

The Kibitzer

Newsletter for Duplicate Bridge Players

ACBL Unit 360

January 2026



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This President's Message is a recognition of the Unit 360 teachers and learners. It is to acknowledge the time and effort people within our unit spend to teach and to become better bridge players.

Chief among our teachers is John Dukellis. John has taught and continues to teach beginning and intermediate classes both at the Bridge Center and at the Senior Center. He currently is teaching three classes at the Senior Center, a basic beginner class, an advance beginner class and an intermediate class. In the fall he taught an intermediate class on the play the hand at the Bridge Center. These are well planned and well taught classes.

Additionally, John and Jay Francis have a Thursday morning class for new players involving some instructional material and some supervised play the hand time.

Other instruction within our unit involves the Mentor program overseen by Dave Loring, the Ambassador program created and run by Claudia Busch Lee and other long-time teachers and tutors such as Ann Parker, Fran Pilch, Bob Somppi, Shirley Scott and Ed Hill in the Pueblo club.

Our learners also need recognition. Duplicate bridge is a complicated game challenging even the best players. The individuals who put in the effort to improve their game and to improve the quality of play in our unit need to be acknowledged. These are the people who take classes, who read the monthly Bridge Bulletin, who review the hand records and who in general work at their game.

Achievements:

Junior Master (5 pts):

Patricia Rodriguez

Club Master (20 pts):

Sectional Master (50 pts):

Regional Master (100 pts):

Pat Atkinson

Sandra Brightwell

Polly Parent

Jean Pettibone

Ron Bliss

NABC Master (200 pts):

Advanced NABC Master (300):

Claudia Busch Lee

Life Master: (500 pts):

Kay Brock

Steve Lebel

Ruby Life Master (1500 pts):

Silver Life Master (1000 pts):

Jodi Wyss

Nancy Teel

Gold Life Master (2500 pts):

Dorothy Hyden

Sapphire Life Master (3500):

COLORADO SPRINGS Winter Sectional
Thurs., Feb. 19 – Sun., Feb. 22, 2026
UNIT 360 BRIDGE CENTER ** RESERVATIONS
REQUIRED**

901 N. 17th Street Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Last minutes entries allowed if space is available 719-634-7250

www.ColoradoSpringsBridge.com

SCHEDULE

Thursday 6:30 pm Stratified Swiss Teams

Friday (lunch on your own: drinks & snacks provided)

10 am & 3 pm Two Session Stratified Open Pairs

10 am & 3 pm Stratified 299er Pairs, Single Sessions

(Single sessions allowed)

Saturday (lunch on your own: drinks & snacks provided)

10 am & 3 pm Two Session Stratified Open Pairs

10 am & 3 pm Stratified 299er Pairs, Single Sessions

(Single sessions allowed)

Sunday - (catered lunch provided)

10 am and 3:00 pm TBD Bracketed Teams

(Bracketed by average masterpoints – brackets
may be handicapped depending upon entries)

Stratifications: **Open:** A: Open, B: 0 – 3000, C: 0 – 1000

299ers: D: 0 – 300, E: 0 – 150, F: 0 – 50

PAYMENT BY CREDIT CARD ONLY

ACBL Members: \$15.00 per session

Unpaid ACBL Member: \$19.00 per session

Swiss Team: \$150.00/Team

ACBL Members with 0-5 Masterpoints: Play FREE

Director in Charge: John Worley

Tournament Chair and Partnership Chair:

Bonnie Bagley bon1bon@comcast.net 719 593-0205

Assistant Tournament Chair:

Mark Bishop bish40love@aol.com 719 238-7730

Reservation Chair:

Jeff Rapp jeffrapp@comcast.net 719 237-5010

Sanction Number
2602343



How to Criticize your Bridge Partner, Part 2 by Fran Pilch

A couple of Kibitzers ago, I presented “How to Criticize Your Partner, Part 1.” I promised then to provide a follow-up article that included tips on how to mask your Surprise? Annoyance? Astonishment? when your partner passes your 2C opening bid, or when (as happened to my esteemed partner last week), you fail to recognize a ‘new minor force’ bid, leaving him in a 3/1 split.

But before I treat you to coping suggestions, let me begin with **A Cautionary Tale.** The game of Bridge tests not only our memories and resilience (for we all make SO many mistakes), it also tests our ability to cope with partner misbehavior. I’m not talking here about missing that 2C opener or a Texas Transfer – I’m talking about when a relationship becomes mightily strained by one partner loudly chastising another; and in extreme circumstances, calling the partner ugly, demeaning names. Yes, it happens. And it can result in**MURDER.**

No, you say. That could never happen in a bridge scenario. Think again!

Beautiful wife Myrtle and her husband John Bennett were playing bridge with their neighbors, the Holmans, in 1929. The Bennetts were losing, and John apparently made a poor bid. Myrtle called him "A bum bridge player!" John was having none of it, slapped her, and said he was leaving. Myrtle grabbed his gun and shot him dead! Shot him four times! At the trial, beautiful Myrtle cried copiously, and her attorney argued that it was accidental! Believe it or not, the jury acquitted her.

So with that true bit of history in mind, let us return to "**Think Again**," situations. These are instances that cry out for you to criticize your partner! In **Think Again** cases, I urge you to curb your impulses, and exercise maximum self-control! Here are phrases about which you should **Think Again** before you utter them to your partner.

- 1) Those two cards in the dummy were good.
- 2) You just trumped my Ace.
- 3) You totally missed my signal.
- 4) What were you thinking when you.....(complete the sentence)
- 5) That was FORCING!
- 6) NO NO NO you can't pass my double!

I also urge you to reflect deeply when your partner says, "I welcome criticism." That statement is NEVER 100% true. A lot depends on how and when the advice is given! Also on the sheer quantity of criticism. And your tone of voice. Be cautious here!

Finally one of our resident therapists suggests the following exercise to develop your coping mechanisms. Stand in front of a mirror. Envision your partner passing your 2Club opening bid. Study the rolling of your eyes and the clenching of your teeth. Note your accelerated heartbeat and the rising flush in your cheeks! Now think of a beautiful meadow with lambs frolicking about. Briefly remember poor John Bennett's demise. Return to the happy meadow filled with flowers and a gurgling brook. Practice a compassionate smile! You have done it! You have mastered your emotions! You will not lash out at your beleaguered partner. Your partnership will survive, and you will live to see another bridge board!

HELP WANTED

It has been suggested that a regular feature of the Kibitzer could be a Help Wanted column identifying volunteer opportunities at the Bridge Center.

Currently, there are three areas in need of volunteers as indicated below:

LONGEST DAY COORDINATOR(S)

Unit 360 has a long and successful tradition of annually raising money for Alzheimer research through a day long Longest Day game and silent auction. Planning for the Longest Day already begins in January. We currently do not have a Longest Day Coordinator. I don't want to see us miss a year of holding this event. Please speak with Bob Wagstaff if you are willing to take on this task.

PRE-SECTIONAL CLEANING CREW

Unit 360 has four Sectionals a year. These are significant sources of income for the unit as well as fun events. They require a great deal of work to do for the tournament chairs, Bonnie Bagley and Mark Bishop, without these people having the additional responsibility of pre-tournament cleaning.

A cleaning crew chief and cleaning crew workers are needed. Individuals interested in helping should speak with Mark Bishop.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

John Dukellis continues to need help with new player instruction. Currently, one need is for individuals to help with the play the hand instruction in the Thursday morning game.

FRONT RANGE CHALLENGE

Unit 360 hosted the 2025 Front Range Challenge in the Fall. Twenty-two teams participated in the all-day event representing Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver and Fort Collins with six A, eight B and eight C teams.

Denver was the overall winner with nine points followed by Colorado Springs with eight, Boulder with five and Fort Collins with four points.

Thanks to all the Unit 360 members who participated.

MEMORIAL TROPHY WINNERS

The Memorial Trophy winners are the top Master Point winners in the year's several Unit games. The 2025 winners are Judy Hummel in the A bracket, Nancy Teel in the B bracket and Claudia Busch Lee in the C bracket.

NO SCENT CONSIDERATION

A request was made recently to remind people that the Bridge Center is a no scent bridge game. ***The no scent includes perfumes, aftershave lotions, body odor, etc.***

The basis of the rule is to provide a pleasant atmosphere for playing bridge and in consideration of individuals with allergies sensitive to perfumes.

2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 2026 Board of Directors are Mark Bishop, Brenda Bocek, Claudia Busch Lee, Ed Gardner, Paul Gefreh, Ed Hill, Dave Loring and Bob Wagstaff. Roger Williams is continuing as the Building Manager.

Bonnie Bagley and Mark Bishop are continuing as Co-Tournament Chairs. Jeff Rapp is continuing as Webmaster and doing Supplies.

Medical Equipment Available to Borrow

Wheelchair

Boot

Knee Rover

Walker (walker has no functional breaks)

Contact: Torrie 719-580-2099

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

The Board thought it would be a good idea to have emergency contact information for those who choose to participate at the Bridge Center. Please send your Name, Emergency Contact Name, Relationship to you, Phone number of that person and relevant Medical Info (i.e. Diabetic or Pacemaker) to claudiabuschlee@gmail.com. An Excel spreadsheet has been

created, and that information will be accessible to Directors should there be a need. ***This list will be updated twice a year.***

New Year's Resolution: Keep our center pristine!

Please return the Boards to the Director's desk after you complete last boards at the end of the day.

Please push your chair in and look around for leftover glasses, cups, plates, napkins and candy wrappers. Be kind to those who might be on walkers, etc. by offering to take their cups/glasses to the sink/kitchen/dishwasher for them. Kindness is contagious!

499ER TOURNAMENT

Our 499er Tournament in October was great fun! Food, snacks, and door prizes! There was a morning and afternoon pairs game on Saturday. After the morning game and during lunch, Don Patterson went over some of the interesting boards that had been played. His insight and explanations made all of us think a little differently! Thanks, Don!

A number of people had told us that they wished the games would finish earlier in the day. So, we started each day at 9:30 instead of 10:00. In addition, on Sunday, Jeff directed a Swiss team of thirty six boards instead of forty eight. Thank you, Jeff!

A shout out goes to the intrepid first place Swiss Team of Kathy Dawson, Danuta Brown, Jared Nakamura and Claudia Busch Lee! They also won first place in the Swiss Team 499 Tournament in Denver in October!

Our turnout for Swiss teams has always been low. Our goal this year is to get more of you to play in the Swiss teams. So, keep an eye out for those games (see article below for new Swiss Team Ambassador Games)!

Please sign up for the Colorado Springs sectional tournament

Feb. 19-22! Don't worry if you don't know how to score for Swiss Teams. North/South will do it. Sign up for East/West.

Call us, and we will help you form a team! We want you to end up having fun and trying something different while still enjoying the game!
Murlene Williams and Jodi Wyss

AMBASSADOR GAMES

Purpose: Create opportunities for the 499er's and open pair folks to form relationships and build bridge skills.

Frequency: Twice a year. The next Ambassador Game will be on **Monday, February 9th**.

There will again be a sign-up sheet so that we can make sure people are paired for this one-day event (at the Director's desk). Thanks for being respectful and responsible for your presence once you sign up.

Team Ambassador Game:

Purpose: Allow a team from the 499 side to pair with an open pair team to create both friendships and greater ease for playing a team game.

Frequency:

Twice a year. We will have the Open Pair to be North/South (keeper of the score) in case the East/West 499 team is unsure how to score.

If you want to play in this game, **it will be your responsibility to find a team**, though a Board member and Murlene and Jodi will help!

The proposed first ever, memorable and fabulous Team Ambassador game will be the third Monday in **March, the 16th**. Let's all make this a fun way to increase our team participation!

LONG TERM TREASURE

Support Our Bridge Center Our Bridge Center is an important gathering place for many people who want camaraderie, mental challenges, and competition. As our building ages, the maintenance costs are increasing. There are several ways that you can help support our club and make sure that we, and future bridge players, can enjoy the center.

You can write a check to "ACBL Unit 360" and give it to a director or board member. It is not tax deductible but will help maintain our

building. Please consider putting the bridge center into your will or estate plans. You can specify an amount or a percentage. This type of legacy gift will sustain the center in the future. The Bridge Center is our treasure, and you support it by participating in games and events. It is our community of players that make the Bridge Center a warm and special place. Thank you. **Dave Loring and Lynne Telford and the Board**

UNIT GAMES

The next four Unit Games are listed below with special emphasis on the Awards Game coming in March.

February 24, Tuesday, 9 am
March 11, Wednesday, Swiss Team Game, 12:30 pm
March 14, Saturday, Awards Game, TBD
April 16, Thursday, 12:30

**MARK
YOUR CALENDAR!**



Golden Sectional January 9 - 11

Albuquerque Marriott Regional January
12 - 18

Phoenix NLM 749er Regional February
13 - 15

Colorado Springs
Sectional February 19 - 22

St. Louis NABC February 25 - March 8

Aurora Sectional March 13 - 15

Tucson Regional April 7 - 11

Gatlinburg Regional April 20 - 26

Oklahoma Regional May 11 - 16

Denver Regional May 19 - 25

Penticton, BC Regional June 15 - 21

Minneapolis NABC July 8 - 19

Phoenix Regional August 10 - 15

Taos Regional September 21 - 27



All District 17 Tournaments



Dorothy Hyden Gold Life Master (2500 pts.)



Ron Bliss (birthday boy) with Pam McCutcheon



Kay Brock Life Master



Jim Hurley/Bob Harward 70.95% game



Lynne Telford/Peter Viliesis 72.50% game



Aileen Tracey/Lisa Gree 79.18% game



Peter Viliesis/Steve Windom 80% game



Jackie Keller/Sue Coast 73.45% game

The Kibitzer is published several times a year by the Colorado Springs Bridge Center, Unit 360 of the American Contract Bridge League. Our unit is dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of the game of

duplicate bridge in the Pikes Peak and Southeastern Colorado region. News contributions and comments can be emailed to the editor Claudia Busch Lee at claudiabuschlee@gmail.com

