

Bridge News

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

LA Summarized by Mike Marcucci



There are so many interesting things to write about, my friends, but I have run out of time. My 4 years are up next week and it just seems appropriate to summarize what has happened in D23 over that time.

Organization Chart – Seems like a little thing, but from a corporate viewpoint explains a lot. Our District never had one but now we do. Check it out on our tournament wall or on the web site. It explains who does what for whom! It also clarifies for our whole membership what the D23 Board does and who does it.

Job descriptions – The few officer job descriptions in our ByLaws were written in 1970. The overall responsibilities haven't changed much but the environment has. Technology has made tremendous advances since folks relied on phone calls and the typewriter for communications. Modern communications have leveraged all our capabilities upward. We can do so much more with e-mail, modern computer software, and smart phones, that all those outdated descriptions needed change. Folks also deserved specifics rather than generalities. That has been done. Not only for the Officers but for everybody on our Board.

Membership - From July 2015 till today, we have been holding relatively steady. It would feel better if we had increased by hundreds of players, but the loss rate is hard to counter. Nothing new here. Many outstanding efforts among our players to attract more players & many successes. When I joined ACBL, the goal line was 300 points and I could not see that line! Even though that line is 500 points these

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District Director Report July 2019

by Kevin Lane

“Bridge is a game and should be fun.”



Preparing for Las Vegas

The Long Beach regional is right around the corner followed by the Las Vegas NABC at the Cosmopolitan. It's a busy month of bridge for D23 players.

I have submitted two motions for the Las Vegas board. In addition, I continue to advocate for board-time on several critical business issues that will materially impact the prosperity of bridge over the next few decades.

A strategy for bridge education.

The ACBL Education Foundation has hired a very well-regarded Executive Director. As the Education Foundation re-orient themselves with their new leader, it's a great time for the ACBL to set its own strategic plans for bridge education.

Towards that end, I have proposed better practical use of education funds, with a special

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days, the creation of Gold Rush events has made the task easier. Still takes a lot of work for those newer players, but I think the goal line is still within sight.

The chart below shows our progress? ☺

Unit #	Unit Name	change
551	Pomona-Covina	1
553	Glendale-Verdugo	-11
556	Santa Clarita-Antelope Valley	-12
557	Long Beach	21
559	Pasadena-San Gabriel Valley	12
561	San Fernando Valley	-59
562	West Los Angeles	15
564	Downey-Whittier	-6
568	Torrance-South Bay	-4
	Total Members	-43

Tournaments – Our major problem area. As D22 has been warning us for years, our arrangements at hotels do not work as well in 2019 as they did in 2010. Their bottom line requirement for profit does not match well against a non-profit’s capability for generating revenue unless there is outstanding support from players. When 10,000 players belonged to D23, the burden was spread among many. With 3300, those folks who sit at home really hurt us. Our Tournament Committee works hard and stretches our resources to the limits to provide great snacks and refreshment, great speakers, and a friendly atmosphere for all our players. Sitting at home is not good for your health – playing bridge with new folks is! Come join us.

561 Committee - Since 2013, when the Bridge Academy folded its tent, senior players have had a hard time playing locally. They have had to travel further than most of us for their black point sessions. We formed a committee of 7 players in February to study the issues with opening a new “Open” club in the SFV. Their work continues – it will not be easy. Why should we be making D22 Clubs happy rather than our own?

Future – Where does D23 go from here? 1) Lots of hard work to open up new hotel possibilities. Having only 1 Regional adds a burden to all our players. More travel and expense to gather in those reds and golds. Please don’t talk to me about the ACBL efforts to move those opportunities down to Club level. Despite the great benefits to Club owners,

I still feel the silver, red, and gold awards need to be earned against stiffer and different competition than we get in the local neighborhood. 2) Education and promotion is the 2nd area of great promise. Mitch Dunitz and his private financial supporters are completely sponsoring our Junior Day and Reception on 6 July. How can we ever thank support like that?

We are still searching for the Coordinator we wrote about in May. Rather than 9 education efforts around the city, having a central person as the information organizer will benefit everybody. Mitch could use that other set of eyes to see where efforts are succeeding and where more support is deserved.

Thanks to our entire District Board for all their efforts over the last 4 years on making bridge a relaxing and enjoyable game for us all. Now that you are all familiar with that Org Chart on the wall, please stop who you recognize and thank them for their efforts! I also want to thank all our friends in District 22 for supporting our tournaments so enthusiastically.

Of course, each of our District 23 players holds a special place in my thoughts, both at the tables and elsewhere. You are all why we continue to put our heads together to find new ways to make your hobby more enjoyable.

The July Regional at the Long Beach Hilton is happening as you read. Hope your cards are running well and those squeezes are all working. I’ll be turning in my badge and handing over the District gavel but will still see you there. Adios, mi compadres.

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emphasis on more local support for bridge education as well as a cost-effective resumption of bridge-education technology efforts.

My view is that local groups are a better judge of how to carry out bridge education. Plus, local volunteer groups have much lower overhead than bigger organizations. Bridge-education technology was explicitly a part of the 2013 strategic plan, but the effort has languished amidst three ACBL leaders in three years.

Limiting our risk

I have also proposed some common sense changes to how the ACBL hires its executive director. These proposed changes come out of my review of documents in Horn Lake prior to the spring board meeting. Several board members came early to Horn

Lake at our own expense in order to get a handle on some lingering issues.

A review of 15+ years of CEO/Executive-Director contracts proved quite illuminating. The main problem is a lack of continuity in how the contract terms changed over the years, as CEO committees undergo inevitable turnover. I joined with several board members on a few simple proposals to mitigate the most critical risks. A longer-term effort is needed to forestall financial surprises from lawsuits. Alas, these longer-term issues must necessarily address the challenge of board politics.

Potential board re-structuring

Some district members have asked about the board reorganization proposals mentioned at the Memphis Board of Governors meeting. I've been a long-time advocate of improving how the board is structured. Last year the board worked on six proposals on board re-structuring. The specific plan being publicly touted was, in my estimation, the third most popular.

I continue to advocate for plans being driven by board-consensus after a serious discussion of the problems we face. I also prefer simple, do-able plans such as my successful motion last year to move the masterpoint committee off of the formal business of the board.

Feel free to contact me at kland23@gmail.com

Statements from Candidates for District President

Stan Holzberg

To the bridge players of District 23:

It has been almost 40 years since I last ran for President of District 23. When I left the office we had two regionals per year. One regional had about 7,000 tables and the other about 5,000. We also had a healthy treasury, a healthy bridge-playing population and a friendly hotel situation. Times have certainly changed.

We are faced with an aging population (I am a prime example) and a difficult playing site problem with the exception of the Long Beach Hilton. Neither of these situations are news to the individuals who not

only play but also devote their time and energy to the continuation of bridge not only in our district but nationally as well. The national organization, as well as the district, is devoting resources to try to increase the interest in the game we all love to play. All districts and the ACBL, as well, have a problem with rising hotel rates and finding hotels and other locations willing to accommodate a tournament at a reasonable cost.

At the district level I will focus my attention on a more compact Board of Directors meeting, maintaining and increasing interest in becoming a volunteer and investigating avenues of increasing district income. This last item would include holding a joint regional with District 22 in the near future.

I would look forward to serving the district again as President and using my prior experience as a foundation for leading the district again.

Bob Shore



I'm Bob Shore, and I'm running for President (of District 23). I'm running because I believe in the power of inspiration. I'm running because I believe in the power of collaboration. And I'm running because I want to use my vision, my talents, and my connections to help us grow our game and our community.

I believe in the power of inspiration. We are a volunteer organization. Just the basic functions of a District – holding tournaments and spreading the news – require a lot of contributions from a lot of people. And then, of course, there's the always-present challenge of growing the game by cultivating new players. All this work requires many hands or it simply won't get done.

My aspiration is to inspire many people to contribute to our District's growth and success. I am particularly hopeful of inspiring those who may not have volunteered in the past, and those who used to contribute but now prefer to spend their time in other ways. I have been heartened, over the last few months, by the number of people who have approached me urging me to run for this position and promising to volunteer their time and efforts for the District if I do so. And I am downright proud of the number of opponents who have told me they enjoy having me at

their table. I hope that the good feelings I try to spread wherever I go, and my practice at respecting the time of people with very busy lives, will translate to more volunteer efforts on behalf of our District.

I believe in the power of collaboration. If you know me, you know that my playing schedule is peripatetic. I regularly play at clubs all around the County and at tournaments all around the state. This has given me good relationships with many of the people in our own District and with many people in nearby Districts as well.

And I've kept my eyes open. I see the success people like Jeff Grotenhuis, Art and Diane Gulbrandson, and the Beverly Hills Bridge Club have enjoyed in growing our game. I've seen tournaments throughout the state flourish. For instance, did you know that the annual "Firecracker Sectional" in San Jose typically boasts approximately 1000 tables? Those who have enjoyed success have proved eager to share their knowledge, and sometimes more tangible help, toward our common goal of expanding the game to a new generation of players. I'd like to take full advantage of their knowledge.

I want to grow our game and our community. Our District Director, Kevin Lane, has been singing this song for a long time. We have fewer bridge players per capita in District 23 than almost every other District in the ACBL. When I started playing, I referred to Los Angeles County as the country's "bridge capital," but that is clearly no longer the case. I believe that it can be again, though. Our neighbors to the north in District 21 have enjoyed great success expanding the game in the Silicon Valley. I can't think of any reason we can't enjoy similar success with Silicon Beach. The efforts of Debbie Rosenberg in growing youth bridge in the Silicon Valley have become legendary. We have the same raw materials for growth in our District. I'd like to aspire to the same results.

I'm Bob Shore and I'm running for President. I hope that you will see fit to grant me your support.

Paula Olivares

Paula Olivares for D23 President



Qualifications: organized, people skills, leadership skills, runs well organized meetings,

forms consensus and keeps people motivated and on task.

Experience:

- retired corporate manager (ATT),
- former board member, (Wm S Hart High School District – elected 2 terms, 8 years).
- Wealth of experience leading teams, chairing meetings, using technology to improve functionality (conference calls, dropbox, paperless filing and communication) and brings positive attitude and energy to the table.

Bridge Experience:

- Bridge Club owner/manager/director: Baja Bridge Club (5 years), Friendly Bridge Club (8 years)
- ACBL certified Bridge Teacher (12 years), Rosarito Beach, Mx, Valencia, CA, Cruise ships (26 cruises)
- Unit 556 current President (5 years)
- District 23 current Secretary, past Unit Representative, past District Webmaster

My priorities are the District must be financially sound, support bridge Clubs of LA County and bridge players of LA County. In addition the District is guided by a District Charter to organize regional tournaments, send entries to National events (NAP, GNT) and publish monthly newsletter.

If you are a Unit Representative to District 23, please attend the next District meeting on July 6th in Long Beach and vote for me.

Southern California Bridge News

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From the Director's Chair: by Brian Richardson

Opening bids at the two level, and the subsequent responses and re-bids, often need clarification within the partnership, as well as for the opponents.

Opening bid of 2♣

Many bridge players consider that a 2♣ opening requires a hand of at least 22 High Card Points. That is absolutely correct IF the opening hand is a balanced hand. If it is not a balanced hand, then it may well be a quite different story. The ACBL states "opening an artificial and forcing bid without an 'abundance' of high card values is acceptable under the following circumstances: IF, IN THE VIEW OF THE BIDDER, THERE IS A REASONABLE CHANCE FOR GAME WITH LITTLE HELP FROM PARTNER". This is usually interpreted to mean that it is legitimate to make an opening bid of 2♣ with an unbalanced hand, if game can be made with only one trick from partner.

Here are two hands where it is acceptable to make an opening bid of 2♣ with comparatively few High Card Points:

1. ♠AKQT9765 This hand has nine tricks in a
♥754 ♠ contract and needs but one
♦2 trick from partner to make
♣----- game.
2. ♠AKQT98 If partner has as little as
♥JT9876 the ♥Queen then it is likely
♦4 that 10 tricks are available in a
♣----- major suit contract.

Each of the above hands have only 10 high card points, but are considered by the ACBL as legitimate 2♣ openers.

If both of these hands had their points in the minor suits then it would NOT be acceptable to make a 2♣ opening. Why? In a minor suit contract, MORE than one trick from partner would be required to make game.

Responding to Partner's 2♣ Opening Bid.

If your partnership uses Step Responses to a 2♣ opening, then that response must be alerted. In a similar fashion if your partnership responds 2♥ to show something other than a ♥ suit then that bid also needs to be alerted. If your partnership uses some other bid to show a particular type of hand, then the opponents have a right to know the meaning of that bid also.

In a bidding sequence like: 2♣ - 2♦, 2♥ -3♣, that second bid by Responder needs to be alerted IF, for instance, it shows anything other than a ♣ suit. If, as is often the case, it shows a weak hand, the bid MUST be alerted.

Partner's 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠ Opening Bids and Responses.

If any of these three bids show, by partnership agreement, anything other than a 6-card suit with between 5-10 High Card Points, then the bid has to be alerted. Quite a number of players make an opening bid of 2♦ to show a hand with about 11 to 15 points with a 5-card ♥ suit and with a 4-card ♠ suit, while others make an opening bid of 2♦ to show a 4-4-4-1 hand. These bids must be alerted.

If your response to partner's opening 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠ bid is the bid of a new suit, AND that response is NOT FORCING, then that response is also to be alerted. The only responses to partner's weak two opening bid that are not immediately alertable are: a raise of partner's suit, and a response of 2NT – if the 2NT bid is forcing. If it is NOT FORCING then it should be alerted. However, opener's re-bid to the 2NT response is to be alerted. The 2NT response may ask opener to show an Ace or King outside his bid suit, if he has one, or it may ask opener to give a further description of his hand, using, for instance, a convention called Ogust.

In a bidding sequence of P – P – P – 2♦/♥/♠, that bid is typically NOT a weak bid. It usually shows an intermediate strength hand of about 11 to 15 High Card Points and a 6-card suit. As it is considered "playing bridge" the bid is not alertable. It clearly

makes no bridge sense to open a regular weak two in the fourth seat. Such a weak opening would let the opponents get back into the auction too easily. Would it be wrong for you to alert partner's intermediate 2 opening when it is done in the fourth seat? No, it would not be wrong! A player may get penalized for NOT alerting a bid that required an alert. Seldom will a player get penalized for over-altering.

Something to remember: if you have alerted a bid and an opponent asks for an explanation, you are required to explain the partnership understanding of the meaning of the bid. **YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO GIVE THE NAME OF THE CONVENTION.**

HAPPY BRIDGING TO ALL.

The Mortons: ACBL "Star" Recruiters

by Linda Silvey



Recently, William Morton of The 750 Bridge Club in Woodland Hills, received a lovely certificate recognizing him as an "ACBL Star Recruiter." This award was in acknowledgement of Bill's recruitment of 100 new members to ACBL in the past years. This represents new membership in both U561 and D23 as part of ACBL.

Bill, with his wife, Terry, began their ACBL recruitment activities when they acquired The 750 Club in 2009 from the late Carol Lang and her late husband, Mike Halpren. Their goal was to run a duplicate bridge club where novice and intermediate players could play in a comfortable, pleasant, and hassle-free atmosphere. In the beginning, Bill and Terry did everything. He directed, gave lessons, and partnered with new players needing an encouraging beginning. Terry efficiently managed all the myriad of small detail necessary to run an ACBL sanctioned

bridge club, shopped for snacks, and also played with new players as needed.

Word of mouth soon spread the good news of this wonderful place to play duplicate bridge. As new players began to sign up to play, they were encouraged to join ACBL if they were not already members. Many did so along with some who had previously been members in earlier years, but had dropped out for a variety of reasons. Since 2009, special activities/events are planned for each month (often involving interesting food treats and drawings for "Free Plays"). Many players celebrate their own special days at the Club such as birthdays, anniversaries, etc.

For the past few years, Jim Gardner (an ACBL certified teacher) has been presenting a series of lessons for beginners. Those completing the classes are given "Free Plays" to play in the regular games at The 750 Club and many of these players became ACBL members. Soon after 2009, Wayne "Doug" Beagle and Herb Zweig began directing at the Club and Terry also became a director. Mike Fierman and MJ Jubelirer later became regular directors at the Club. Much credit goes to all of these directors who maintain the friendly, encouraging atmosphere of the Club. Credit also goes to the many players who have become regular volunteers at the Club.

Bill and Terry have worked closely with their Unit, number 561. The U561 Membership Chair sends out friendly letters welcoming new members and reminder letters encouraging those whose dues are not current. At the Club's venue, the Unit hosts successful Sectionals, a festive Holiday Bridge/Dinner party each December, an annual Awards luncheon/bridge event for those U561 ACBL members who have received Mini-McKenney and Ace of Clubs awards in the previous year, and two other luncheon/bridge events.

All of these activities that have contributed to recruiting ACBL members have also added to the success of The 750 Club. During 2009, the Club averaged 34 tables of bridge/week and in 2018 the Club averaged 127.5 tables of bridge/week. Last year, the Club was 34th in North America and 1st in District 23. Many thanks, Bill and Terry, for providing such a wonderful place to hangout and have a pleasant day of bridge!

New Life Masters

District 23 salutes all those members who achieved the rank of Life Master this calendar year.



Virginia Brewer
Manhattan Beach



Jill Thesman
Los Angeles



John Vacca
Northridge



Lynn Danielson
Long Beach

Also promoted to Life Master, but alas, no picture is available:

Robert Johann, Redondo Beach

Eilene Gittleman, Los Angeles

Carol Levin, Encino

Shirley F. Knopf, Long Beach

Congratulations to you all for your skill and hard work.

District 23 Rank Changes May 2019

Junior Master

Mikie Alpert
 Priscilla C. Caillouette
 Angela H. Chen
 Toni Dasgupta
 Belle Frieman
 Milton P. Kaplan
 Lorraine L. Matza
 Bruce L. McDaniel
 Thomas McMullen
 Monte R. Smith

Club Master

Gillian Cooper
 Myrna M. Gordon
 Debbie Hamilton
 Bonnie L. Shok
 Ann Valdez
 Arthur D. Vatz
 John C. Walker

Sectional Master

Carolyn E. Byrnes
 Leslie J. Debeauvais
 Barry A. Ross
 Karen Sterling
 Tomoko Y. Stock
 Suzanne K. Wilcox

Regional Master

Anne M. Doublier
 Miles J. Rubin

NABC Master

Linda Lin
 Marcia Schulman
 Casey Stiers
 Herbert Wolas

Life Master

Ilene S. Berg
 Patricia L. Bessone
 Roberta J. Brown
 Barbara Federman
 Barbara Freeman

BronzeLife Master

Richard Bakovic
 Barbara Federman

Silver Life Master

Doreen K. Maes

Gold Life Master

Harry Wessels

Carolyn Taff & Marion Napier
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Around the Units in District 23



Long Beach by Jon Yinger

www.acblunit557.org
www.LongBeachBridge.com

May 26 Unit game. Overall results: 1st in A: Jackie Hess/John Melis, 2nd Henry Sheehan/Henry Crowder, 3rd Renee Alpert/Joan Kaye, 4th Eva Mroz/Penny Wentworhth, 5th Fern Dunbar/Rob Preece, 6th Judith Jones/Pamela Cole. In the C flight overalls Barbara and Alan Olschwang 1st, Mark Singer/Julie Deluccio 2nd, Janet Logan/Sue Boswell 3rd, Chie Wickam/Mike Nielsen 4th. In the 199er section Judy and Willy Grieb were 1st, Jeof Wyrick/Raymond Boncato 2nd, Pamel Hakins/Freda Main 3rd, Caryn and Glen Musicer 4th, Lyn Kraatz/Kathy Jervick 5th. Congratulations to all!

June 11 George Welsh farewell game: Overall results: 1st in A: Kay Tseng/John Melis, 2nd Bruce Horiguchi/Kim Wang, 3rd Bob Rubin/Harry Sachs, 4th Fred Willbanks/Bill McClean, 5th Rob Preece/Hank Dunbar, 6th Robert and Richard Bakovic, 7th Rich Wasser/Mike Welsh. In the B flight overalls Doreen Maes/Phyllis Greenstein were 3rd, Ernie and Ylia Ross 4th, Mike and Karen McKittrick 5th, Sherry Troeger/Carl Schiermeyer 6th. In the C flight overalls Janice Fisher/Barbara Wallace were 5th. And in the NLM game overalls Arlene Spatz/Dale Blessing were 1st, Elaine Dovgard/Vince Vilker 2nd, Mark Singer/Paul Chen 4th, Louise Sperr/Carol Ramseyer 5th. Congratulations to all!

70% GAMES May 16 through June 15: In the evening pro-am game June 3 (14 boards) Kay Tseng/Morgan Elsa had 73.33% and Steve Rowe/Jan Klein had 70.83%. In the open game June 6 Keith Hafen/Jackie Hess had 69.83%. In the evening pro-am game Jun10 (11 boards) John Melis/Freda Otto had 73.38%. In NLM games June 12 John Benson/John Kiemer had 75%, and June 13 Henry Lee/Kam Wong had 72.22%. Congratulations to all six pairs!

BIG MASTER POINT AWARDS May 16 through June 15: In the Unit Team Game May 19 the team of Wayne Rapp, Linda Renkus, Bill Clark, Bill Skupen was first, each winning 2.68mp. In open games: May 24 Rich Wasser/Jon Yinger won 4.23mp for 1st, Marcie Evans/Betty McClellan 3.17mp for 2nd. May 27 Pat Henderson/Joe Caserma won 3.65mp for 1st. May 29 Kiyoo Nagaishi/Wayne Rapp won 3.50mp for 1st. May 30 Kay Tseng/Bill McClean won 3.35mp for 1st. June 7 John and Jo Melis won 5.06mp for 1st, Mark Tang/Kiyoo Nagaishi 3.80mp for 2nd. June 8 Colleen Gardner/John Melis won 4.13mp for 1st, Walt Schafer/Wenjia Yan 3.10mp for 2nd. June 11 Kay Tseng/John Melis won 7.31mp for 1st, Bruce Horiguchi/Kim Wang 5.48mp for 2nd, Harry Sachs/Bob Rubin 3.08mp for 3rd. And June 13 John Melis/Jane Reid won 4.50mp for 1st, Jackie Hess/Cory Hand 3.38mp for 2nd. Congratulations to all!

NEW CLUB MEMBER: Margaret Faux. Welcome to the club!

STATUS CHANGES: New Club Master: William Cary. New Regional Masters: Ardis Lane, Barbara Wallace. New Advanced NABC Master: John Hagman. New Silver Life Masters: Bill Brooks, Nancy Conger. New Sapphire Life Master: Louis Shen. Congratulations to you all!

GET WELL: Phyllis Parker, Christine Frumen, Gabrielle Sills, JeanMatz

UP-COMING EVENTS AT THE CLUB:

June 26, 28 North American Pairs 12:30pm and 7pm: Extra points, \$11 card fee
June 29 North American Pairs 12:30pm: Extra points, \$11 card fee
July 8 ACBL-wide Instant Matchpoint Game: Extra points, \$12 card fee
July 9-14 District 23 STaC: Silver points, \$11 card fee
July 16 12:30pm, 17 12:30pm and 7pm: North American Pairs: Extra points, \$11 card fee
July 21 Team Game 12:30pm
July 22 Birthday Monday 12:30pm. Play for \$5 on your July birthday
July 28 Unit Game 12.30pm. \$8 card fee, dessert served
July 29 North American Pairs 12:30pm: Extra points, \$11 card fee

**NEWS FROM LEISURE WORLD
BRIDGE CLUBS
Judy Carter-Johnson**

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP--Clubhouse #1

May 17: Jeanette Estill/Marilyn McClintock 1 in A. Ernie Ross/Roy Tomooka 2 in A, 1 in B. Louise Seifert/Stam Johnson 3 in A, 2 in B, 1 in C. Judith Jones/Al Appel 4 in A. Sally Fenton/Ellen Goodwin 5 in A, 3 in B, 2 in C. Joyce Basch/Dorothy Favre 6 in A, 4 in B. Patricia and Robert Adams 5 in B. Emma Trepinski/Winifred Warga 6 in B.

“EIGHT IS ENOUGH” SWISS TEAM GAME—Clubhouse #3 May 20: Dorothy Favre, George Koehm, Joan and Ted Wieber 1 in A, 1 in B. Bettyanne Houts, Shirley Knopf, Chie Wickham, Alan Olschwang 2 in A, 2 in B, 1 in C. Paul Chen, Bill Linskey, Larry Slutsky, Ron Yaffee 3 in B. Robert and Patricia Adam, Audrey Healy and Bill Power 4 in B, 3 in C. Judith Jones, Emma Trepinski, Miranda and Anthony Reddy 5/6 in B, 4/5 in C. Sharon Beran, Jane Gibbons, Barbara Vann and Gene Yaffee 5/6 in B, 4/5 in C

UNIT RATED GAME—Clubhouse #3 June 10: Jeanette Estill/Gary Paugh 1 in A. Judith Jones/Al Appel 2 in A. Sibyl Smith/Rob Preece 3 in A. Diane Starbuck/Howard Small 4 in A, 1 in B. Jane Gibbons/Ellen Kice 5 in A, 2 in B, 1 in C. Kar Yee Nelson/Mark Singer 6 in A, 3 in B, 2 in C. Chie Wickham/Alan Olschwang 4 in B. Lynn Danielson/Shirley Knopf 5 in B. Priscilla and Glynn Sisson 6 in B, 3 in C. Gene and Ron Yaffee 4 in C.

Any news for next month's column, please email me @ jcj90740@gmail.com. Results of all Leisure World games are posted on www.acblunit557.org



Pomona –
Covina
by Tom Lill
www.acblunit551.org

Unit Game: Saturday July 20, 11:00 a.m., Glendora
Individual: Saturday, July 13, 9:30 a.m., Claremont

Yes, the Individual game is delayed a week this month. There's some sort of tournament going on in Long Beach that week ...

Because July 4 falls on a Thursday this year, the La Fetra center will be closed on that day, so there won't be a game that evening. Why not consider trucking down to Long Beach to play in the Bridge Week Regional, instead?

The top finisher in the June Individual was Clint Lew, breaking Linda Tessier's win streak. Gino Barbieri was second, Linda Stuart third, and Don Logsdon tied with Yours Truly for fourth.

The June Unit game was something of a runaway, with Richard Patterson – Roger Boyar outdistancing the field with a 66.2% game. It seems the rest of the field insisted on knocking each other out of contention – there was a log jam around the 55% mark. In second we find Bill Papa – Vic Sartor tied with Kiran Kumar – Avice Osmundson and Gerard Geremia – Amr Elghamry. Rounding out the top finishers we find Hanan Mogharbel – Linda Stuart.

Our Longest Day event was modestly successful. Turnout was perhaps a bit low, but the attendees seemed to have a good time. Bill Papa – Vic Sartor outdistanced the field in the morning session, while Penny and Gino Barbieri squeaked by in the afternoon; that event was still a tie at the top with ONE score to post! Kurt Trieselmann won the split-the-pot raffle. Special thanks to all the contributors to this worthy cause.

Get well wishes are in order. You will have noted that Clint Lew is out of rehab from his Mardi Gras adventure and follow up; but these things come in threes. Linda Tessier suffered a bad fall (wait, there's such a thing as a *good* fall?) and broke her right arm. Not to be outdone, and proving once again that no good deed goes unpunished, Penny Barbieri tripped over the dog she was dog-sitting, and broke a toe.

We are both happy and sad for Richard Patterson. He had to be taken to the hospital during a regular club game – no, not for bad play. After all the test results were in, it seems Richard is suffering from a brain tumor. He's out of the hospital and back to bridge, but the long term prognosis is uncertain. However, we *do* know he will be moving away – all the way to Olympia, Washington – on or about the 10th of this month. So come on down to the club and give Richard your best wishes.

HELP WANTED: both your Unit, and the La Fetra club, would like to have an alternate Director / Club Manager. While the incumbent (ahem) does an adequate job, he sometimes must be away. Both jobs pay – a bit, you won't get rich though. Anyone interested? We offer on-the-job training, and all the complaints you can eat. Contact any Unit board member for more information.

This month, the games were quite competitive. No huge scores to report, and only two pairs managed to reach the magic 65% mark. Fredy and Lulu Minter topped the list at 66.67%, and Chuck Lohr – David Ochroch were just behind at 66.0%. Others who found themselves looking back at the rest of the field: Roger Boyar, Herb Stampfl, Bill Papa, Vic Sartor, Richard Patterson, Jane Carrigan, Linda Stuart, Steve Mancini, Joe Unis, Clint Lew, Penny Barbieri, Gino Barbieri, Don Logsdon, and Yours Truly.

39 players won a total of 78.9 masterpoints in games within the Unit. The top 5 masterpoint earners in June were Vic Sartor (6.54), Bill Papa (5.01), Clint Lew (4.98), Linda Stuart (4.91), and Hanan Mogharbel (4.88).

No promotions to report *again* this month. Well, a lot of our members don't go to tournaments much. Wait until next month! We should have some Bridge week results to report, not to mention the nearby (well, relatively) NABC.

For our hand of the month, we switch from the Laurel & Hardy School of Bridge, to Nightmare on Elm Street. It's matchpoints, both vulnerable. South deals and passes, and you, West, find yourself holding

♠ K8 ♥ K ♦ KQ1087652 ♣ 93.

Well? It's too good for 4♦ (you don't want to miss out on a possible 3NT), and not really good enough for 1♦.

At one other table, this hand opened 3♦. North called 3♠ (no surprise), and East came with 4♣! Well, you are fairly disciplined, are you not? You preempted so you don't bid again unless forced. It goes all pass, and partner, holding ♣ AQJT764 and ♦A, goes two down, -200. A disaster? Not at all! North-South are stone cold for 5♠, and will make 6♠ if declarer peeks and drops your ♥K offside. South took a rather timid view of his hand, holding 9 HCP and 4 spades. At the other tables, N-S recorded 650 in their spade contract, or 800 when E-W sacrificed in one minor or the other.

Quote for the month: "An optimist sees the glass as half full. A pessimist sees it as half empty. I see it as too large.." (George Carlin)



Santa Clarita-Antelope Valley by Beth Morrin

Worldwide Bridge Contest Results:

Joshua Tree Bridge Club, Friday June 7th:

1 st 58.33%	Carol Reukauf – Paul Reukauf
2 nd 55.56%	Sharry Vida – Henry Roediger
3 rd 52.08%	Rosalee McEntyre – Kay Aiken
4 th 50.00%	Bill Brodek – Paula Olivares

Final results are posted on ecatsbridge.com

Longest Day Charity Bridge Games:

Friendly Bridge Club, Monday Afternoon, June 17th:

North-South

1 st 59.17%	Irwin Novick – George MacDonald
2 nd 58.13%	Roy Ladd – Bert Stock
3 rd 56.04%	Fran Franklin – Esin Parikh

East-West

1 st 69.09%	Bob McBloom – Bill Brodek
2 nd 66.59%	Kathy Flynn – Ruth Baker
3 rd 52.73%	Carol Trenda – Gary Trenda

Joshua Tree Bridge Club, Friday Afternoon, June 21st:

1 st 67.13%	Ruth Baker – Kathy Swaine
2 nd 56.02%	David White – Pat Larin
3 rd 55.56%	George MacDonald – Carol Ashbacher
4 th 55.09%	Sharry Vida – Henry Roediger

Change of Address for the Joshua Tree Bridge Club:

2747 West Avenue L, Lancaster, CA 93536
Phone: 661-285-1779 or 760-505-3491

Change of Address for Friendly Bridge Club:

27180 Golden Valley Road, Santa Clarita
Phone: 661-755-8543

Change of Address for Valencia Bridge Studio (Tuesday Evening game):

Every Tuesday evening except the second Tuesday of the month

Friendly Valley Golf Lounge
19345 Avenue of the Oaks (enter Friendly Valley Parkway)
Santa Clarita

Email Kathy for reservations:
kathyand1999@gmail.com

Upcoming Events:

Instant Matchpoint Game, Monday, July 8th, 12:30 PM at the NEW Senior Center in Santa Clarita.

District 22-23 STaC games: Thursday, July 11th at 10:00 AM Castaic; Friday, July 12th at 12:30 at Joshua Tree Bridge Club and Sunday, July 14th at 12:30 at Joshua Tree.

This year's Magic Mountain Sectional will be held on September 21st and 22nd at the Friendly Valley Auditorium in Santa Clarita. For more information, contact Gay Gipson (gegipson@gmail.com) or Roy Ladd (royr.ladd@gmail.com).



San Fernando Valley by Linda Silvey

Results of the Carol Lang Memorial Game

The annual Carol Lang Memorial Game was held on Friday, June 7, at The 750 Club. This was in celebration of the 13th Anniversary of The 750 Club that was established in 2006 by the late Carol Lang and her husband, Mike. Current Club owners, Bill and Terry Morton, provided a delicious catered "Taco Truck" lunch and desserts. There were twenty-four tables of bridge, ably directed by Doug Beagle.

The overall winners were the EW pair of R. Gasway – A.D. Shah with a 64.76% game. Their names will be engraved on the Carol Lang Memorial plaque and they each received a certificate of achievement. Other winners were: NS – William Morton – John Tickner 63.70%, Michael Klemens – Nancy Klemens 58.35%, Sharyn Miller – Ravnesh

Amar 58.29%, Barbara Dickson – Coral Goldsmith 57.38%, and Jeanne Sherwin – Jean Jolin 56.54%; EW – Rochelle Popowitz – Leonard Popowitz 60.00%, Shoshana – Blumenfeld – Ray Primus 58.97%, John Van Egmond – Dwight Hunt 57.05%, and James Gardner – Jerry Rose 56.84%.

September 21: Unit 561 "Fall Festival" Luncheon/Game

Unit 561 will host a "Fall Festival" Luncheon and Game on Saturday, September 21, at The 750 Club, 5700 Rudnick Ave, Woodland Hills. A catered lunch will be provided and served buffet style at 12noon, followed by an Open, Stratified game at 1 p.m. This is a special, free luncheon and game honoring all duplicate bridge players. Reservations will be required. In September, a sign-up sheet will be available at The 750 Club and email instructions for making reservations will appear in the September newsletter article.

Special Congratulations

Recent Life Master Accomplishments by Unit 561 players were: Eileen Gittleman and John Vacca (Life Master); Eileen Gittleman (Bronze); Phillip Calloway (Silver – 1,000); Thomas Shudic (Ruby – 1,500); Dwight Hunt (Gold – 2,500); Craig Kavin (Emerald – 7,500).

June Top Ten Masterpoints at The 750 Club were Ray Primus 9.17, Susan Raphael 8.95, Dwight Hunt 8.54, Ronald Malkin 7.94, Michael Klemens 7.75, Jerry Goodman 6.32, Gary Baxley 6.31, Sharyn Miller 6.00, Vera Mandell 5.79, John Van Egmond 5.44.

July 16: Braemar Dinner/Bridge Night

The next Braemar Dinner/Bridge Night will be held Tuesday, July 16. Dinner (which will be a barbecue) is \$20 per person and starts at 6 p.m. and the bridge is \$5 per person and begins at 7 p.m. This is an ACBL sanctioned game and the first place NS and EW winners will receive coupons for Braemar's Wednesday night "Taste of Tuscany" dinner. For reservations and/or partnerships contact Nancy Klemens at nrklemens@aol.com or (818) 609-1071.

July and August Events at The 750 Club

During the weeks of July 1 – 12, all The 750 Club games will be held in the Family Center since the Church will be using the usual bridge room for their Vacation Bible School. The Family Center is the A-frame building on Rudnick Ave., just north of the

Church. The 750 Club will be open on Thursday, July 4 (Independence Day) for the 11 a.m. game only. Expect fireworks at the bridge table!

North American Pairs (NAP) games will be held at all game sessions during the weeks of July 22 – 26 and August 5 – 9. Bridge sessions are at 11 a.m. Monday – Friday and at 7 p.m. Monday and Thursday nights. Card fees will be \$11.00 and half red and half black points will be awarded to the winners. For reservations contact thmorton@att.net.

Calendar

Monday, July 1 – Friday, July 12, All 750 Club games will be held in the Family Center on Rudnick Ave. See details above.

Thursday, July 4, The 750 Club will hold a day game only (Independence Day).

Tuesday, July 16, Braemar Dinner/Bridge Night starting at 6 p.m. See details above.

Monday, July 22 – Friday, July 26, North American Pairs Games will be held at The 750 Club. See details above.

Monday, August 5 – Friday, August 9, North American Pairs Games will be held at The 750 Club. See details above.

Saturday, September 21, “Fall Festival” U561 luncheon and bridge game will be held at The 750 Club. See details above.



West LA by Robert Shore

The Start of Something Big

We held our first traditional Sectional tournament in two years and our first ever at our new site, the Culver City Elks Club. The site seemed popular with players and most of our events were full or nearly so. The Unit even managed to turn a profit, which will help us with future events. We're looking forward to this being the start of a long relationship.

A number of our players turned in strong performances at the Sectional. Mary Williams and Sylvia Christensen started things off by winning the

Saturday morning 199er Pairs event. Randy Hammock's win in the Saturday afternoon Open Pairs helped propel him to the lead in the race for the Jill Meyers Trophy. Pete Benjamin won the Sunday Open Pairs, while John Ramos's team won the Sunday A/X Swiss. The team of Jim Brunet, Alex Wiles, Nancy Heck, and Aton Arbisser won the Sunday B/C/D Swiss, putting Aton on top of the race for the Mary Jane Farrell Trophy. Last month's only other tournament performance of note was turned in by your Humble Scribe, who led all master point winners at the Garden Grove Sectional.

Don't Miss Out!

Qualifying has begun for the North American Pairs event, which will conclude at the Spring Nationals in Columbus, Ohio, in March 2020. The first step is picking up a “Q” at a club qualifying game anywhere in the ACBL. Those games will be available through the end of August, and they're worth *a lot* of points. And the top pairs in all three flights in the District will get nice checks from ACBL to help defray the expenses of attending the Nationals.

And then of course, there's one of my favorite summer traditions, Bridge Week. Our annual regional starts July 1 at the Long Beach Hilton with our annual Pro-Am game. Many experienced local players donate their time at this game to play with less experienced players. I've played the event myself in years past (when work permits), and it's always a lot of fun for both groups of players. Come support our sole remaining regional tournament to help the District regain the ability to offer more of these great events.

Memories

Like many of us, I took a hiatus from the game when I was first getting my career started. In my case I was away from the game for seven years before I returned. When I decided to dip my toes back into the duplicate bridge waters, I found the Tuesday night game at Barrington known as Cyma's game. Cyma's game was a great reintroduction to our community, because it featured many new and prominent players alongside names and faces I recognized from my previous tenure.

Not the least of those faces was Cyma herself. Cyma was a regular at the Wild Whist and the old Culver City club where I played most of my bridge when I was in grad school. She and her husband Jerry were known to pretty much everyone and she was a welcome sight. Cyma closed her game about three or four years ago to enter a well-earned retirement not

long after Jerry passed away. Word has now reached this reporter that (in the words of her family) “Cyma and Jerry are together again.” She will be missed. Our condolences to Cyma’s friends and family.

Right and Wrong

I’ll present a couple of hands in this month’s column, one I got wrong for a top-to-bottom swing, and one my opponent got very, very right for a well-earned cold top.

At matchpoints, after opening 2N and taking an aggressive view in the auction, I found myself in 6♠ with the following combination against the lead of the heart 6:

Dummy: ♠ J98752 ♥ 97 ♦ AQ107 ♣ 10
Declarer: ♠ A10 ♥ AKJ2 ♦ J83 ♣ AKQ2.

Well, it wasn’t a good slam, but I’ve been in worse and the opening lead certainly didn’t hurt. The heart 9 forced the Q and I won the first trick. I took one club and then ruffed a club to the board so I could take the required spade finesse, losing to the Q. LHO sent back a diamond, and I decided to forego the hook because I had enough pitches if I could cash them all. I led a trump to my bare A and was delighted that RHO played the K, so I was still in the ball game. The question now was what order to cash my winners. My remaining two heart winners lived, but LHO ruffed my last club winner with her small trump. I overruffed but had to concede the last trick to her diamond K.

Where was my mistake? I should have preserved communication with my hand by cashing the clubs first. Now, when LHO ruffs the last club, I can overruff and run the clubs, keeping a heart and the Qx of diamonds on the table while keeping AJx of hearts in my hand. LHO was dealt four hearts and the diamond K, so she’d have been squeezed in the red suits and I’d have scored up my slam.

The second hand, also at matchpoints, allowed an opponent to shine. White against red at matchpoints in second seat, after a pass on my right, I heard my opponents bid: 1♣-1♠, 1N-2♠, all pass. I led the heart J (which would prove to be a fatal mistake) from:

Dummy: ♠ Q ♥ AQ4 ♦ Q532 ♣ A10643
Me: ♠ J72 ♥ J107 ♦ KJ98 ♣ K95.

Declarer started well by winning the heart A, partner playing the 8. We play standard signals, so this told me two things. First, partner liked hearts. Second, Declarer had the 9. Declarer cashed the club

A and ruffed a club in her hand, then led a trump to the board’s Q and my partner’s A. Partner returned a trump which I won with the J.

Then I tried a surrounding play by leading the diamond J. That didn’t work very well because the board’s Q held. Declarer ruffed another club back to her hand, drew the last trump, then cashed the diamond A *and led her last trump*.

That play put me to a dilemma I didn’t solve. I threw my fourth diamond (as did dummy), but now when she led her last diamond, I had to break the frozen heart suit. Declarer ended up scoring the heart 9 for her 9th trick and a cold top. Well done, Andrew McNichol.

Around the Clubs

Last month at Barrington, 70% games were turned in by Pete Knee and Rob Perlsweig and Om Chokriwala and Bronia Jenkins. Club champions last month were Pam Wittes and Matthew Riklin and Anna Benatar and Jim Lopes.

Beverly Hills saw club championships taken by Maria Pendergast and Alan Schneider, Paul and Elizabeth Ryan, Farideh Sigari and Lou Papp, and your Humble Scribe and Bruce Altshuler. Racking up 70% games were Nancy Heck and Danny Kleinman as well as your Humble Scribe and Richie Weinberger.

Got news? Send it to me at
Bob78164@yahoo.com.

Problem Solvers' Panel

Moderator: John Jones

Panelists are Wafik Abdou, Mark Bartusek, Tim Lolli, Mike Shuster, and Jon Wittes.

<h1>1</h1> <p>IMPs N-S Vul</p>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
	1♥	pass	1♠	pass
	2♦	pass	3♦	pass
	???			
<p>You, South, hold: ♠AQ ♥K9865 ♦AQ86 ♣86</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>				

[The problems from this set are hands that were played on the East Coast. This problem involves a difficult third bid. 15 HCPs looks like significantly too much to pass without significant risk of missing game. Which game is best? 3NT, 4♠, and 5♦ and maybe even 4♥ are all possibilities. Most of the panelists try 3♠, although it normally shows three card support. I was surprised at the number of panelists who said they would or might open 1NT (Bartusek mentioned it verbally, so every panelist except Wittes gave it some consideration). Despite the difficult third round bid we have encountered, I am of the opinion that opening 1NT with five hearts, four diamonds and a small doubleton is just unthinkable. You'll never get the distribution across and may have wrong-sided the contract.]

Lolli: 3NT. Hopefully partner can join in with some clubs. I wouldn't object to opening 1NT with this hand.

Shuster: 3♠. I expect partner to have a good diamond fit and about 10 - 11 HCP, often with a singleton heart.

That means that partner will nearly always show up with the ♣A or ♣K, so don't sweat the club control. If partner holds five spades and four diamonds, we will often belong in 4♠. If he holds five diamonds and four spades, then 5♠ will be our target. 3♠ seems the most natural continuation, catering to both contracts. By the way, I would have opened 1NT.

Abdou: 3♠. I'm end played into bidding it, although it normally shows 3 cards. However, nothing else is appealing. Why didn't I open 1NT?

Bartusek: 3♠. Probably doesn't guarantee three spades, since the obvious concern is a club stopper (a 5-2 spade fit might be the best spot).. Note that if I held 3=5=4=1 with extras, I would probably jump to 4♠ here.

Wittes: 3♠. I know this tends to show three spades, but if partner doesn't have a club stopper, the 5 - 2 spade fit might be our best chance at game. My two spades are probably as good as any three spades partner might expect from me.

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">2</h1> <p>IMPs N-S Vul</p>	<u>South</u> <u>West</u> <u>North</u> <u>East</u>
	<p>???</p> <p>You, South, hold: ♠AK8 ♥86 ♦A8 ♣AKQ1086</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>

[Nice hand, but Mark is correct that I should have asked the 2♣ bidders what their plan was.]

Bartusek: 2♣. This hand is much too strong to open 2NT, and 1♣ could easily miss a game. The posed problem should really have been what to rebid after opening 2♣. I play that a 3NT rebid shows a running minor with about nine tricks: If you go through Kokish and then bid 3NT, it shows a strong balanced hand (28-30) to break up the Kokish point range (2NT after Kokish being 25-27 or 31+). *[Mark's Kokish methods here are not expert standard, but I think his methods are a small improvement on what is more standard. I asked him to include his version].*

Lolli: 2♣. I have a good chance for nine tricks on this hand if partner has ♥JTxx without anything else. I wouldn't like 1♣ Pass Pass Pass.

Shuster: 2♣. I can make game opposite a balanced zero count, so any non-forcing opening is out. If we get to game and it doesn't make, such is life. However, I am not willing to miss game with this monster.

Wittes: 2♣. I have too many tricks in my own hand to consider any other alternative.

[The above panelists all thought the chance of being passed out in 1♣ was too significant to risk. By contrast, Wafik thinks 2♣ is too clumsy to easily handle a smooth auction. I tend to agree. Holding six clubs, the chance someone bids is pretty high. I'd open 1♣, and over a 1♦ or a 1♥ response, I'd jump shift into 2♣. If partner responds 1♠ I would reverse into 2♦ and then support spades. The 1♣ bid is not only lower, but it is a natural bid, so it is significantly ahead in describing the hand.]

Abdou: 1♣. This hand is too good and positionally wrong for 2NT, and too cumbersome for 2♣, unless you play control responses. The problem is on the next turn after partner responds! I'll bid a fake jump shift into 2♣, or a fake reverse into 2♦ over a spade response.

<h1 style="font-size: 48px; margin: 0;">3</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">Matchpoints N-S Vul</p>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
	1♠	double	redouble	1♦
	???			1NT
	You, South, hold: ♠A87642 ♥6 ♦AJ ♣KJ106 What call do you make?			

[What does the redouble mean? In my partnerships it normally would show Ax, Kx or Qx of partner's overcall. Regardless of what it means, are the backs of the cards all the same color? It certainly looks as if someone used a pinochle deck on this deal.]

Lolli: Pass. Partner is forced for one more bid, so I want to hear what he's about. If anyone is thinking this is a three card showing spade bid, I believe he/she is misguided.

Shuster: Double. Modern partnerships will have defined my partner's redouble. Lacking a special agreement, it shows values and desire to defend. I have extra values, so I'd like to encourage that game plan. If they wind up in a suit, we will destroy them with spade ruffs.

Wittes: 2♣. Even if partner has a reasonable hand with something like ♠Qx or ♠Jx, the texture of my spades could mean three trump losers in a spade

contract with the free 1NT bid in front of me (KJ10x or KQ10x for examples). If we have a game, 5♣ seems the more likely contract. If partner bids 2♠ over 2♣, I would not bid more than 3♠ despite the six card suit and good distribution.

Bartusek: 2♠. I play that partner's redouble specifically shows a doubleton spade with some values. Thus, 2♠ seems the spot to play which also stops LHO from bidding 2♦ or 2♥ (which could easily get raised by RHO). A 2♣ rebid doesn't interfere with LHO. Even if the redouble only showed something like honor doubleton of spades, 2♠ is probably the best tactical bid.

Abdou: 4♥/double. If redouble is support, I bid 4♥ as a self-splinter to clue partner in over the impending favorable sacrifice. Clearly 1NT is a joke. *[Quite likely!]* If redouble is power, I settle for a double for now. This is a 50 point deck?

<h1 style="font-size: 4em; margin: 0;">4</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">IMPs N-S Vul</p>	South	West	North	East
	2♥	5♣	1♠	2♣
	???		pass	pass
	You, South, hold: ♠K86 ♥AQ9865 ♦AQ6 ♣J			
What call do you make?				

[It's critical to ascertain whether pass is forcing on this auction. Does the 2/1 force us to double or bid on? I think the answer is yes unless we are non-vulnerable versus vulnerable opponents who bid game. I think that vulnerability and level are even more important than form of scoring. I would always have an invitational sequence create a force at these colors. Mike spoke eloquently on this debate, so he gets first crack.]

Shuster: 5NT. Much hinges on whether partner's pass is forcing. While a 2/1 in competition doesn't generate a game force, I believe it ought to create a force when the opponents bid to the five level. However, recent panels on Bridgewinners [bridgewinners.com] show that my view on this aspect of partnership bidding is not standard. Regardless, I have a positive hand for slam and the opponents are blasting away in my shortness. Whatever partner holds is working, so I think we rate to have slam. I'll try 5NT to try to get to the stronger major suit fit.

[Mark is clearly in the non-forcing camp.]

Bartusek: 5♠. Vulnerable at MPs I think 5♠ is a fairly good description of the hand. Obviously partner's pass

is non-forcing, so a 5♦ bid by me would be natural (not a cue bid). I don't think we'll get 5♣ enough to compensate for the vulnerable game. There is no way to make a slam try here.

[Jon's comment doesn't state specifically that he thinks pass is forcing, but it's clear he is in the "pass is forcing" camp].

Wittes: 6♣. Toughest problem in this set. Hopefully this implies some kind of spade fit, and we'll land in the best fit between spades and hearts. Preempts can be a bitch sometimes. LOL.

[Tim and Wafik discuss follow-ups by the passer, so they are also clearly in the "pass is forcing camp"].

Lolli: 5♠. This should be a very useful hand for partner, but just not quite enough to insist upon slam. If partner is kind enough to bid 6♣, I'll gladly bid 6♦ to probe for 7♥ or 7♠.

Abdou: 5NT pick a slam. A thoughtful partner would bid 6♣ with ♠AQ, ♥K and ♣A to allow me to bid a grand!

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">5</h1> <p>Matchpoints Both Vul.</p>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
		pass	1♣	pass
	1♠	pass	3NT	pass
	???			
<p>You, South, hold: ♠AK86532 ♥8 ♦A86 ♣86</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>				

[3NT differs significantly from 2NT in this auction. 2NT shows 18 to 19 HCP balanced. 3NT shows running (or almost running depending on partnership agreements) clubs, and frequently a singleton in partner's suit. 3NT has less HCP but more tricks than a 2NT bid would advertise. OK, the entire panel all knows what 3NT means, but where do we go from here? Is there a way to ask for aces? Do we insist on slam? Is it worth considering a grand?]

Lolli: 5♣. 4♣ is a slam try in clubs, so 5♣ is Super Gerber. *[I agree!]* Partner has seven solid clubs, so if he shows two aces, I'll bid the laydown 7♣.

Bartusek: 6♣. Partner should have solid clubs, red suit stoppers, and probably a stiff spade. I have no agreements with partners as to how I would ask for keycards here. Maybe 5♣ should be Super Gerber, with 4♣ forcing to game? *[That sounds right to me.]* Perhaps if I cue bid 4♦ and partner responded 4♥ I might be confident enough to blast 7♣?

Shuster: 4♣. I'm driving to 6♣, but want to bid key card along the way, in case we have a grand. The way

to do that is to set trump with 4♣ and then bid 4NT over partner's 4♥ cuebid. If partner tries 4NT over 4♣, then I'll give up on seven and just bid six. The heart ace and diamond king are enough for seven. Note that 6NT is safe opposite the ♥AK and no diamond king, so I'll be asking for specific kings and bidding seven myself if I find diamonds.

Abdou: 4♣. If partner has short spades, solid clubs and side stoppers as advertised, a club slam is odds on, and 4♣ will clue him in. I have a terrific hand with three quick tricks and a ruffing value. If he signs off in 4NT, I will have a difficult time not trying again, and will bid depending on the state of our game!

[Last word to the man who has played enough bridge to know that partner rarely produces the perfect hand.]

Wittes: 6♣. In a perfect world, partner should have a long running club suit, spade shortness and an ace or king in the other two suits. We could even be missing seven if partner has something like ♠x ♥Axx ♦Kx ♣AKQxxxx, but perfect hands seem to come up rarely.