

UNIT 191 BRIGHT LEAF ALERT!

Official Publication of ACBL Unit 191

April/May 2013

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Harrison Brooke, Membership Chair

Our total membership during the past two months dipped slightly, going from February's month-end 556 to 552 for March and then back up to 554 for April. April brought us new ACBL member **Jacqueline T. Miller** of Durham and in May **Trenna S. Corey** of Chapel Hill. In addition, we were joined by transfer members **Karen D. Carpenter** of Raleigh who comes from Unit 119, **Ed Nelvyn Evans** of Durham from Unit 106 in New Jersey, **Felicity T. Klintworth** also of Durham and also from Unit 119, and **Ava H. Nackman** of Chapel Hill who returns from Unit 507 in Santa Clara Valley. Ava joined ACBL in the spring of 2008 while living in this area and moved to California during the summer of 2011. Please join me in welcoming these new players to our bridge family.

To date, we've gained only 6 new members for the calendar year which represents only 35% of the number at this time last year and only 42% of the average for the past three years. It's our hope that that number will increase in the months to come.

In the March issue of the Alert I announced that **Connie Namm** (now **Connie Ellinwood**) fulfilled her gold point requirement at the Charlottesville Regional in late February to become a Life Master. I now have official word from ACBL, and am pleased to repeat congratulations, and am delighted to add that **Victor (Skip) Riva** also has become a Life Master. Special congratulations go to **Peggy Barbee** who has reached the rank of Platinum Life Master—5000+ points.

We're proud of and pleased for all of you!

Congratulations also go to the others advancing in rank:

Junior Master	Jody Bartlett Kuangda Lu Zimeng Xie
Club Master	Richard Cole Reece Schuler David Sokal Robert Thorstad Fran Young
Sectional Master	Nancy Honeywell Rita Musante Phylliss Woody
Regional Master	Carole Hamilton
NABC Master	Melanie Riva Paul Smith
Bronze Life Master	Ziad Kurdi
Silver Life Master	Harry Mathews
Gold Life Master	Erlinda Wehrman

I am sad to report the death of **Syd Elstran** on Sunday, March 31. Syd's father was a career officer so frequent moves were part of her early life. After receiving her degree in education and marrying her husband Bill, that pattern repeated to some extent when the two of them were hired by the Department of Defense to teach at military bases around the world. While in England, they were one of four couples (another being Jo Anne and Bob Vansuch), who ultimately retired in Chapel Hill. Syd was an accomplished artist and spent many hours enjoying her craft. She also was a successful agent with one of the major real estate firms in Chapel Hill. She is survived by her son Clete of Tennessee, her daughter Linden of New York, and three grandchildren.

OUR NEWEST LIFE MASTERS

It is now official—our unit's newest life masters are **Connie Namm** and **Victor Riva**.

Connie started playing bridge many years ago as a student nurse. She started playing duplicate bridge 12 years ago and credits her success to Pahnea Ratty, her mentor and good friend. Connie said, "I like to play and compete. Golf and tennis are my physical competitions and bridge is my mental stimulation." Well done Connie!

Victor started playing bridge in 1975, but stopped when family and job responsibilities were more important. Victor—"Skip" is from Pittsburgh and was Human Resources Director for several steel companies and negotiated labor agreements. He retired in 2009 and moved to Chapel Hill in 2011. Melanie talked him into playing bridge again just a year ago—and he was able to acquire enough points to become life master. Skip is an old time banjo and guitar player and also a singer. Of course, his favorite partner is his wife, Melanie.

Congratulations Connie and Skip!!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Upcoming Tournaments.....

May 21-27—Richmond, Virginia
Memorial Day Regional

June 20-23—Raleigh, NC Sectional

July 11-14—Durham, NC Sectional

July 19-21—Winston-Salem, NC
Sectional

MENTORING GAMES

Thirty-two mentees and mentors enjoyed a special game held on Saturday, April 13. **Andrea Roitman** and **Ken Dye** were the winners at the event. Thanks to Darleen, who not only directed the game but also filled in as a mentor.

On May 14, there was another special game for mentors and mentees. 44 people attended this event! Winners were:

Jim Cunningham/Nancy Coey	62.20%
Rosalyn Katz/Meyer Liebermam	57.14%
Dave Streifford/Jim Wells	57.14%
Judy Laney/Kay Richardson	56.85%
Jim Bean/Nancy Crow	54.17%

On June 1, there will be a special mentor/mentee game at 1:00 which will end this year's program. Lunch will be provided.

Special thanks to the board for supporting the mentor/mentee program and providing funds for pairs playing in games during the year. And thanks to **Sharon Crane** and **Linda Harris** for organizing the program and special games.

Be thinking about next year's program because Sharon and Linda already are organizing this popular event for 2013-2014. There is a folder at the TBC for those interested in being a mentee or a mentor. Contact Sharon Crane at:

SCrane531@earthlink.net 919-489-4903

or Linda Harris at:

lharris166@nc.rr.com 919-414-6716

This program is beneficial to new players and also gives experienced players an opportunity to give something back to the unit. Everyone benefits!!

THE ADVENTURES OF DUKE AND CAROLINE

Caroline.....Smart, vivacious, trusting
Founded her own company at 25,
now retired and seeking new
challenges
Wants to learn to play bridge the
right way, both technically and
ethically

Duke.....Rich, cavalier, devil-may-care
Made his money the old fashioned
way, he inherited it
Sees bridge as a social outlet
Not above bending the rules to
advance his status

The McAdoos....Elderly couple from the 299er
game

Buzz and Jim.... College students

The RRG's.....Expert players who gave and
expected the best you had to offer
at the table

Over the course of many weeks, other characters
will be introduced to our little drama. Any rela-
tion to real life persons will be purely coinciden-
tal.

“KEEP THOSE CARDS AND LETTERS COMING”

Caroline was looking forward to her game
with Jim. She had never played with anyone ex-
cept Duke, and when Buzz and Jim offered to
switch for the Tuesday night game, she jumped at
the chance. Duke, of course, was not so thrilled.

“They might have higher expectations

for our abilities than we are capable of providing,”
said Duke.

“You are the biggest wet blanket,” Caroline
thought to herself. She loved many qualities about
Duke, but his sense of adventure left much to be de-
sired.

“They will expect nothing more than that we
pay attention and try to learn some things that we
haven’t yet encountered,” Caroline cooed. “Please
just try to behave and take this as another learning
experience.”

Duke and Caroline arrived at the TBC about
thirty minutes before game time so that they could
talk to the guys about what they wanted to play and
fill out convention cards. Jim got right into the swing
of things by putting their names at the top of their
card. This puzzled Caroline since she and Duke had
never bothered to include their names.

“Very important information,” Jim said to her.
“Names set a friendlier tone and give an unfamiliar
opponent a chance to put a name with a face. What
No Trump range do you like?” Carolina had never
thought of that.

“Doesn’t everyone play 15-17?” inquired
Caroline.

“Not in the open game,” Jim explained.
“Some play 14-16, some play 12-14, some give you a
range and then bend the rules. They call it upgrading
which is OK on certain hands, but when an upgrade is
made on every hand there is a presumption that their
range is not what is listed on the card.”

As they filled out their card, Caroline realized
that it was important to give the opponents the best
information available about what she and Jim were
playing so those opponents could try to work out
what she and Jim held. Some players could care less,
but the really good ones used this information to
help them in understanding what their bids meant.
The days of one name, unintelligible scribbling and a
haphazard filling out of her card were a thing of the
past in Caroline’s mind. Why, this was the chance to

show her latent artistic talent.

Jim and Caroline used their thirty minutes to good advantage, and each filled out their own card so that they matched. Caroline made notes to ask Jim about some treatments they played that were not required as part of the actual card.

These treatments are just as important for each partner to know so that when an opponent asks what a bid means, they can answer it appropriately. Many sequences come up in bridge that opponents have not discussed. Jim explained that one should not offer to answer a question that you and your partner have not talked about and simply say, "Undiscussed," if queried about it. Jim added that the proper etiquette when asking the opponents about a convention is to simply say, "Please explain." Never try to tell the opponents how you play the bid or why they are not playing the correct response.

The game was uneventful and Caroline's play was undistinguished. She and Jim scratched with 51%, but it was not the BIG GAME that she had hoped for. After saying her goodbyes, Caroline couldn't wait to see how Buzz and Duke had fared. 63% and 2nd overall!!!!!!! She couldn't believe it!

Duke ambled up looking like the cat that ate the canary and said so that everyone could hear, "I guess talent will have its day."

He and Buzz had had a remarkable amount of luck and had played very well on numerous hands. Caroline gave him a big hug and congratulated him profusely. Then she saw his convention card. Same old Duke!!! One name, many boxes left unanswered, and grade school scribble. Though he had done well, she still had a lot to teach him about her newly found convention card skills.

The ACBL is very proud of its convention cards, and the ACBL.org. website is very explicit about how to fill out the convention card. Partners must have two identical cards that are filled

out uniformly. For people with many frills, the cards should be easily readable. If you play in a national tournament, as opposed to a local game, these rules will be enforced, and penalties are prescribed for those not adhering to them.

When you have multiple partners, it saves a lot of discussion time if you save a filled out card for each of them and review it when you play. Just a few minutes of study before a game can save you from a bad board or two that might result from confusion about exactly what you play with this partner.

As you can see from our story, having a pretty card will not guarantee good results. However, your fellow competitors will certainly appreciate the ability to be able to read and comprehend your conventions. Not to mention, you can feel better about your intentions to play fairly.

Submitted by Randy Joyce and Sandy McCay

As a follow up to the article, I asked **John Torrey**—who has directed **UMPTEEN** bridge games at all levels, if he had ever given a penalty for not having convention cards completely filled out. This was his response:

First of all, Randy is correct. But I've never actually given a penalty for this. If a pair is in violation, I would instruct them to correct it and then check back to see that they have. I'd be very gentle with new players and also with a pair that got thrown together at the last minute. It would also depend somewhat on the nature of the game: a club game can be lenient, An NABC game much less so, with others in between. Even though there is only a small chance of an actual penalty, players should know that making a complete and legible card available to their opponents is a basic courtesy of the game. A player who cannot produce one when asked owes at least an apology, followed by an explanation of both the reason and of his understanding of the partnership methods. Technically, the ACBL requires each pair to have TWO identical convention cards. I have never seen a club director enforce this.

A penalty, if given, would come under "procedural penalties" as specified in Law 90. A normal procedural penalty might be 1/2 of the top score on a board, or 3 IMPs if playing an IMP game.

OUR MEMBERS SPEAK.....

Abuse, whether verbal or non-verbal should never be tolerated. There is simply no justification for insulting a partner at the bridge table. We are all human beings and deserve respect as such. If a player has a problem with a play or a bid/call by partner, he/she can take the matter up with the partner in private when the opportunity arises.

The unintended consequences of partner abuse are almost never beneficial. By alerting the opponents that partner has made an error gives away information that will assist the declarer or the defenders as the case may be. If a partner receives a reprimand or insult concerning a certain play or bid/call, it may cause him/her to lose their focus for the next hand and possibly subsequent hands. An insult may also engender anger and/or resentment in the partner which is certainly not good for the partnership.

The response to partner abuse should be completely passive. The abuse partner should, in fact, avoid eye contact with the offender. When the opportunity presents itself, the offended party should inform his/her partner that he/she considers partner's behavior to be abusive and that he/she will not tolerate it in the future. These simple rules should apply to all players regardless of their skill level.

The problem of partner abuse can only be addressed by the individuals who are abused. They have to be proactive in this regard. The ACBL rules are silent regarding this problem although serious abuse can be addressed by the director.

Frank Hund

AND THE LIGHTS WENT OUT.....

No, it isn't a song and it probably will not be made into a movie or a television special.

Friday afternoon, April 7, The Tarheels Bridge Club game was well into the first round when there was a very loud explosion. The power went off and the TBC building was dark. The emergency lights did come on, but they ran out of juice pretty quickly; the back door was opened to give some light in the kitchen and restroom area. Persons with a flashlight on his/her phone were very popular!

Director John Torrey very calmly suggested a vote among the players to see if they wanted to continue the game or take a rain check for another day. The vote was overwhelmingly to continue the game.

Arranging the tables to take advantage of the light from the windows was a bit tricky, because one player needed a lot of light. John put that player at a table in the best spot and arranged the others around that table. Play carried on and the game continued.

A beer truck had backed into a transformer and took out all the power in the area for about two hours. By 3:00, the power was restored—and the game was completed in the same table arrangement.

George Bloomer and Irene Adams had a 70%+ game—while the rest of us definitely were "in the dark".

No complaints were heard from anyone—just another routine Friday afternoon of bridge.

MEET IRA

Ira Vendig, Unit 191's own centenarian, was born June 5, 1912, in his aunt's house in Brooklyn. After a few days, he and his mother returned to their home on Morningside Drive, behind Columbia University. During his years in NYC, he lived in all five boroughs. He didn't marry until he was 45 years old because he was "having too good a time." After his marriage to a kindergarten teacher, they resided on Long Island, living in each of its two counties. So Ira is a true New Yorker.

Ira's first full-time job was a runner at the New York Stock Exchange. He started working just a month before the crash in 1929. He made \$12 per week for five and one-half days of work. He says, "I was an errand boy. I delivered stocks and documents between investment houses." He lost that job five to six weeks after the crash. He then got a job at another brokerage house making \$15 per week, again as a runner. He was fired again after several months because there was no business.

Next, Ira worked at a life insurance agency. He started as an office boy, became an assistant mathematician and finally a sales agent. He stayed in the business for five years but didn't enjoy the work. He scored one large sale that enabled him to quit and attend Pace College. His teacher was a CPA who taught business concepts that Ira already knew, and in some instances, Ira knew more than the teacher, so he stopped taking classes.

Ira's brother had started a plastics company where Ira next worked. With his brother, the ideas' person, and Ira,

the financial and operations expert, the company succeeded. They manufactured the first lady's plastic compact and the first plastic dog leash. His brother was drafted into the Army and Ira ran the company for one year. Then Ira entered the Army as a buck private, but was discharged as a second lieutenant. While in the Army, he did contract negotiations work. Eventually, his brother sold the company.

After Ira's nineteen year marriage ended in divorce, he met another woman who became his life-long companion. She ran a church school. Ira, in his 60's, and she in her 50's, were looking for a warmer climate when she saw an ad for Fearington Village in the New Yorker Magazine. They moved south, living in Fearington for five years, then moving into Chapel Hill, which held most of their entertainment, for another five years. As the house became too big to handle, they moved to Carolina Meadows, where Ira still lives. Sadly, she died several years ago.

When asked about his proudest moment, Ira hesitated and then said his work in finance as a comptroller, office manager, and treasurer, plus working with his brother.

Bridge became an important part of Ira's life from an early age. At about 15 years, he started playing whist with his friends. Contract bridge became popular in the United States in 1904 and by 1928, Ira was hooked. His game has developed to the point that it is rare that he doesn't score in the five games he plays per week—three at the TBC and two at Carolina Meadows retirement community. He doesn't use many conventions, but he is a sly bidder and an excellent declarer. He recently asked if



there was a retirement community within walking distance of the TBC, so that he could walk to bridge. Turning 101 this June, he gave up driving just two years ago.

Ira did not recall a notable bridge hand that he bid and played very well, or very poorly, but he did remember a hand he wished he had held. The hand had 12 spades without the king and ace of clubs. He could bid an obviously seven spades, but he said, "I would open the bidding with the strong bid of two clubs. Regardless of responder's bid, I would bid Blackwood next. If partner has 2 aces, I can bid 7 NT, outscoring those who rush to 7 spades."

Ira, at age 100, walks with a brisk, posture-perfect pace. He eats a reasonable healthy diet with no restrictions. He suffers from a few ailments, but accepts them stoically. He enjoys a Scotch and several almonds at the end of each day, but he never over-indulges. He likes bridge because it's a friendly outlet for thinking and problem solving, but he attributes his longevity simply to luck.

Submitted by Liz McGuffey

PUPPET STAYMAN

Larry Cohen, printed with permission

This variation of regular Stayman is used by the partner of a notrump bidder to locate not only a 4-card major with the notrumper, but also a 5-card major.

I like to use 1NT-3 Clubs as Puppet. So, I use it only with enough values for game (10+ points for the responder). The Puppet Stayman user is looking for a 5-3 major-suit fit. So, he will always have at least a 3-card major, (maybe a 3-card major and a 4-card major). Never use Puppet Stayman with a 5-card major.

I don't recommend Puppet Stayman on the 2-level (1 NT-2 Clubs) because I prefer Garbage/Crawling Stayman—whereby responder can use 2 clubs with all junky major-suit hands.

I also don't like Puppet Stayman after a 2 NT opener. It doesn't work well when responder has 5/4 in the majors. However, many players don't mind that problem, so they do use Puppet after 2 NT. Just make sure you agree with your partner if 2 NT-3 Clubs is Puppet Stayman or not.

Always make sure you and your partner are in agreement as to the form of Stayman you use and mark your convention card clearly.

P.S. Do not alert a Stayman bid by your partner—especially if the bidding is 1 NT—3 Clubs, however, responder must then alert opener's response. Directors John Torrey and Jay Bates have explained this procedure at club games, but we do need to be reminded when it is proper to alert the bid.

YOUTH BRIDGE CAMP

We have received many registrations and look forward to more—and now is the time to get the entries in if you know someone who is planning to attend.

This year, Youth Summer Bridge Camp is scheduled for June 17—21 for beginners (rising 5th graders through high school) and June 24—28 for more advanced instruction. The camp is being held at the Triangle Bridge Club and hours are 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Fees will be \$75/child/week. Pre-registration will be required. The only requirement for attending the second week is completion of the first week. The flyer and registration forms are posted on the website for easy access.

We look forward to another summer of fun and learning with the kids. The learning often goes both ways. There will be outdoor breaks with recreational equipment provided to absorb some of that youthful energy and help them focus at the bridge table.

Maggie Lindquist and Darleen Bates

DURHAM BRIDGE CLUB

After many years of service, Jay Bates is no longer able to direct the Durham Bridge Club games on a full time basis due to his busy schedule. **Ken Dye** has agreed to direct the Wednesday morning game that starts at 9:30 AM. We are thankful to Jay for many years of directing and look forward to having Ken as the director. Come support Ken and the Durham Bridge Club.

During the 2012-2013 calendar year, the Durham Bridge Club has given out over 30 free plays (\$5 each) to mentors for their participation and for finishing as the top Mentor/Mentee pair in the Wednesday morning game. Come out and win a free play in May before the mentoring program ends in June. This program will resume again when the new mentoring schedule comes out in September. Remember, May is the last month you may earn a free play with your mentee, but the free plays already earned will be honored throughout the summer months.

Nancy Young

LEARN FROM A PRO!!!

The Governor's Club Bridge Club is pleased to present "A Day with **Larry Cohen**" on Friday, August 16, 2013. This is your chance to spend a day with one of ACBL's most influential 52 people, and one of the most sought-after of all bridge teachers and authors in the world. The seminar is designed to apply to players of all skill levels. Larry will be teaching **2/1 Game Force: The Modern Way to Bid; and Helping Partner on Defense: 3rd Hand Play and Signals.**

The seminar will take place in the Governors Club Country Club Ballroom, 11000 Governors Drive, Chapel Hill from 9:00am—4:00pm and includes lunch.

The seminar fee of \$100 per person includes instruction, morning and afternoon play of lesson deals, lunch, and take-home materials written by Larry.

Reservations will be accepted starting May 15. To register, please send your check for \$100 made payable to Governors Club to **Mary Ellen Pasquale**, 50011 Brogden, Chapel Hill, NC 27517. Please include your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address.

Seating is limited and we expect the event to sell out, so make your reservation ASAP.

Any questions concerning the event may be sent to GCBCseminar@gmail.com.

No seminar cancellations will be accepted after August 1.