually have 4 or 5 tables, and it's free.

Also, on Wednesdays at 9:30, there is a half hour lesson covering various introductory topics, usually attended by 10 people or so. We are covering forcing bids, currently.

November Friday game results

11/7		
NS	Mark Brifman – Susan Strassner	57%
EW	Roy Ladd – Rand Pinsky	60%
11/14		
NS	Beth Morrin – Ruth Baker	70%
EW	John Langer – David Khalieque	58%
11/21		
NS	Rand Pinsky – Roy Ladd	63%
EW	May Abagi – Hani Abraham	61%
11/29		
NS	Marjie Pinkers – John Langer	69%
EW	Russell Gray – Ted Maki	59%

My story with Omar El Sheriff

by May Abagi

When I was young, living in Egypt, a new handsome actor was in the rise: Omar El Sharif.

Educated, elegant, coming from very rich family very known in Egypt, he was the dream of every young girl in Egypt.

I followed his news, he become an international actor and moved to live in France, still following his news, he was number one gambler playing all kind of card games and a very brilliant bridge player.

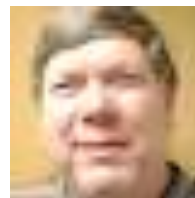
I am a cards player, but bridge attracted my attention; I decided to learn that game.

I used to go to my sporting club and I find a special room there for learning and playing bridge, but at that time I was too busy with young kids, my own business, champion in a sport game (Croquet) playing every day and part of social community, but the idea of learning bridge stayed with me.

When I moved to the state, I was told that there is a bridge club in every city and area, and through newspapers I find one and went learned the game.

I used to visit Egypt frequently and play bridge there; one day while visiting there was a big tournament that I participated in. To my surprise, Omar El Sharif was playing there, sitting waiting to start the game. I went to him and told him that he was my inspiration to learn bridge and I had a pleasant, short conversation with him, what a gentleman! What a personality! He really deserved to be international actor.

That was my story with Omar El Sheriff



Long Beach by Leo Dittmore

www.acblunit557.org
www.LongBeachBridge.com

Unit 557 Year-End Note

As we close out 2025, we extend heartfelt thanks to our Board of Directors and to every member of Unit 557 for making this year such a success. Your

dedication, teamwork, and enthusiasm have kept our bridge community vibrant and welcoming.

From tournaments to parties, lessons to daily games, each event has been enriched by your participation and support. The spirit of camaraderie and fair play continues to define our unit, and we are grateful for the countless hours contributed by volunteers, directors, and players alike.



Player Recognition

Special congratulations go to Neal Kleiner & Al Lum, Fern Dunbar & Rob Preece, and Bill McClean & Jon Yinger who achieved remarkable 70% games last month. Their outstanding performance is a testament to skill, partnership, and focus at the table.



Looking Ahead

With the foundation of this successful year, we look forward to 2026 with excitement. More opportunities to play, celebrate, and grow together await us, and we know our community will continue to thrive.

Thank you again for being part of Unit 557. Here's to another year of bridge, friendship, and achievement!

Downey-Whittier by Daniel F. Oakes

Sorry, nothing to report this month.

San Fernando Valley by Alan Curtis

Sorry, nothing to report this month.

Bridge Jeopardy Questions

\$100 – What is Golden Gate Bridge?

\$200 – What is Brooklyn Bridge?

\$300 – What is London Bridge?

\$400 – What is Vincent Thomas Bridge?

\$500 – What is Bridge Over Troubled Water?

District 23 Rank Changes December 2025

Junior Master

Ann M. Bass
Mark Brifman
Roberta S. Buckner
Shailendra K. Gupta
Hemlata K. Lepkowski
Thanos Trezos
Dylan Vanderree
Karen White

Club Master

Benjamin Duncan
John Reid

Sectional Master

Daniel J. Collins
Debra Collins

Sectional Master

Lauren Edgerton
Camille D. Gardner
William I. Purdy, Jr.

Regional Master

Andre Di Marco
Lynn S. Dotts
Kim R. Gundlach
Mike Joseph
Ann Peacock

NABC Master

Glenn T. Barry
Hillary W. Clark
Peggy A. Mitteldorf
Laurie J. Silton
Melinda G. Wilson

Advanced NABC Master

Harkirat Randhawa

Life Master

Yongkang Huang

Silver Life Master

Judith C. Tomic

Ruby Life Master

Mikie Alpert
Linda Stein

Gold Life Master

Lutrell G. Long

Sapphire Life Master

Steve L. Ramos, Jr.

Problem Solvers' Panel

John Jones is moderator. Wafik Abdou, Mark Bartusek, Paul Boudreau, Jordan Chodorow, Margie Michelin, 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

BAM
Both Vul

South	West	North	East
1♣	pass	1♠	3♦
pass	pass	X	pass
???			

You, South, hold: ♠ Q8 ♥ AK8 ♦ J52 ♣ A8753

What call do you make?

This hand is not a real hand. It came from a suggestion by Tom Dodd, moderating a column from around 20 years ago. He suggested this hand might bid 3♥ at this juncture. I disagreed and gave the hand to my band of thieves who agree with me and pass.

Bartusek: Pass. I lead a trump. Partner is most likely 5=4=1=3, 5=4=2=2, or 5=3=2=3. There is no clearly defined makeable game, and they're vulnerable, so take the money and run.

Abdou: Pass. I have three quick tricks, and no apparent fit. Go for the magic!

Michelin: Pass. We have three suits and they have one. I have some extras, but no particular fit with partner. I may even get a spade ruff. Partner did not bid NT or cue bid or venture extra spades. I'll take his 10+ and my hand for hopefully more than our game if we have one anywhere.

Boudreau: Pass. Three likely tricks and no comfortable alternative is jumping out at me.

Roeder: Pass. No clear action so let's go for 200.

Chodorow: Pass. I would have opened 1NT; hate my choices now. Entirely my fault when they score it up, but at least partner won't make me play BAM again.

Wittes: Pass. Nothing is sure here. I have what looks like at least three defensive tricks in my own hand. If we can find at least two more defensive tricks between the two hands, we should get at least +200 with a probable part score at best our way.

Shuster: Pass. It's BAM.

I rarely get unanimous panels, but this time they all pulled out the green card.

2

Matchpoints
None Vul

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

* Help suit game try

You, South, hold: ♠ AK ♥ A6 ♦ K7 ♣ AJ108652

What call do you make?

I'll start with a panelist who objects to the conditions, thinking 2NT, not 1♣ is the best opening bid. I think he has a point.

Abdou: 2NT. I protest! This is a 2NT opener for me. Now I am relegated to 2NT to show 18-19, a slight underbid with those gorgeous clubs. 3♣ will not show all my values and double is flawed.

Michelin: 2NT. A good partner would have bid 1NT for me showing values (hehe)! My partner did not even make a negative double here. I am going to trot out 2NT and hope for the perfect club holding. If I cuebid to force I will likely be past the 3NT opportunity if it were right. Partner should play me for this monster hand with clubs and can retreat to 3♣ for me if needed.

Bartusek: 3♣/2NT. This is really a toss-up. If I decided to be super-aggressive, I'd choose 2NT hoping partner can raise to 3NT. The safe conservative choice is 3♣, which I much prefer (fewer undertricks when wrong, and only a speculative non-vul game potentially missed). *At matchpoints, the vulnerability of a missed game doesn't really matter.* This allows me to back in with 3NT if the opponents compete to 3♥. (*I play a back in of 3NT as four diamonds and seven clubs on this auction in some partnerships.*) Partner should then know to pull to 4♣ unless he has club honor(s) to solidify my suit.

Roeder: 3♣. If opponents are to be believed, partner's hand is impoverished.

One panelist asks partner if she has a heart stopper.

Chodorow: 3♥. If partner has Qxx, we'll try 3NT; if not, 4♣.

Other panelists liked their hands and made big bids.

Boudreau: 3NT. This is an overbid, but needs only a little heart help - Qx(x), J10x, or J9x, and clubs xxx or any royal. No heart help but ♣Kxx is enough, or guessing well if partner holds ♣Kx. Partner knows 3NT is based on clubs and IMO he is allowed to pull 3NT to 4♣ regardless of club length when he has no help in hearts and no club royal since I did not open 2♣. Perhaps 2NT (if not playing Good-Bad 2NT) should be a strong 3♣ bid with a heart stopper allowing partner to correct to 3♣ as he would over 3NT.

Wittes: 4♣. If partner has Kx or better in clubs, we may very well belong in 3NT. Partner couldn't bid over 1♥, so I don't expect a great hand from partner. 3♣ doesn't quite do this hand justice, and 3NT is a gamble.

Shuster: Double. 3♣ doesn't do the hand justice. If it weren't a minor, it would have been a 2♣ opener.

3

IMPs
Both Vul

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

You, South, hold: ♠ Q763 ♥ K ♦ A9 ♣ KQ9832

What call do you make?

This is a hand sent to me by my Canadian friend Bill Treble. I'll present the results from his game at the end.

Michelin: 3♣. With no negative double by partner, I am simply going to bid 3♣. Partner may be waiting for a reopening double, but if he now bids notrump he'll be pleased with my ♥K.

Roeder: 3♣. If partner cannot make a negative double, I'll bury the spades.

Abdou: Double. I'll live with it if partner bids 3♦; need to get spades in the picture, especially if partner is 4=4=3=2. If partner is 3=4=3=3 he will bid 2NT and we will get to clubs. On some hands when 3♣ is best we will languish in a 4-3 spade fit, say 3=4=4=2, but nothing is perfect. The big pluses are the rare occasions when partner has good hearts or we catch the spade fit.

Shuster: Pass. 3♣ is possible, but we have so little strength and a passing partner.

Bartusek: Pass. I have a presumably wasted ♥K and only a so-so club suit.

Boudreau: Pass. My unbridled optimism (as in problem 2) does have its limits when vulnerable.

Chodorow: Pass. I can't bid the same way when partner passes as when she responds.

Wittes: Double. This keeps spades in play. Partner can always return to clubs with three clubs and nothing else to say.

On the actual hand, both David Eddy and Ellen F. tried 3♣. Partner actually held ♠x ♥Txxx ♦QTxxx ♣Jxx. 3♣ went down one at one table, but at the other table the opponents took their eight-card heart fit too far and went down a trick. Bill thought Pass, not 3♣ was best at all vulnerable. Bill sent this hand to his panel and they mostly agreed with him.

<div style="font-size: 48pt; text-align: center;">4</div> <div style="text-align: center;">IMPs Both Vul</div>	East	South	West	North
	1♥	???		
	You, South, hold: ♠ AQ7 ♥ 8543 ♦ AQ108 ♣ A6 What call do you make?			

This is another Bill Treble problem. Ask enough people about this hand and you will get Pass, Double, 1NT and maybe even 2♦. I'll start with the doublers.

Shuster: Double. I used to pass on this hand type, but it is just too likely we will get robbed.

Bartusek: Double. A problem might occur on the next round, but I can't let our side be shut out. Much safer to enter now than later.

Boudreau: Double. Hopefully, the HCP will compensate for the shape if partner insists on clubs.

Wittes: Double. I have values for a 1NT bid, but don't like the idea of a heart lead coming through. I'll feel better if partner can bid notrump, as unlikely as that might be. Partner could also have a spade or diamond fit.

Now for the panelists who started with a pass.

Roeder: Pass. You have a defensive hand and the auction is not over.

Chodorow: Pass. Nothing else fits. Double is possible if playing ELCD (Equal Level Conversion Doubles). Make the ♥8 the ten and NT would cross my mind.

Michelin: Pass. I am going to pass and see what happens next. I can always re-enter the auction if it seems right.

Now for a panelist who wanted to be there.

Abdou: Pass/Double. 1NT is for young cowboys. Pass loses a part score if we are shut out, and double gets in trouble when partner competes in clubs. Table feel and state of the match all dictate my action: an aggressive double or a conservative pass.

Finally, let's hear from all the 1NT overcallers.

Silence? Yep, there were no 1NT bidders. Maybe Wafik is right and I should have found some panelists (young cowboys) at a ranch! Both the players at the table doubled, but I don't know the result.

5

IMPs
Both Vul.

South	West	North	East
1♦	2♥	3♦	3♥
???			

You, South, hold: ♠ AK32 ♥ A ♦ 108732 ♣ QJ7

What call do you make?

*Finally, a third Bill Treble problem.**Some try 3♠.***Shuster:** 3♠. Partner can still have spades here.**Bartusek:** 3♠. This will give partner a good idea of my hand. My diamonds are so bad that 3NT won't make unless partner also has a heart stopper. I'll pass a 3NT call or accept a 4♣ game try from partner. Looking at this set of problems, isn't bridge easy?**Boudreau:** 3♠. Worth a move.**Roeder:** 3♠. 3NT is for dreamers, as partner would need to have something like ♠Qxx ♥xxx ♦AKxxx ♣xx. That dream hand also makes 5♦. Partner could have hands like ♠xx ♥xxxx ♦Axxxx ♣Kx which give 5♦D good play.*Some try 5♦.***Chodorow:** 5♦. ♦AKxxx and the right distribution of side spots makes this somewhere between good and excellent. 3♠ is misguided at this form of scoring.**Wittes:** 5♦. Partner couldn't make a negative double over 2♥, so a spade fit is unlikely, and 3NT seems a bit of a stretch unless the diamond suit is ready to go. 11 tricks in diamonds seems like our best bet for a game.**Abdou:** 5♦. 3♠ shows 5/6 for me. I don't need much: ♦KQ, ♣K, and two spades or five clubs or JTxx spades.*Finally, a panelist who involves partner with a double. If partner converts this, she may be a big winner.***Michelin:** Double. My diamonds are not great, so without an extra stopper, 3NT does not rate to make. Partner did not make a negative double, but a 4-3 fit may be right for game in spades. I think I am going to double, wanting to compete. Partner will be able to place it in the right spot. I am likely to have this type of shape.*In the actual game, both players who held this hand passed. Partner held: ♠xx ♥xxx ♦AKxx ♣Kxxx and 12 tricks in diamonds were available on a friendly layout. This panel and Bill's panel were both more aggressive, trying for game or simply bidding it.*

Solution to "Solve This"

Ruff the opening lead. Go to dummy in a minor suit. Ruff another heart. Go back to dummy, ruff a third heart. Go back to dummy, ruff a fourth heart. Use your remaining dummy entry to ruff another heart. That's nine tricks, and your ♠87 stand as equals against the ♠Q. Simple dummy reversal!

Bridge ... such an easy game.