

THE BRIGHT LEAF ALERT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF UNIT 191

OCTOBER 2020

From the President.....

Welcome to fall! We have officially made it to the end of summer. September brought us our first online mentor/mentee game and the turnout was terrific. We had 13 tables playing and the proceeds from this game goes The Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina. Unit 191 is thrilled to support this organization at this time. Thanks to the Triangle Bridge Club for hosting this inaugural game.

For now, we are keeping our fingers and toes crossed that one or more of the vaccines for the coronavirus will be deemed effective and safe and can be made available in the coming months. Face-to-face bridge is still considered non-essential and thus the Unit 191 clubs are still closed. Please join the many Unit 191 players on BBO and support The Bridge Academy and Triangle Bridge Club as often as possible. We recognize that there are many options available, but it is best to support local clubs when you can. Bigger games are more fun so join us!

In the coming month, we have our second Mentor/Mentee game (registration will begin soon) on October 10th hosted by the Bridge Academy. Also, we are preparing for our 2021 Board of Director Elections. Look for detailed information about these events in the September newsletter. (Check the website).

In the meantime, stay safe and healthy, reach out to your bridge friends and stay connected. We hope to gather together again soon!

Deanna Larus—Unit 191 President





♠ **Want to step up your game?**



♥ **Want to give back, having done so?** ♦

Are you a Non-Life Master with under 500 masterpoints who would like to improve your bridge skills and enhance your enjoyment of the game? Ask someone to mentor you; or, let us know and we will match you with a mentor.

Are you a bridge player who would like to give back for the mentors who have helped you improve your bridge skills and your enjoyment of the game? Ask to mentor someone. Or, let us know. We can match you with a mentee.

The unit's mentoring program is underway. The first game was hosted by Triangle Bridge Club on BBO, Friday evening, September 11th. Thanks to all who came out to play. We had 26 pairs, some challenging hands, and a delightful time. Eric Hamilton provided a commentary afterwards on the bidding of one of these challenging hands. His commentary is appended below. Our thanks to Eric.

Our congratulations to

Dixie Hapgood and Joyce Jenzano, 1st in NS and 1st overall with 64.12%

Renee Getz and Emily Hungerford, 1st in EW and 2nd overall with 63.43%

Steve Dong and Bob Dunas, 2nd in NS and 3rd overall with 61.34%

Eileen Bok and Martin Causley, 3rd in NS and 4th overall with 60.88%

Becky Fuchs and Josh Geigerman, 2nd in EW and 5th overall with 59.26%

We gave back to the local community, as well. \$3 of each player's game fee, or **\$156**, was donated to the **Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina**.

Didn't play last time? Please join us for the next mentee-mentor game on Saturday, October 10th, at 7:00 p.m. We hope to "see" you there. The game will be hosted by The Bridge Academy (BA) on BBO (**VACB267385**).

Play every card well,

Ed Fuller, Beverly Craig, Barbara Bute, and Donna Walther (Board Liaison)

Unit 191 Mentoring Program Committee

♠♥♦♣ **Commentary by Eric Hamilton** ♠♥♦♣

There were a bunch of interesting deals last night, but if I were going to pick out just one lesson-worthy hand, it would be Board 7.

Board 7 from last night's game:

Both vulnerable in first seat you pick up ♠5, ♥765, ♦AKT72, ♣AQJ4 and make your obvious 1♦ opening bid. LHO (left-hand opponent) overcalls 2♣ and your partner (no, you are not allowed to call partner "CHO") makes a negative double showing values to compete and interest in the unbid suits.

So, now what? Partner wants you to bid a major and you don't have one. So you make the bid that's under your nose: 2♦, saying that you have real diamonds and aren't thrilled by partner's interest in the majors. We aren't thrilled to be in 2♦ either, but it looks like the least bad landing place and we do have five of them.

That's what just about everyone did with this hand last night. And just about everyone was overlooking another answer to the "So now what?" question: **Pass!**

Yes, you are allowed to pass this double. In fact, you should when you expect to beat 2♣ and you aren't happy about your possible contracts. And that's exactly the situation here. Just in your hand you expect to score two top diamonds and three trump tricks, and partner's "values to compete" is surely good for at least one trick, down one, +200, and a score way better than anything we can get playing a part score our way.

The only pair that found the pass was rewarded with +1100 and a cold top.

There are several lessons here.

*One is to consider all your possible calls in difficult situations.

It's easy to forget that when your opponents are in the auction you have two more choices (pass and double/redouble) than when they're quiet.

*Another is that suit quality is important for two-level overcalls, especially when vulnerable. KQJ932 looks a lot more like a comfortable 2♣ overcall than what LHO had: K98532. The first one has built-in tricks, is playable even if partner has no help, and wants the suit led if they buy the contract and partner is on lead. The second one, not so much.

From the archives—October 2010

Durham was preparing to host the Future Life Master Sectional to be held at TBC. **Paul Morrisette and Ken Dye** were co-chairs and **Bunny Wheeler** was partnership chairperson.

Plans were in place for the Holiday Gala to be held on December 5th at the Sheraton.

Membership was 517. **Linda Whipple** was the newest member, moving from Wilmington to be near her daughter.

New Regional Masters are: **John Braun, Sue Preston, Dorothea Wilson, Stirling Haig, and Margaret Rouse**

Marty Demko is offering a class on Deadly Defense!

Officers of Unit 191 are:

Sigrid Olin, President

Harrison Brooke, Vice-President

Patsy Whitehurst, Secretary

Paul Kobrin, Treasurer Alert Editor, **Marty Demko**

Covid-19's Silver Lining

Marc Goldberg

Without question, the Covid-19 pandemic has been a world-wide catastrophe. Many people have died or lost their livelihoods. Many Americans have lost their jobs and are struggling to feed their families and manage their children's schooling. Sure, we all complain about our coronavirus quarantine- bridge clubs closed, vacations cancelled, favorite bars and restaurants closed, can't socialize with our friends, no sports on TV, the list goes on and on. But keeping it all in perspective, these are just minor inconveniences as long as we stay healthy.

So what is the Silver Lining that I found with the Covid-19 Pandemic? It has really helped to improve my bridge game.

Improving at bridge involves a combination of learning, study, and experience. My friends and I used to joke that bridge was easy before we learned so much. It seems that the more we learn, the more things there are to analyze and consider, and the harder it is to play the game. That may seem counter-intuitive, but that is why we love the game of bridge so much. **It is challenging!** Playing more bridge- applying what we have learned- adds to that experience. Barbara Seagram, an outstanding bridge teacher, always closes her workshops by encouraging students to play as often as they can. She quips, "If you only play bridge once a week, you will always be a weak player."

In **BC** (Before Covid), I typically played bridge twice a week- sometimes three. I had a rotating schedule with several partners, and we would meet up once or twice a month for a game. When quarantine started, and bridge games shifted to the virtual world on BBO, there was little else to do but play bridge. Now, I find that I play at least 5 games a week, and sometimes more. Some days, I might play twice in a single day, something that would have been logistically impossible **BC**. When the clubs were open, I couldn't play a morning game in Cary and drive in time to make an afternoon game in Durham- but I can do that now. **BC**, I couldn't play in out-of-town or out-of-state games each week, but I do play in those games now. Playing all these extra games has given me significantly more practice in declaring and defending, and they have added considerably to my experience level. I still have regular partners, but we now play together weekly instead of monthly, so we are becoming much more familiar with each other's game.

Playing in more virtual games on BBO gives me additional opportunity to improve my declarer play. Not only do I get to play more hands since I am playing in more tournaments than **BC**, but BBO allows me to see my partner's hand while I am dummy. Being dummy at the club is a bit boring. As dummy, I just turn the cards that are called, and I can't always see the strategy or flow of the hand. On BBO, seeing my partner's cards is a great benefit. I can watch how my partner plays and determine my own strategy for how I would play the hand. Sometimes I see things develop that I might not see if I were the declarer, and that gives me greater perspective when I get to play a hand. From an experience standpoint, being dummy on BBO is almost as valuable as actually being the declarer.

In a July 2020 Alert article, I discussed how the BBO platform provides many valuable tools for evaluating how well my partner and I played each board. Using features like double dummy and watching card by card play by more experienced players is a great way to improve my skills. I use them often after each match, and they have helped my game a lot. These are BBO evalua-

Covid-19 introduced many of us to Zoom, which is an online platform for conducting meetings and conferences. Several of the accomplished bridge teachers in our area offered free lessons and seminars. I took advantage of these and learned a lot. Every bridge hand is unique. Hearing the strategy and philosophy of experienced players helps to develop my approach on how to play or defend unusual hands.

I may not make it to the finals of a grand national event, but that is not my goal. My objective is to become a better bridge player so that I can enjoy the game while trying to be competitive with the better players in our clubs. The extra playing time during quarantine has helped with that aim. Sure, I still mess up and get my share of low scores, but compared to **BC**, the additional games have increased my confidence and skills.



I don't want to make it sound like I am a fan of Covid-19. If I had my way, the virus would still be in a lab somewhere being studied by scientists. I just try to make the best of things. We've all heard about the optimist and pessimist observing whether the glass is half full or half empty. My glass is overflowing, and I hope yours is, too. See you at the bridge table- virtual for now, for real sometime soon.



You may have seen this floating around on the internet—if not, here goes:

1. The number of cards per deck is 52, which corresponds to 52 weeks per year.
2. Each deck has 4 class of cards (heart, spade, diamond, and club) corresponding to 4 seasons.
3. Twelve colored cards per deck corresponds to 12 months.
4. Thirteen color cards (12 + joker) correspond to 13 weeks per season.
5. If you add up the numbers on consecutive 13 cards, 1+2+3+4+5 etc., you come up with 91; $91 \times 4 = 364 + \text{joker}$.

Thanks to **Tom Roberg** for sharing.

Meet **Ray McEntee**—unit 191 member, is currently serving on the unit board as secretary and is also a director in the unit.

I grew up in Newark, New Jersey, attended Seton Hall Prep and New Jersey Institute of Technology, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. The one thing I knew upon graduation was that I did not want to be an engineer.

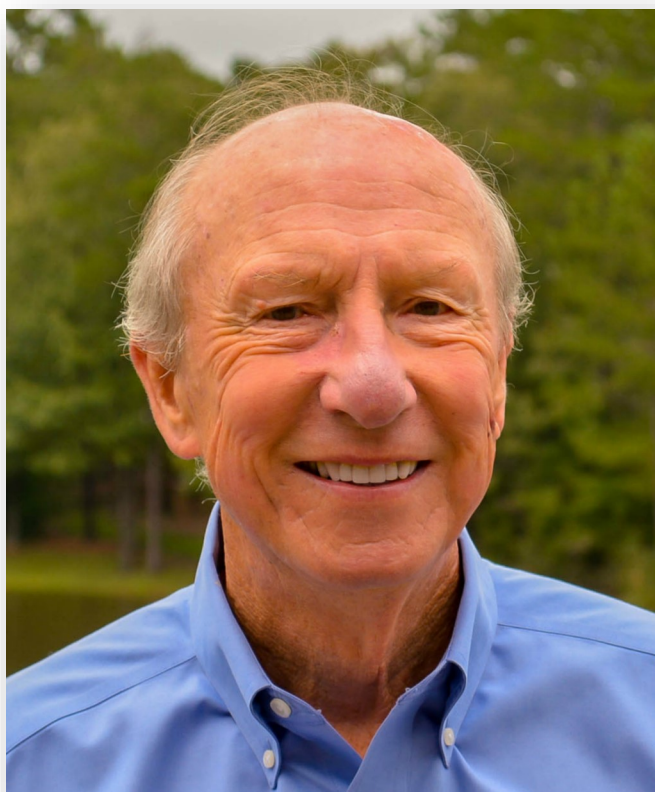
The sales engineering firm I co-founded in 1969 sold process equipment, specifically powder handling systems, mainly to the food and chemical industries in the metro New York area. I sold the business (PME Equipment, Inc.) in 2004 to company employees who thrive to this day.

Elizabeth, my non-bridge-playing wife, and I have been married 57 years. Son Derek and his two boys live in Charlotte. The boys go to college at UNC Chapel Hill and Furman. Son David in Chapel Hill has three kids, one a graduate of the Air Force Academy and MIT, one at App State and one in grade school. Our two sons pestered us for years to move to North Carolina – we did in 2004 – best move ever!

We built a house in Governors Club. One day my neighbor, **Ken Schooff** asked, “Do you play bridge?” “Yes, 45 years ago.” “No problem.”

(I don’t ever remember seeing a deck of cards in my house but during college I was exposed to lunch-time rudimentary bridge, Goren style. Once, in the early 60’s my partner and I went to a small local game and earned 0.08 master points. It would be 45 years before I got another point.)

So, I gave myself a crash course in 2 over 1 and off we went to meet **Bob Lenkeit** in Cary. “What’s this?” “It’s a bidding box.” After that I played a few times with different partners at Bob Boggs’s game in Durham until **Darlene Bates** introduced me to **Eric Larson** who also needed a partner. Eric has tolerated my numerous errors for about 10 years. What patience. Incidentally, I never did get to learn Standard American. One thing I have learned; I much prefer Imps to match-points and wish there were more opportunities.



I've always liked rules; rules of baseball, rules of golf. I was a baseball umpire at one time and still think refereeing golf tournaments would be a perfect hobby. Learning new things is cool so it just seemed natural to become a bridge director. It was not hard to pass the test; I had to buy a PC (ACBL doesn't do MAC) and study one winter. Betsy Mebane was a big help. The test is all about the rules, called Laws. However, directing has little to do with Laws; it's about setting up the right game and finding players, both at the very last minute. Then, maintaining a calm no matter what happens. The worst part of directing is having to play while directing a 2-section game, especially when director calls are coming from the other room in the first round. What's the best part? Two things: Seeing the happy faces of winners, particularly B and C winners. And there is a feeling of accomplishment after the game- like you've gone to work and everything went well.

Chris Moll in particular as well as **John Torrey and Maggie Lindquist** have given me encouragement and been gracious with their time as I learned, and continue to learn, the necessary skills. Ideally, I would direct a weekly game somewhere. Instead, I have been filling in for Maggie at Governors Club and Farrington, both Unit 191 members by the way, and of course mainly for Chris Moll at TBC when he is away. This amounts to about 25 games a year in normal times.

Being on the Unit Board – what's it like? As Board secretary my principal duty is to produce minutes of our meetings, a job I enjoy. Generally, one sees a broader picture of the bridge world - that picture is not always in sync with my views. I feel ACBL pays way too much attention to the highest levels of the game and not nearly enough to the clubs.

Based on what I've been reading, a significant portion of bridge will be transferred to online because ACBL is of the belief that online play is key to the game's future growth. If so, I'd better embrace online play; my once a week frequency will not cut it. It is awkward for me. Seems like I play robotically, quickly, lacking analysis.

I go to the gym most mornings for 45 minutes. I play golf and pickleball twice a week, bridge usually twice a week in normal times, and spend about 45 minutes a day in the garden. If you are not familiar with Daniel Silva and like international detective stories, try him.

Until next time.....

Ray

Recipe for taking social bridge online.

Reprinted from Bridge Winners with permission.

By Alan Rickayzen

For many bridge players, the game is a social activity played at home with friends rather than in a club or online. Lockdowns have prevented this. And although lockdowns are easing, there are still many not willing to take the risk of playing at the same table until... who knows.

Going online is a partial answer, so I've summarized the learnings I've gained helping my father and his over 90's friends migrate to online.

1. A mobile phone plus a laptop/PC is essential. The mobile is for voice and the laptop/PC for playing.
2. Get each of the players familiar with the mobile app first before starting the group online together. We used WhatsApp. I created a group for the four of us, and use a voice call to get us all dialed in with each other first. Video hogs too much bandwidth in rooms where wifi connectivity is poor.
3. Establish a screen-sharing tool to prepare the way for online playing. I used www.jitsi.org so you can share your screen (or see their screen) to train the users. Separately, get each of the players familiar with the online bridge user interface before starting the group online together.
4. We used BBO as the bridge platform. Show each player how to register, how to join a game, how to bid and play cards. A tablet instead of a PC/laptop is possible, but it's very confusing if players are on different user-interfaces so I strongly recommend sticking to PC/laptops.
5. Once all have been trained, you can start your first online session. Make sure you start the voice channel first (e.g. WhatsApp on the mobile – with all phones switched to speaker mode).

**CONGRATULATIONS
TO
IRA MUELLER!!!
OUR UNIT'S NEWEST
LIFE MASTER**



Message from Barbara Hudson:

Starting NOW, BBO will no longer post a random (SAYC) convention card if you don't have one posted. You should create a convention card to use with each of your partners. BBO has the option to retain a LOT of CCs for each player. Not sure how? Here are some 'how-to' videos:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bx4OVOo7z_Q&ab_channel=TheBridgeTeachers https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKdraqR2bSA&ab_channel=TheBridgeTeachers

If your questions aren't answered here, give me a call [919-413-7677](tel:919-413-7677) and we'll talk through it.

1. BBO does NOT show you the official masterpoint award at the end of a session. 'Live for Clubs' has a listing that is almost NEVER correct until approx. 30 minutes after close of game (although they claim earlier).

At www.vanderbiltbridgeraleigh.com there are two links available to reference game results. They are labeled separately because one is better for clicking through the hands you have played and one is more accurate for viewing ACBL masterpoint awards.

a. ACBL has decided to discontinue the "temporary membership" program. It had existed with an \$8 fee.

b. ACBL is now instituting a FREE MEMBERSHIP program (BBO has always been free to join). It starts after [Wednesday](#) of this week. IF YOU HAVE EVER BEEN A MEMBER OF THE ACBL, THIS MEMBERSHIP IS NOT AVAILABLE TO YOU. For those who are eligible (perhaps you know an interested individual?) it is for a 120 day period. It includes an ACBL number (which the individual will retain if they decide to turn it into a *real* long term membership), electronic access to the bulletin, and a membership page that will keep a record of masterpoints that are earned in the 120 day window. IF the player decides to join long term, any masterpoints won will stay with their assigned number.



TRIANGLE BRIDGE CLUB

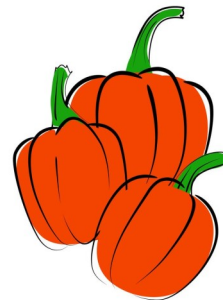
OCTOBER 2020 NEWS

I hope everyone is adhering to the CDC guidelines and wearing a face mask.

We currently offer the following game online .. VACB252858:

Please notice on Tuesday and Thursday afternoon new start times

Monday	7:00	Open	
Tuesday	12:30	0-750	starting 10 minutes later
	12:40	Open	starting 10 minutes later
Wednesday	7:00	Open	
Thursday	12:30	0-750	starting 10 minutes later
	12:40	Open	starting 10 minutes later
Friday	7:00	Open	
Saturday	9:50	0-750	
	10:00	Open	
Sunday 1:50		0-750	
	2:00	Open	



BE HAPPY and STAY SAFE

Please join us for friendly competition at its best.

Chris Moll

trianglebridgeclub@gmail.com

504-495-7485 cell