



January 2026 Newsletter
Chicago Duplicate Bridge Club
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Happy New Year!

We hope you and yours had an enjoyable holiday season and are looking forward to 2026!

2025 was an eventful year of transition for Chicago Duplicate Bridge club, with well-attended beginner/intermediate lessons introduced by Les White and, especially, the move to our spacious new location at The Century. The move has been a big success in attracting returning and new players and increasing our overall attendance and revenue. Thanks to club President Dave Schroeder for his persistence in making the move happen after months of effort. Thanks to John Miller for all his hard work before and after the deal was done and taking responsibility for solving issues small and large, from having extra restroom keys made to leading the charge on fixing the heating situation (we're still working on that). Thanks also to all the other folks who helped with the move out of Dearborn Station and setting up our new quarters. Due to the efforts of many people to get us settled into our new space and even more opportunities to learn and play bridge in 2026, we're poised for an exciting new year!

Game Calendar

Wed., December 31 – New Year's Eve party and game at 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, January 1 – New Year's Day Open Game at 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 6 – Mentor/Mentee game at 6:30 p.m.

****Junior Fund Month for all games in January****

Mon, Wed, Thurs, Sat – Open Games at 12:00 pm F2F

Monday, Wednesday – Open Games at 6:30/6:45 pm on BBO

Tuesday, Thursday – Open Games at 6:30 pm F2F

Friday – 750/Non-Life Master Games at 12:00 pm F2F

Please note that there will be **no CDB afternoon game on Thursday, January 1 but the evening game is on** if we expect enough people to attend it. Please sign up for the evening game beforehand on BridgeWebs or by email at chicagoduplicatebridge@gmail.com.

Also, the game on Friday, January 2 will be an Open Game since The Clare will be closed and some of their players will be joining us at The Century. Open Games are a great learning opportunity for our Friday Advancers, who can get to know - and maybe even play against - more experienced players.

Staying in Touch with the Club

The best way to reach us is via email at chicagoduplicatebridge@gmail.com.

Also, please email David Schroeder at dave8459@yahoo.com about Tuesday evening games and use the BridgeWebs reservation/partner request website for ALL games (see link and instructions below).

Annual Members Meeting and Board Member Election

The CDB Annual Members' Meeting was held on December 9. Existing Board members Dave Schroeder, Matthew Dyer and John Miller were re-elected to serve additional two-year terms and Josh Zhao was newly elected to fill out the 9-member board (congratulations to all!). President Dave Schroeder gave a recap of our move to The Century and Treasurer Cory Perkers presented a summary of the club's financial status, which is very positive due to increased attendance/new players.

Internet/Social Media Coordinator Wanted!

The club is looking for someone with expertise in online communications to maintain our website and social media presence (X, Instagram, Facebook). If you have experience in this area and you're interested in supporting the club as a volunteer, contact Matthew Dyer at msdyer@gmail.com to learn more about the position.

Membership

If you haven't paid your \$60 annual membership dues yet, please do so now. Of course, the club would also welcome any additional contributions our players are inclined to make! The club is a non-profit entity owned by its members and, as a 501(c)3 organization (tax ID above), it's likely that any dues or contribution you make would be deductible on your federal income taxes (check with your tax advisor). Contributions and dues may be paid in cash or check given to the Director at any game or transmitted via Venmo. If you use Venmo, please let a Director know in person or send an email to chicagoduplicatebridge@gmail.com so we can make sure you get credit for your donation.

Bridge Lessons

Following up on Les White's successful beginner bridge lesson series, CDB is offering even more beginner, intermediate and advanced lessons! Each lesson takes place at 10:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning and lasts 90 minutes. Lessons cost \$15 each. After a brief break for lunch, all learners are encouraged to continue with Supervised Play from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. or join the Open Game that also starts at noon.

Saturday, January 3: 2/1 Advanced 2/1 (Two-over-One): Advantages of the system, bidding and responses. Taught by Dave Schroeder.

The following lesson topics are tentative; keep an eye out for more information:

Saturday, January 10: Defense Part 2: Taught by Mathew Dyer.

Saturday, January 17: Splinters: Taught by Matthew Dyer.

Saturday, January 24: TBD: Taught by Dave Schroeder.

Beginner lessons taught by Les White will resume in February.

Extra/Special Games

The club will hold a **New Year's Eve party and game** at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 31. Come for refreshments and bridge and join your fellow players/friends as we prepare to ring in 2026!

New Opportunities to Play Bridge at CDB

Beginning in January, the club is increasing your opportunities to play bridge with us. Beginning on Saturday, January 10, we're offering a **0-99er game** concurrent with the Open game at noon. The fee will be the usual \$15 for members. Also, on alternating Tuesday and Thursday evenings, we'll offer **Social Bridge** for any member who wants to bring a group of 4 players to take advantage of the club's facilities: the tables, bidding boxes, duplicate boards, hand records – and the free snacks, coffee and water available to all players. The cost is only \$5 per person.

Game Reservations

We strongly encourage you to make reservations for ALL bridge games. This will help the Directors plan their game for the potential number of tables, how many people need partners, etc. We welcome walk-ins and guarantee partnerships at all one-section games, but reservations are very helpful, especially if you'll need a partner, if you're running late or if there's a possibility that the game may not take place due to insufficient expected attendance.

Making reservations on BridgeWebs is very easy once you've done it once or twice! **Especially if you use the link below, which allows you to go straight to the calendar where you can make a reservation and/or request a partner.** You may need to enter your email address or ACBL number to log in:

https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwor/bw.cgi?club=chicagodbc&pid=display_month .

If you can't get the link to work, email us at chicagoduplicatebridge@gmail.com and we'll get you signed up.

If you'd rather start from the BridgeWebs home page, you can use the following procedure:

- 1) Select "Results" under "Upcoming Games" from the main menu on the left.
- 2) Select the game you want to attend. You may need to move the calendar to the following month.
- 3) If you need a partner, select "Partner Required."
- 4) Enter your name. When you leave the site, your request will be registered.
- 5) If you have a partner, select "Reservation Requested."
- 6) If you're asked for your name or ACBL number, enter it.
- 7) Insert your partner's name in the box that comes up.
- 8) Select the direction you prefer: N/S, E/W, or Any.
- 9) Select "Add reservation."

Solo Players

We guarantee partners for all one-section games, so if you feel like showing up for a game at the last minute, feel free to do so. On the rare occasion that we have a two-section game, please contact the director in advance and we'll do what we can to find you a partner.

But the **best way to find a partner**, or help us find one for you, is to use the BridgeWebs online reservation system described above to sign up ahead of time (the earlier, the better!). The sooner you let the Director know you're coming, the more likely you are to end up with a compatible partner.

Day Game Starting Time

To help people beat rush-hour traffic on their way home, **all afternoon games now begin at 12:00.** Please be on time! If you're stuck in traffic or otherwise running late, let your partner know and/or alert the Director. We'll do our best to accommodate you.

January 6th Mentor/Mentee Game

The new year will kick off with our popular Mentor/Mentee game, which is scheduled for **Tuesday, January 6 at 6:30 pm** at the club. Please use the online sign-up process to RSVP but **also email Dave Schroeder** at dave8459@yahoo.com to let him know you're planning to be there. It's important to **let Dave know as soon as possible** so he can ensure that we have enough mentors for all the mentees.

The Mentor/Mentee game is intended to be nurturing and instructive, and it's a great way to get to know and learn from some of the most experienced players at the club. We always hope to see lots of new/intermediate players there! But it's **important** that both mentees and mentors register with Dave in advance, by email or through the online system, so he can arrange to have enough mentors available and match up suitable partnerships.

Another reason to attend the Mentor/Mentee game is that Dave bakes treats like cookies or brownies - whatever strikes his fancy - for everyone to share, and they are always delicious!

Sunday Evanston Games

Sunday games will be held at Northwestern's Evanston campus location, but dates are TBD until the first week of January. Stayed tuned for more information soon.

Other Special Games

Junior Fund in January is one of the four months in which every game will award extra points, with \$1 going to supporting the US Juniors in international competition.

New/Intermediate Players: Improve Your Game!

CDB offers these opportunities for newer players to improve their bridge playing:

- ❖ Supervised Play
 - Friday at 10:00 a.m., followed by a game at 12:00 p.m.
- ❖ 0-99er game – **NEW beginning January 10!**
 - Saturday at 12:00 p.m.
- ❖ Mentor/Mentee game
 - 6:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday evening of the month, although occasionally that date changes – check the calendar in the newsletter or the CDB website to confirm.
- ❖ Brief lesson
 - Thursday prior to 12:00 p.m. game.

Supervised Play and Games. Join us at Supervised Play, which is a learning session on Friday mornings at CDB. You can ask experts and more experienced players for advice and, for example, occasionally we replay hands the way they should have been bid. We often have new players who come with little to no bridge experience. Don't be afraid that you are "too new" or even "too experienced" to benefit from joining the group. If you're looking for more chances to play in a limited-MP game, consider attending our Friday afternoon 750/NLM (Non-Life Master) game or, beginning January 10, the Saturday 0-99 game.

Supervised Play at 10:00 on Fridays is followed by a short break for lunch at 11:30 and a 750/NLM game at noon. This game now regularly has **4-6 full tables**, and there's a nice spirit of friendly competition among a fun and welcoming group. **You do NOT have to attend the Supervised Play to join the game or vice versa.**

The fees are \$5 for Supervised Play and the usual \$15 for the game. If you come to both, there is no charge for Supervised Play. The Friday sessions are a great way to practice and use what you've learned by playing bridge in a friendly environment. It's also a great way to meet potential partners, so don't be afraid to come without a partner arranged in advance. Please let us know if you'll be attending Supervised Play and/or the Friday game by signing up on BridgeWebs and/or contacting Barry Little in advance at barrylit@gmail.com.

Social Bridge. The best way to get better at bridge is to play, play, and play some more. If you want noncompetitive practice with real duplicate boards and hand records to check yourself against, get a group together and come play in the back room where we hold lessons. Beginning in January, we'll offer Social Bridge on alternating Tuesday and Thursday evenings as follows:

- ❖ Thursday, January 9
- ❖ Tuesday, January 13
- ❖ Thursday, January 22
- ❖ Tuesday, January 27

Kibitzing. "Kibitzing" always has been part of bridge. You get to peek over the shoulder of an experienced player, and - at the appropriate time - ask them brief and polite questions about their bidding or play of the hand. The etiquette is to approach a table and ask a player, "Would you mind a kibitzer?" Most players will not object, but not everyone is comfortable being watched. If the player declines, find someone else.

Most of the better players take it as a compliment if you choose to watch them. You'll get to see different bidding methods, thought processes and playing techniques. Many of them love being asked why they bid, played or defended a hand a certain way. Plus, you'll see that even experienced players sometimes make stupid mistakes.

Kibitzers may watch one player for several hands but should plan on kibitzing with a few players over the course of a game to see a variety of bidding and playing styles. You'll soon figure out which players are most welcoming to kibitzers and eager to share their knowledge with them.

Important: Kibitzers are expected to sit where they can see **only one hand** and need to pretend to be invisible and maintain a poker face. **Do not react to the bidding or play** by making comments or facial expressions or you will be asked to leave.

Try kibitzing! - you'll learn a lot and meet some smart, interesting and nice people.

Restroom Keys

There are public restrooms a few steps away from our club. A key is required to enter. You can find the keys on chains on a table near the club entrance. Walk out of the club, turn right, and walk to the end of the hall (girls on the left, boys straight ahead). Please remember to bring the key with you when you leave the restroom and replace it on the table when you return.

Please note that the stall in the Men's restroom is currently out of commission. The closest alternative stall is one level up on the 3rd floor and it's always unlocked. You can take the elevator or the (somewhat tortuous) stairs) to get there.

Don't Want to Do Stairs?

As we're getting used to our new space, we're figuring out the details that help make it better fit our players' needs. Some players have commented that if you park on Level 2 there are 7 steps to negotiate to get to and from the club. Here are three ways you can avoid stairs if they are a problem for you: (1) Have someone drop you off and pick you up out front. (2) Park in one of the handicapped spaces if you have a permit. They are on the right when you pull into the garage. (3) Park on Level 6 and take the elevator or ramps down to Level 2. There are NO stairs needed to get from Level 6 in the garage to Level 2 in the building.

Upcoming Tournaments

There are several tournaments scheduled in Illinois and surrounding states for January and February 2026. The list below is for Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa and Missouri, but if you have an itch for tournament play farther afield, check the additional listings at:

<http://tournaments.acbl.org/>.

- ❖ Milwaukee Holiday Sectional
 - January 6-9, Glendale WI
- ❖ Hawkeye Holiday Special
 - January 9-10, Urbandale IA
- ❖ St. Louis Winter NLM Regional / Sectional
 - January 16-18, Olivette MO
- ❖ **Winterfest Sectional**
 - January 30-February 1, Chicago IL – see more information below
- ❖ Valentine's Sectional
 - February 4-7, Glendale WI
- ❖ Indianapolis Crossroads of America Regional
 - February 9-15, Indianapolis IN
- ❖ Metro East Swiss Sectional
 - February 14-15, Edwardsville IL
- ❖ 2026 Spring NABC
 - February 25 – March 8, St. Louis MO

The WinterFest Sectional in Chicago is an early 2026 Highlight!

This Chicago Sectional tournament, which takes place during January 30 – February 1, is reachable by public transportation and features an Irish pub! Please join us for a weekend of great bridge at all levels and/or for the annual dinner to celebrate service by leaders in the local bridge community (our own Barry Little was recognized last year). The new (to us) location for the tournament is the Irish American Heritage Center at 4628 N. Knox Ave.

Sectionals provide a wider range of competition than you can get at our local club and are a great way to improve your bridge skills and meet new people.

Here's the link to the tournament website:

<https://tournaments.acbl.org/schedule.php?sanction=2602334>

This three-day Sectional offers an opportunity to take home silver points and participate in a range of exciting events, with stratified pairs/teams, Swiss teams and 750 games.

Immediately after the Saturday game, the Chicago Contract Bridge Association (CCBA) will host its annual dinner meeting. Join the CCBA Board for pizza and salad, a review of 2025, the election of new Board members and awards presentations. Current CCBA President Loring Knoblauch, who is stepping down from that post in 2026, will be saluted for his tireless service to Chicago and Midwest bridge. Five Board members will be elected; three are current Board members and two are being elected for the first time. The cost for dinner is \$15; **reservations are required**. Their contact info is:

ccba@bridgeinchicago.com.

The Irish American Heritage Center is located just east of the junction of the Kennedy and Edens expressways near the Wilson Ave. exit, making it convenient for most players. There is ample parking and the building is handicapped-accessible. A food guide featuring nearby eateries with 10 different ethnic cuisines will be available.

The IAHC is home to the popular Fifth Province Pub which serves Irish food and drink. The Pub usually opens at 6 p.m. but may be open that Saturday afternoon, which would provide a convenient spot for lunch during the Swiss teams game. Reservations info: please write or call Fran Lyne, 6538 N. Greenview Ave., Apt. 2, Chicago, IL 60626, 773.972.5014, Thelynes@21stcentury.rsn.

Looking a little farther ahead, we'll have the rare opportunity to attend **two NABCs** within driving distance of Chicago in 2026. These are wonderful tournaments and worth the time and expense to get to and stay there. Please consider attending them! - they offer opportunities for gold points and exciting competition at all skill levels.

St Louis is hosting the spring NABC from Feb 25 -Mar 8: <https://www.acbl.org/stlouis/>

Minneapolis is hosting the summer NABC from July 9-19: <https://www.acbl.org/minneapolis/>

We hope to see many of our club members at these upcoming tournaments!

Rank Advancers

Congratulations to those who advanced in ACBL rank, as reflected in the latest data release from ACBL:

- ❖ Junior Master: Sean Edwards, Dane Meade, Hannah Sheats
- ❖ Club Master: Gayle Arlen
- ❖ Sectional Master: David Brown, Luca Crone
- ❖ Regional Master: Julian Oettinger
- ❖ NABC Master: Zinnia Meyer, Susan Salek

Special congratulations to Josh Zhao for being certified as a Director!

Player Achievements

Congratulations to these players for success in face-to-face games held during December at the club!

65.00% - 69.99%		
12/9 E	George Clark, Rahul Garga	65.28%
12/17	Lynn Gryll, Carole Green	65.18%
12/18	Les White, Matthew Dyer	65%
70.00%+		
12/20	Cory Perkers, Matthew Dyer	71.00%
12/20	Josh Zhao, Frances Margolin	70.00%

Congratulations to these players for their achievements at the November 27 – December 7 NABC tournament in San Francisco:

<u>NABC</u>		
Nail Life Master Pairs	Final - 14	Eldad "Gino" Ginossar
	Final – 21	Aleks Lishkov
	Final - 28	Ariel Smid & Sandra Sarnow (his mom)
Soloway	D1-35	Dan Zagorin & Jonathan Yue
Mitchell Open BAM	Final - 10	Dan Zagorin
	D1-31	Gino
Blue Ribbon Pairs	Final - 12	Gino
	Final - 26	Aleks Lishkov
6K Blue Ribbon Pairs	Final - 19	Nic Hristea & Mark "Polish Club" Pinkowski
NABC+ Mixed	D1-18	Ariel Smid & Sandra Sarnow
Reisinger	D-3	Dan Zagorin
NABC 6K Pairs	D1-20	Nic Hristea & Mark Pinkowski

<u>REGIONAL</u>		
1st Fri Open Pairs	10A,5B, 4C	Luca Crone
Fri BRR B1	2A	Luca Crone
Sat BRR B1	1A	Luca Crone
Sat BRR B1	8B	Ben Fisk & Bob Fisk (his dad)
Tue Eve Side Pairs	2C	Linda Martin
2nd Sat Open Pairs	2X	Ben Fisk & Bob Fisk
2nd Sat Fast Pairs	5A	Aleks Lishkov
Fri Eve Side Pairs	3B	Mark Pinkowski

That's it for now. If you have any CDB-related news or photos you'd like to share in the next newsletter, please send them to chicagoduplicatebridge@gmail.com and/or patmiller@me.com.

Happy New Year!