

ALERT

Quarterly Newsletter



Cincinnati
Bridge Association



UNIT 124

VOL XLIV No. 1 January 2019

2860 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45241 (513) 563 2218

From the President's Desk

Unit 124 Members,

The game of bridge has been played internationally for centuries. In my opinion passion for the game brings people from all walks of life together. One of the top priorities of the 2019 board is to make CBA the best place to learn, enjoy and play bridge.

We all are very competitive players. Play nice principles and guide need to be practiced more. They are very simple. I urge senior players and directors to take lead to coach our newer members so that they feel wanted and do not get discouraged from their experience.

Your 2019 board has 3 past presidents. In order to capitalize on their experience, they have been given a role of Adviser to key committees.

Another goal is increase youth and minorities participation. Many of you know that Warren Buffett plays bridge 10 hours a week. He has donated \$10 to \$15 million to Atlanta school district to open high school on Saturday for high school students to learn bridge. We need to learn from their experience.

One of the keys to any organization is CHANGE. In order for us to improve we need your participation. Please give us your comments, ideas and feedback so that we the board can deliver. We will have comments/idea/feedback box soon.call

I want to thank you for the opportunity given to me and the board to serve you. As they say,

SEE YOU AT THE TABLE.

Nalin Mehta,
President, Unit 124 Board of Directors



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GNT D11 Finals	---	Apr 13-14, 2019
Spring STaC	---	Apr 15-21, 2019
Gatlinburg Regional	---	Apr 22-28, 2019

Unit 124 Club Games

Day	Time	Game
Mon	AM	CBC 11:00 Inv
	Aft	MIDM 1:00
	PM	CBC 7:00 (Limited) - OXF 7:00
Tue	AM	NKY 10:00
	PM	11:00 CBC, AND, MIDS -- C&P/SP 2:45PM CBC 7:00 Limited (Call for 0-20)
Wed	AM	CBC - AND 11:00 - SCC 10:00
	Aft	MIDL 12:00
	PM	NKY 6:30 CBC 7:00 PM (Limited)
Thu	AM	INT 9:00 - CBC 11:00 - NKy 11:30 AM
	Aft	WHC 12:00 - EAB 12:30
	PM	CBC C&P/SP 2:45PM CBC 6:30 "8 is ENOUGH" Swiss Team 1/3/5
Fri	AM	NKY 10:00 - CBC 11:00
Sat	AM	CBC 9:30AM-Noon Supervised Play (SP)
	Aft	CBC 1:00

"What great thing would you attempt if you knew you could not fail?" — **Robert Schuller**

ONE STEP FORWARD

Growth continues to be the focus at all levels in the world of bridge. We offer some new perspectives on efforts underway in the District and the Unit that can have important benefits to our game. Act now.

We also have a new Board President, Nalin Mehta. Nalin outlines his **priorities** above. He is very interested in making the CBC the best place to play bridge in our area. To do that we need all players to play friendly. The players themselves create the atmosphere. Welcoming players create warmth and a fun environment. Nasty players create an unwelcome off-putting environment few would find attractive.

There is quite a bit of Unit news and input from area clubs. The Jan Feb Mar quarter can be difficult with weather (closing bridge centers and reducing tournament attendance). It is important to stay safe. Be sure to check the unit and the game websites for up to date closure information.

The tournament scene heats up again in April with many prime offerings. This year the Grand National Teams District 11 Finals are in Cincinnati. Under new rules, if Flight B and C competitions field at least 8 teams each, then the 2nd place team qualifies to go to Las Vegas for the NABC finals. District 11 approved a \$500 stipend for any Flight B or C 2nd place team who participates in the NABC final.

We all thank our tireless volunteers. They make everything you enjoy happen. Beyond the Board and our Committees, there are dozens of people who pitch in to make bridge thrive in the tri-state area. Thank them.

As always, this issue is chock full of entertaining offerings by our talented cast of authors. Amit Raturi returns with another gem, as do Felson and Brown, and Weidenfeld too. We thank our tireless contributors for making these pages worth the read. I continue to marvel at our collective creativity. You all make my job as editor a joy.

Wishing You Good Bridge and Good Luck,

Steve

Editor, The **ALERT** moesefamily@aol.com



Unit 124 News

Thanks to Salty Roark and his Election Committee, we have a new 2019 Board of Directors. The Board is actively pursuing table card reminders for use at our games. The real results depends on you! Do you commit to saying one

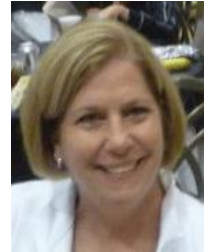
nice thing at every table you visit during a game? Try it – you might just infect everybody else! Here are your Board Members for 2019:



Nalin Mehta,
President



Potter Orr,
Vice President



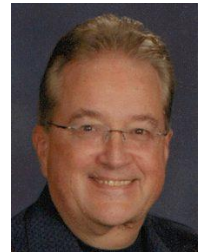
Pam Campbell,
Treasurer



Tom Mess,
Secretary



John Meinking



Steve Moese



Steve Messinger



John Williams



Pete Outcalt

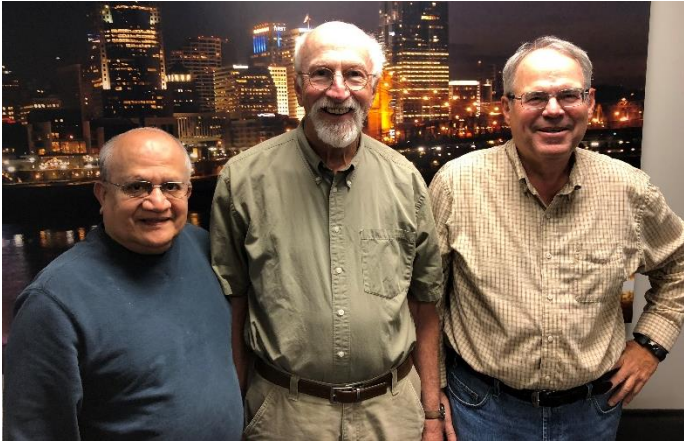
We always want to hear from our Members about how to make thing better in the Unit and at the CBC. Please get your suggestions to any Board Member. Our emails are on the [Board Member Page](#).

The November Unit Membership Meeting had a quorum this year and spend a large portion of the time discussing the need to make play at the Cincinnati Bridge Center enjoyable for everyone. [Membership Meeting Minutes](#).



Many thanks to Bob Frey and the Frey Family Foundation for donating a new the **ZOLL® AED Plus® Defibrillator with Standard Size Cabinet** to the Cincinnati Bridge Center. That's right. We have an automatic defibrillator installed on the wall at the director's desk. Bob and his family deserve a vote of thanks for their very thoughtful and caring donation to the health of our players. When you see Bob

playing in Northern Kentucky Bridge Club, be sure to thank him. Bob's life was saved by one of these devices and he wants to pay this forward to all his bridge friends. Bob, we thank you profoundly.



L to R Nalin Mehta, President, Bob Frey, John Meinking

10 CBA members trained with the Evendale Life Squad at the CBC and have CPR certification. Anyone can use the AED device because the device itself is smart, and coaches the user through the few steps in complete safety.

Saturday December 15 saw the Unit Holiday Party along with major Unit Awards and a Unit Championship Game. The Unit extends its thanks to Pam Campbell for organizing the Party, and all Unit volunteers who made it come together. Thank you all!

2018 Jerry Steuernagle Award



Jerry Steuernagle (1940 - 1971) was one of Cincinnati's most liked and respected bridge players, known particularly for his sense of humor and for always being a gentleman at the bridge table.

The **Jerry Steurenagle Award** is presented annually to the duplicate bridge player best exemplifying the principles of ethics, kindness, and high character in bridge. This award is based on 4 factors: 1) Contribution to the promotion of duplicate bridge, 2) Action in setting high ethical

standards, 3) Compassion, sportsmanship and sense of humor, 4) Willingness to help less experienced players.

This years award goes to Bob Fisk for his tireless volunteer work with new and improving players, his sportsmanship, and his demeanor at the table. Well deserved indeed!!



L to R Bob Fisk and Debbie Cummmings.

2018 Nancy Sachs Award

This year's Nancy Sachs award goes to two well deserving members. This award recognizes members who have contributed the most toward mentoring newer players. This year's recipients are Larry Newman and Greg Brinker.



L to R: Greg Brinker, Paul Pseschang, and Larry Newman

2018 Patty Eber Award

The **Patty Eber Award** is given to an individual demonstrating extraordinary service to the Unit and to

Duplicate Bridge. This year's award goes to Bob Fisk. This is the first time anyone has earned both the Jerry Steurenagle and Patty Eber Awards, let alone in the same year.



Patty Eber and Bob Fisk

Saturday December 15, 2018 the Unit celebrated the holiday season with a catered party and a Unit Championship game at the CBC. We had 39 total tables and a separate NLM Game. Congratulations to **Al Beaupre and Barbara Levinson, 1st Overall, Steve Vogel and Cliff Pleatman, 1st in Flight B, and Reeta Brendamour and Isaac Stephani 1st in Flight C**

Here are the masterpoint winners:

Unit 124 Holiday Party Masterpoint Winners - 39 Total Tables

Dir	Pr#	Name	Name	St	OA	OB	OC	SA	SB	SC	MPs	%	MPs
NS	10	Albert Beaupre	Barbara Levinson	A	1	.	.	1	.	.	194.04	62.19	4.81(OA)
EW	9	Steve Vogel	Cliff Pleatman	B	2	1	.	1	1	.	192.01	61.54	3.61(OA)
EW	6	Mike Ma	Stephen Moese	A	3	.	.	2	.	.	189.35	60.69	2.71(OA)
EW	4	Amitabh Raturi	Norman Coombs	A	4	.	.	3	.	.	183.6	58.85	2.03(OA)
EW	7	Reeta Brendamour	Isaac Stephani	C	5	2	1	4	2	1	183.14	58.70	1.82(OB)
EW	12	John Meinking	Larry Klein	A	6	.	.	5	.	.	182.19	58.39	1.14(OA)
NS	3	Kay Mulford	Lorna Davis	A	.	.	.	2	.	.	179.88	57.65	1.38(SA)
NS	13	Herb Schapera	Sheldon Kushner	B	.	3	.	3	1	.	176.55	56.59	1.37(OB)
EW	8	Betty Torello	Joanne Earls	C	.	4	2	6	3	2	174.27	55.86	1.08(OC)
NS	8	Joy Singerman	Barry Wauligman	C	.	5	3	4	2	1	170.84	54.76	0.81(SB)
NS	9	Margaret Young	Jackie Toth	A	.	.	.	5	.	.	169.86	54.44	0.39(SA)
EW	5	John Williams	Terry Brausch	C	.	6	4	7	4	3	163.76	52.49	0.61(OC)
NS	12	Deborah Cummings	Patricia Newman	B	.	.	.	6	3	.	163.38	52.37	0.58(SB)
EW	11	Jo Ellen Spitz	Justina Clendening	B	.	.	.	.	5	.	162.88	52.21	0.24(SB)
NS	4	Jerry Katz	Joann Katz	B	.	.	.	7	4	.	162.23	52.00	0.41(SB)
NS	5	Henry Jackson	Nancy Dever	B	.	.	.	.	5	.	160.52	51.45	0.23(SB)
EW	10	Stephen Felson	Robert Brown	C	.	.	5	.	.	4	157.44	50.46	0.46(OC)
NS	7	Thomas Mess	Helen Mess	C	.	.	.	.	.	2	156.01	50.00	0.45(SC)
NLM GAME													
EW	1	Steve Messinger	Sandra Fielman	B	1	1	.	1	1	.	55.83	55.83	1.17(OA)
NS	6	Carolyn Murray	Debra Chavez	B	2	2	.	1	1	.	55.71	55.71	0.88(OA)
NS	4	David Elliott	Carla Runda	B	3	3	.	2	2	.	53.36	53.36	0.66(OA)
EW	6	Carol Scovic	Carol Wilson	A	4	.	.	2	.	.	52.58	52.58	0.49(OA)
NS	5	Mary Merryman	Susan Namei	C	.	4	.	.	.	.	51.48	51.48	0.39(OB)
EW	5	Jeanne Bossart	Gary Herrington	C	.	.	.	.	2	.	50.57	50.57	0.30(SB)

CLUB CORNER Send Club News to the Alert Editor: moesefamily@aol.com
70% Games Aug-Oct

Date	Game	Player	Player	Percentage
1/8/19	Tues AM	Arun Goyal	Steve Vogel	71.13
1/7/19	Deschappelles	Anne Finn	Jo Ellen Spitz	70.57
1/4/19	NKy Fri AM	Greg Brinker	John Woeste	70.60
12/8/18	Saturday PM	Bill Higgins	Eugene Siutsau	71.69
11/19/18	Deschappelles	Nancy Luetge	Jackie Toth	71.24
11/14/18	Anderson	Steve Vogel	Bob Fisk	74.73
11/12/18	Mikes Games	Al Venosa	Jan Venosa	73.81
11/12/18	Deschappelles	Helga Tillinghast	Philomena Dillhoff	70.79
10/24/18	Anderson	Bill Higgins	Eugene Siutsau	72.92

9 games reported in this quarter over 70%!!! Well done, everyone! See [ALL Unit 70% Games](#)

The Unit extends its condolences to Debbie Cummings on the passing of her mother this past December. Debbie shared that Cincinnati Country Club Bridge players donated \$400 to the CBA in honor of her mother. The funds will support directors (filing cabinets, a cart for managing 4 sets of boards, smartphone charging station for 6 phones at a time).



Marion Levy Celebrated her 100th Birthday at the Deschappelles Game at the CBC in December. Marion was presented with a special Golden Life Master certificate from the ACBL recognizing her lifetime accomplishment and her dedication to bridge.

GROWTH!! – Take 2

By Steve Moese

This is a call to action for all CBA Members.

“I’m not good enough to teach. Why should I try? What can I as a member do to grow bridge?”

Quite a lot as a matter of fact!

A lot of fancy marketing savvy does not replace knowledge gained from practice. I’d like to introduce two ideas and see how they resonate with you.

Fact One: The majority of new players and new members come to us through personal contact with other members. Our new members are not cold calls from the yellow pages, or hits from the internet or Facebook ads. While our effort to attract new members through adult education classes (US’s OLLI Progeam) has met with some success, the primary source of new members is member referrals.

Fact Two: People who know how to play the game already have **different learning and socialization needs** than people who are learning to play for the first time.

Fact Three: Adults learn best by doing, not by hearing (a lecture) or seeing (reading a book or watching a screen). Social reinforcement tends to improve adult learning. Adults tend to learn better from their peers or from family members. This includes young adults too.

Fact Four: Many experts in many fields do not know how to teach or coach. **Teaching/coaching is a valuable skill.** Not everyone has developed that skill.

Fact Five: The glidepath to becoming a bridge player is different for everyone, but some common stages exist that help us **organize our approach to growing bridge.** From Left to Right consider the following progression: For simplicity let’s let friends include co-workers and all casual acquaintances.

So, how can we unpack all of this into something that we can all do that will have an impact?

There are many clubs and professional/volunteer teachers who can help people learn, yet membership is in decline. What we have is clearly not enough. We are not reaching the right people.

One way to think about this growth puzzle is that “the way we do things today gets us what we can measure today”. We need a simple way to help everyone share bridge in a very easy way. Avoid the complications. Get people excited about playing this 13-card trick playing game, then introduce the notion of contracts and scoring. *“Tu Puedes” (You Can Do it) – said Jaime Escalante (played by Edward James Olmos) from Stand and Deliver 1988 Warner Brothers Directed by Ramon Menéndez.*

If you are with me so far, there are several ways to get people to try bridge and like it.

Option	Comments
Hearts Spades Euchre Pinochle	These games are great for getting people introduced to trick taking games. However, they fall short of the ideas that make Contract Bridge attractive. Pinochle uses a special double deck, and Euchre uses only part of the deck. Spades and Heart are great party games that don’t offer as much strategy and thinking challenge.
<u>Whist</u>	This centuries-old ancestor of contract bridge is a worthwhile starting point because all 13 cards are in play, there is no bidding and the critical thinking about trick taking and signaling with cards is an integral part of the game.
<u>Mini Bridge</u>	This beginner’s game focuses on Milton Work Count (4,3,2,1 HCP) and has everyone announce their HCP. The partners with the higher HCP then declare. They choose their trump suit and a partial, game or slam contract. Play commences and scores are optional.
<u>Hool</u>	Add more strategy to mini bridge. Allow 2 pieces of info be shared with the table about one’s hand. See the link for details.

When looking for FUN I want to:

Play Games /cards	Learn Bridge	Play Bridge/ FUN	Improve	Compete	Volunteer	Earn Income
Friends & Family	Friends & Family	Friends & Family Clubs	Partners, Books, Software, Teachers Theory	Partners, Teams, Tournaments Master Points Wins & Losses	Clubs, Units, Districts, ACBL	Director Club Manger Teacher Pro Player

Start

Player Lifecycle

Mature

Bidittle	Unit 124's Tricia Smaracko's creation that is a proven hit with middle and high school youth. Start out playing with 7 cards. Graduate to 13 card bridge as you learn.
Rubber Bridge	Great way to experience the fun of bridge and learn as you go. Definitely the way to learn among friends and family. All it takes is a deck of cards. Pencil and paper scoring is optional.

Of these ways, Mini-bridge and Hool require no cash outlay beyond a deck of cards (many bridge clubs would be willing to donate them to groups).

So, now we have many members who want to get their friends to play.

We have an easy way to show people the basics of bridge and trick-taking.

We have rubber bridge to continue building confidence and enthusiasm.

All we need is the will to start!

Throw a party – invite friends over. Or, invite them to **“Come and Play”** at the CBC!!! Have your party there!

Do it.

Just to give you an idea of the challenge to growth, when North America had 25MM households with at least one bridge player (1980's) the membership in the ACBL was only slightly less than it is today. Were we to have the number of members per million population that France and Netherlands enjoy, we'd have over 2.9 MM members in the ACBL (compared to the 165,000 we have today). France and Netherlands include bridge in their middle and high school curricula.

The NY Times published an op-ed article [“Bring Bridge Back to the Table”](#) on November 27, 2005 where they state:

‘According to the American Contract Bridge League, 25 million Americans over the age of 18 know how to play bridge. These people are well educated (79 percent have a college degree), affluent (the average income is \$62,000 per year), primarily white (71 percent) and older (the average age is 51). Of these 25 million adult bridge players, only 3 million play the game at least once a week. This is a huge decrease from the 1940's when 44 percent of American households had at least one active bridge player.’

We can of course continue to do nothing. Europe, China and India, as well as pockets of pre-college and college

youth will keep this game going. So will on-line play. Our efforts will determine how popular this thinking game remains among our peers 40 years from now.

The sad truth is we see a 1-2% decline in tables and membership, stronger declines in tournaments, all the while our 50-85 age group will continue to grow 4-6 % well into 2060 (US Census Data). The average age of a 1st time member to the ACBL is 65.5 years old. Unfortunately, the median age is above 72 and advancing each year.

The market is there.

We must marshal ourselves to create today's bridge players.

Just Do It.

BIDittle

By Tricia Smaracko

In the 1940s, an estimated 44% of American households had at least one active bridge player. Saturday evenings were spent at home socializing and enjoying friendship with another couple while bidding and taking tricks at the bridge table. Much has changed since then, and today, it's estimated most school-age students don't even know



what a bidding and trick-taking game is all about. This trend can change, however. This is where the opportunity to increase youth bridge participation lies. The goal is to create excitement among middle and high school principals and teachers about the social and academic benefits of learning bidding and trick-taking games. This is what motivates me. I'm a computer science teacher and Bridge enthusiast. I've designed and brought to market the game of BIDittle [bi-DID-el], a simple bidding and trick-taking card game that uses a colorful game board with bidding prompts in each corner to simplify the bidding process. The seven-card hands are easy to hold and help make the game move quickly. Some students will want to play BIDittle using 13 cards – that's Bridge!

In pursuit of this goal, I'm promoting BIDittle School Clubs to both middle and high school students. We provide lessons to classroom teachers so they can easily teach BIDittle to their students, and from there, they start an extracurricular club for the students. **A community BIDittle-to-Bridge summer camp would be offered in June 2019** for area students who want to advance their game. Hopefully, there will be enough interest next school year for a few schools to offer their own Bridge school program.

The first step, however, is to create excitement for teachers to introduce little bidding and trick-taking concepts in the classroom today. Resources are available for the teachers, and total instruction time takes less than 20 minutes broken into four different topics. To provide plenty of student game play, it's best to reserve 90 minutes for the lesson or to break up the lesson over two class periods.

For the past couple of years, I've taught BIDittle to all 7th graders in their classroom, and then once a week we held a BIDittle Club during lunch/recess with over half of the students meeting regularly. The social interaction is positive for students in this age group, and they love a little competition. Game scores can be recorded in a spreadsheet and school champions can be announced at an end-of-year tournament and celebration party.

We have a leader's guide with instructions on how to teach the game of BIDittle in the classroom. An instructional video is also available on the www.bidittle.com website. It can be downloaded and used during the lesson. Presentation slides and lesson notes are available. Schools will need to purchase BIDittle games - one for every four students. The "classroom" kit includes the basic BIDittle game and an extra deck of BIDittle cards and four student bidding guides. You can check the website for pricing. Demonstration games are available to leave with the school for their review.

Once students have been introduced to basic Bridge concepts through the game of BIDittle, students can succeed more easily with traditional Bridge classes.

"Don't be afraid to take a big step. You can't cross a chasm in two small jumps." — **David Lloyd George**

"The dangers of life are infinite, and among them is safety." — **Goethe**

"Do not fear mistakes. There are none." — **Miles Davis**

"Test fast, fail fast, adjust fast." — **Tom Peters**

"Never let the odds keep you from doing what you know in your heart you were meant to do." — **H. Jackson Brown, Jr.**

"Leap and the net will appear." — **Zen Saying**



A BIDittle-to-Bridge training program has been designed which provides instruction on basic starter Bridge concepts following the guidelines defined in the ACBL Bridge Series book, *"Bidding in the 21st Century."*



The ACBL School Bridge Lesson Series program can also be a tremendous resource for textbooks and teacher stipends.



The BIDittle game idea sparked during a family beach vacation when I wanted to play a new card game with my 9-year-old son, Michael, and nephews, Jonathon and Jordan in the summer of 2005. I thought about teaching

them the game of Euchre because it only uses 5 cards per hand but didn't like the confusing power of the bowers. So in between pool and beach activities, she came up with a new game that discretely introduced a few basic Bridge concepts. During the following summer, we organized a BIDittle summer camp at the community library, and the excitement grew.

Several BIDittle school clubs and community tournaments were organized over the years. In 2011, I started a school Bridge club and used the BIDittle game as a teaching tool. It's curious to note the interest in Bridge didn't develop until the students were first introduced to the simple bidding and trick-taking card game, BIDittle. I've experimented with several approaches to get more students learning and enjoying BIDittle. The game was originally handmade so changes to the game rules could be made easily. If you reviewed an early copy of BIDittle, you might want to take a look at it again. Today, the game is in its second print run and can be purchased from Baron Barclay Bridge Supply and ACBL tournament book resellers.

I give credit to my late mother, Millie Lockert, for introducing me to the game of Bridge over twenty years ago. An ACBL Life Master, Millie was one of the founding members and directors of the Northern KY Bridge Club. I hope to carry on my mother's passion to **"share the love of Bridge with others."**



Tricia Smaracko

BIDittle Designer, Bridge Enthusiast, Computer Science, Teacher (7-12), Technical Trainer, Michael's Mom



Millie Lockert 1923-2017

ACBL Life Master
Director, Co-founder
No. KY Bridge Center
BIDittle Mentor
Tricia's Mom

[Editor's Note – while it is our policy to avoid commercial appeals and ads of any kind in the ALERT, the fact that Tricia is a Unit 124 member, plays frequently at the Northern Kentucky Bridge Club, is a Middle/High School Teacher, and has had success getting school programs running, made sharing her message a priority. We need members and Teachers who want to volunteer to bring Bridge to Middle and High Schools to collaborate and to use best practices. Tricia's success at engaging 7th graders speaks for itself. I look forward to other success stories from our members about teaching bridge and engaging

youth bridge players. Neither I, nor Unit 124, has a financial interest in BIDittle].

District 11 – Engaging Growth

By Steve Moese

Let me start by saying that I have happily served the cause of bridge education since 2006, even though I am not a certified bridge teacher. All that I do, I do as a willing volunteer because I love this game. I believe I am not alone.

Last November the District 11 Board elected me to serve as their president. As a result, I asked our Unit Board to relieve me of my role as Vice President (though I remain on the Unit Board through the end of 2019).

I have been given the privilege of serving on the Board of Governors as District 11's 2nd alternate to the Board of Directors. In that capacity I have seen how the ACBL works and how it doesn't. I have chaired the modestly successful Board of Governor's Committee for Teachers and Club Managers, and have brought several new ideas to the board of Directors on behalf of Bridge Teachers and Club Managers throughout the ACBL.

This perspective has given me insight into the Bridge Ecosystem. The Ecosystem is a fancy way to talk about how all the various parts of the bridge world interact. Think in terms of the work, communication, and money flows (relationships) between the ACBL, Districts, Units, Teachers, and Clubs. Think of our members as customers of these stakeholders.

Currently there is poor communication and almost no collaboration among Districts and Units when it comes to sharing best practices, developing and testing new ideas, and identifying affordable ways to grow bridge.

Growth's 3 legs: **Members, Classes, and Tables.** Obvious that real growth is interdependent – each leg depends in some way on the other. The more members you have the more classes you create, the more tables of bridge you have, and eventually the bigger tournaments get.

Our current arrangement emphasizes business independence and isolates liability, so that no one collaborates and no one assumes the risk of another business. This applies to all relationships among ACBL, Districts, Units, Teachers and Clubs. This has led to a fractured ecosystem unused to that most important kindergarten skill – **"playing nice with others"**. As a result, **no one is piloting the growth plane.** We all depend on the efforts of a very few, and those very few are the clubs and teachers.

Truth: Clubs are the Lifeblood of the ACBL. They are the engine of growth.

Truth: Teachers are critical to helping new players achieve a comfortable level of skill and socialization in area clubs. They create the desire to continue.

Truth: Tournaments depend on a steady stream of new players looking for a competitive challenge and on their personal Masterpoint® mission.

Challenge: Membership is aging – our median age is 72+ and getting older every year. New members average 65.5 years old. If it takes a player about 6 years to get to Life Master, then the average new lie Master will be about 72 years old. How many tournament years does this person have, and how many tournaments against best competition will they want to attend?

We are fretting and working against the wrong end of the bridge player lifecycle - The ACBL member, Masterpoint maven, and tournament player will grow naturally from the new players.

What we need are many more new players.

District 11 has recognized this and has begun Stakeholder Meetings. These meetings are for Teachers, Club Managers and I/N players to exchange best practice, create collaborative relationships, and learn actively from each other.

Dayton focused on Regional Tournament Best Practice. **Cincinnati** developed best practices for clubs to attract beginning duplicate players.

In **Louisville/Lexington**, Vangie Smith and Kit Overpeck offered a discussion on clubs use of Pianola, an electronic service that manages emails and websites for clubs. We use this service for Unit and District communications – you’ve already seen the emails (you probably thought they were from the ACBL).

In **Indianapolis** we led a discussion about Growing Bridge Players. Mike Purcell and I talked about best practices like Supervised Play, Come and Play, Rubber Bridge, BIDittle (Tricia Smaracko), Mini-Bridge, HOOL, and other variants of our game. Why? Because people will come to bridge if they find fun and the social interaction they seek. If they find grumpy players and lots of shouting and acting out, we’ll never see them again. Dallas and NYC have very large bridge clubs that are charging full table fees for people to come and play rubber bridge in their club space. Honors in Manhattan (NYC) claims they now get upward of 80 table a week of incremental fees just from rubber

bridge alone. They’re even exploring opening their space to Canasta Tournaments.

What these big clubs are learning is revolutionary. Adults want fun. If you give them fun repeatedly, they will return. If you help them develop confidence and skill, they will commit. If you help them become competitive, they will be hooked for life. Not because of Masterpoints, or titles or anything else but the intrinsic motivation to enjoy and succeed at the same time.

What we can claim in Cincinnati is that we have been working toward this revelation for the past several years.

The upcoming Stakeholder event at the Cincinnati Flying Pig Regional is defined. The Cincinnati Bridge Association Unit 124 will host the **ACBL Best Practices Teacher Workshop** on Monday June 3 and Tuesday June 4 at the Cincinnati Bridge Center. Cost will be \$100 per person prepaid in advance (you must



prepay to reserve) and \$125 at the door. There are only 32 slots available and we perceive strong demand. If you are a certified TAP teacher, the Education Foundation will subsidize your fee so the net cost will be \$50 to you. If you want to be certified as an ACBL best practices teacher, you must pass an oral exam at the end of the course (cost \$25 payable to the instructor). There are prerequisites for the seminar – the ACBL wants people experienced in bridge to teach new adults. The Best Practices Teacher Workshop shifts the focus from now obsolete TAP – that taught the WHAT of bridge to beginners – to **HOW BEST** to teach adults this game. Please hold your requests for reservation – I will send a message and flyer to everyone once details are confirmed with the ACBL and the seminar leaders. We are likely to have Ms. Patty Tucker from District 7 and Learn Bridge in a Day?® fame.

More details at:

[District 11 Education](#)

[District 11 Stakeholder Meetings](#)

In addition, District 11 has appointed Siraj Haji (Columbus Unit 122) as Education Chair, and asked him to appoint his committee. First focus will be on a thorough assessment of education in the entire district (target audience, strengths/weaknesses, opportunities/threats) and to fashion an actionable proposal to strengthen education across all units.

We have much to do. I talked with the new ACBL Executive Director for the ACBL, Mr. Joe Jones, at the Board of Governor's meeting in Hawai'i. Joe sees the need for fiscally responsible growth as I do. He supports

the efforts to strengthen the ecosystem for teachers and club managers. He is very cautious to say that he himself is the only person working on growth at ACBL headquarters.

Are you shocked? Don't be. Growth has been the responsibility of clubs and teachers from the beginning. That's what being the LIFE BLOOD OF THE ACBL means.

While we face an uphill climb integrating any financial flows among stakeholders, I believe there is a path to succeed sharing **knowledge**.

The trick? Find who is interested in learning bridge and get them to a nearby solution that engages them and gets them integrated easily into the bridge community where they live. We don't have this mapped anywhere. We do not have a coordinated information system for tracking and reporting prospects, their interest, their preferred learning approach, and what they might want from Bridge. Nor is there a data base of lessons, rubber/social bridge, teaching games, I/N games and appropriate computer-based alternatives. If we are to turn back the membership decline we have to do better reaching our prospects.

Certainly technology exists to do all that for us. However the ACBL just lost over \$400K on a failed attempt to engage Microsoft's Customer Relationship Management software. Investing here is now a sore point.

In the spirit of doing what we can with what we have, Executive Director Joe Jones is working to 1) eliminate the failed trial membership (too low a response for continued support), and 2) replace it with a free trial membership (including pared down benefits) that will allow the ACBL to capture critical contact information about likely bridge prospects. Hopefully this trial device will succeed where others have failed.

With this in mind, Units and Districts must have programs and skilled people in place to welcome, engage and integrate new players wherever and whenever we find them. Effective communication is a MUST. For this reason, the excellent efforts of the Unit 124 Education Committee (Mr. L. J Newman, Chair) and the Unit 124 Membership Committee (Mr. Steve Messinger, Chair) are critically important. The combination of these two committees ensures that:

- 1) The Unit engages the prospective player and offers them a seamless array of services that gets them to fun playing bridge right away
- 2) The Teachers can teach instead of investing effort and time in recruiting and outreach,

- 3) The Club Managers can offer 0-5 or 0-10 games on demand.
- 4) That the array of services allows every prospect to decide whether they want rubber bridge, club bridge, or tournaments.

Nothing is worse than wanting something only to find it not available when you want it. Same thing for prospective players. We need to give them attractive options to engage in their time, not ours. This need for instant gratification has worsened with the internet and Amazon.

Once we have a working, integrated process, we can test the waters with Facebook and Google advertising, MeetUps and even college programs – these tools will unleash the flood gates of interest from the younger generations.

How can you help? Engage! Open lines of communication. We have 935 Members 172 of which have not shared an e-mail and 118 of which have bad email addresses, and 7 of which have blocked their email with the ACBL.

VOLUNTEER!!

For all Unit 124 Bridge Classes, please go to:

http://www.cincybridge.com/CBA_Lessons_3.html

Partnerships!

By Joanne Earls



If you're looking for a partner for a single game, call the director of the game you want to play in - s/he's the first to know about others who are available for that game. You can find directors' names on the cincybridge.com website. Another great way to meet prospective partners is at lessons or during supervised play. Unsure about an appropriate game? Call me!

If you'd like a regular partner, give me a call or send an email telling me about your game and your interests. How many master points do you have? What system/conventions do you play? Are you a ferocious competitor or a more relaxed player? Which games are you available to play in, and when can you start? I'll do my best to find someone who's also looking for a standing game.

Joanne Earls

772-4395

jolman@fuse.net

Name Tags

Contact Joanne Earls – 772-4395; jolman@fuse.net

Your Name Here

Cincinnati Bridge Association

First nametag FREE to new members!
Otherwise \$4 each.

Ladies & Gentleman, We Are...



By Dean Congbalay
dcongbalay@comey.com

We are ladies and gentlemen playing a game we love with other ladies and gentlemen, right?

At a recent game, I was sitting west and proceeded to my next table. The woman sitting north clutched two boards in her hands.

"Would you like me to move the boards?" I asked.

She handed me the boards, and I brought them to table I had just vacated.

A minute or so later, I heard a ruckus at the next table.

"These are the wrong boards!" I heard someone say.

We then discovered that I passed the wrong boards to the table.

"Are you north?" the woman to my left asked me, sternly and condescendingly.

"I passed the boards you gave me, and I asked first!" I said, smiling. (I wasn't smiling inside...)

We are ladies and gentlemen playing a game we love with other ladies and gentlemen, right?

A couple days later, I played a game at another club. Toward the end of the session, I looked down and saw a cornucopia of garbage.

There were empty cups. Popcorn. Candy wrappers. Lots of litter.

I thought to myself: Didn't most of these people raise children? Do they live like this at home?

We are ladies and gentlemen playing a game we love with other ladies and gentlemen, right?

Later that week, at another club, a woman came to my table and noticed that I was wearing shorts on a chilly 69 degree day in Sarasota.

"Where do you think you are?" she said, touching my bare knee.

I don't know this woman well and was at a loss for words.

I'm not sure whether she sensed how uncomfortable (That's a polite way of saying repulsed...) I was; despite my lack of verbiage, she continued touching my knee -- and even massaged it a bit with her fingers.

We are ladies and gentlemen playing a game we love with other ladies and gentlemen, right?

A few minutes later, I bid 2♥ after my RHO, a different woman, bid 1NT. After the board was played, I told the table that my 2♥ bid showed both majors -- something my partner did not alert.

"You should have told me!" the declarer said, snarling.

"I just did," I remarked, smiling.

"No, before I played the hand!" she continued. "I would have played it differently!"

"I couldn't say anything before because it would have told my partner what I had in my hand," I said. "You are welcome to call the director."

Of course, she did not.

We are ladies and gentlemen playing a game we love with other ladies and gentlemen, right?

After the game, I met three fellow players for an early bird dinner. For more than an hour, we laughed, joked and told stories. I loved every minute of it.

We are ladies and gentlemen playing a game we love with other ladies and gentlemen, right?

Sometimes, right on!

"I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it." — **Pablo Picasso**

"If things seem under control, you are just not going fast enough." — **Mario Andretti**

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor, catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." — **Mark Twain**

"Nothing will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome." — **Samuel Johnson**

DON'T STOP PICKING UP NUGGETS

By Rob Weidenfeld



OK. Here I am writing an article with bridge advice. Bridge advice for which I am a leading candidate to understand. Yes I am an old-timer having learned bridge almost 6 decades ago. I have learned so much and I have relegated much of it to the trash heaps of my cranium. I know how to count the hand, make inferences from bids or plays not made, and figure out by process of elimination correct declarer or defensive plays. But I don't always do it. Like so many of us, I often make what looks like the safe play or the play that most people would consider the routine play. This is not all bad as often that will get you decent results. But if you want to become a better player, then you have to sometimes go a little deeper. When I am not playing frequently, I try to read bridge as much as possible, concentrating on what I view as the most glaring weaknesses of my game. I often pick up old chestnuts to try and embed what I had integrated into my arsenal.

I recently re-read **Defend With Your Life**, a 1981 classic written by Terence Reese and Eddie Kantar. In it you are given 75 hands as defender and asked to make the right play at the crucial moment. The hands require thought, perhaps for some more time than you would allocate at the bridge table. But like any learning process, the thinking time improves when you practice. Many of the featured plays are counter intuitive but they are always logical. Here is an example from Deal #3:

Vul: Unk ♠10
 Dlr: S ♥ KQ3
 Lead: ♦A ♦ J1097
 ♣ 109742

♠	Q9543	N W E S
♥	AJ7	
♦	A63	
♣	83	

S	W	N	E
1♠	P	1N	P
3♣	P	3N	P
4♠	P	5♣	AP

You are playing in a team game so your only focus is doing everything humanly possible to defeat the contract you are defending. Yet, the defense at Matchpoints should go exactly the same way. So, for a brief moment during the auction you fantasize about playing in a contract of 4♠ but your hopes are dashed when your opponents bid to 5♣, certainly less promising from your angle. You lead the ♦A. Your partner drops the ♦2 and declarer the ♦K. What are your chances now to defeat the contract? What do you lead?

Declarer is marked with 6 ♠s and 4 or 5 ♣s. If he/she is 6-5 there is no hope, so you focus on 6-4. If partner has either black ace the contract is down, but that is a pipe dream if South truly has their jump shift. Partner must score a trump trick if this contract is to be defeated. That is only possible if declarer has 4 ♠s which do not include the ♣K. With the ♣AK declarer will draw 2 rounds of trump and have no problem making 5, losing only to the ♥A. Therefore partner must have ♣Kx to defeat this contract. You know from the auction that partner has a singleton ♠. But partner will not score it unless he gets a ♠ ruff. Clearly if you make a passive lead, even cashing ♥A and any normal continuation, declarer will get to dummy with a ♥, take the ♣ finesse, and will easily score up a game. All your efforts must therefore be to denying declarer an entry to dummy to take the finesse. Process of elimination tells you that leading a ♣ is out as that gives a declarer a free finesse. Playing ♥s, even the ♥A first gives declarer the entry he needs. Playing a ♦ does no good as declarer can once again gain entry to dummy by 2 ♥ plays. So though it seems counter intuitive, you must lead a ♠, but which one?

There is no fast entry to dummy. But leading a ♠ spot card will give declarer a quick entry if he/she happens to hold the ♠AKJ. Therefore, the only right play at trick 2 is the spade ♠Q! Now declarer is without hope. Declarer's only hope at this juncture is to get to dummy with a ♥ but when he/she tries that, you rise with the ♥A and give partner a ♠ ruff. Here is the entire hand:

Vul: Unk Dlr: S Lead: ♦A	♠ 10 ♥ KQ3 ♦ J1097 ♣ 109742	♠ 6 ♥ 109852 ♦ Q8542 ♣ K5
♠ Q9543 ♥ AJ7 ♦ A63 ♣ 83	N W E S	♠ AKJ872 ♥ 64 ♦ K ♣ AQJ6

The vast majority of competent bridge players have the ability to make a play such as this. What many of us lack is the discipline to

take the time to figure it out.

“The way to develop self-confidence is to do the thing you fear and get a record of successful experiences behind you. Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.” — *William Jennings Bryan*
 “Pearls don't lie on the seashore. If you want one, you must dive for it.” — *Chinese proverb*

EP 25: COLD WAR AT THE TABLE

By Steve Felson

HOW TO PLAY LOSING BRIDGE AND STILL OBTAIN A GREAT RESULT



Vladimir
Kryuchkov (1924-
2007): *Requiescet
in infernum*



The facts about the 1991 fall of the USSR are mostly public knowledge here in the 22nd century, so I don't see why Bob and I still have to keep secrets. This is especially so when a fascinating bridge hand helped foil the coup that would have kept

Communism in business. It's time the public heard the whole story!

The gentleman pictured above was head of the KGB at the time in question. Not surprisingly, he was also one of the lead plotters against Communist Party General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and his "new thinking." While still a fully committed Communist, Gorby favored peace with the West, *glasnost* (more openness), free elections within the Party, etc. The KGB was not amused.

Kryuchkov's fellow conspirators included Comrades Yanayev (Vice President of the Soviet Union), Pavlov (Prime Minister), Yazov (Minister of Defense), and Pugo (Minister of Interior) – not the wholesome crowd you might want as neighbors. I'm sure they all had autographed photos of Joseph Stalin in their desk drawers, framed and ready to hang back up.

Non-coincidentally, at that very moment Robert Brown and I were renting a small Moscow flat, drinking *kvass* with the locals, carrying the credentials of regional agricultural officials, and speaking Russian with the appropriate provincial accents. We also possessed enough genuine-looking US currency to buy a small country, each bill bearing a reasonable likeness of Comrade Benjamin Franklin.

By 1991 the Soviet Empire was breaking up but Communism was still intact inside Russia. The West was worried that Gorbachev's hardline opponents in the KGB and the Red Army were going to remove him by force and drag the compliant Russian people back to the bad old

days. Our job was to encourage the democracy option by any means necessary.

Boris Nikolaevich _____ drove Comrade Kryuchkov's KGB limo and took care of whatever his boss needed taking care of. (Boris's last name and likeness remain classified, since he may or may not still be alive and well in Pumpkin Center, South Dakota – that wasn't our department.)

Boris loved the Soviet system, meaning he loved his job and would never have gone over to the American enemy. However, he had a strong affection for American C-notes, plus, we thought, a pretty good feeling for what his boss might be up to, so we made it our business to get to know him. When he saw our roll of Benjamins he probably thought we were selling borscht on the black market, but everyone around him was selling something so why should he care?

Kryuchkov didn't have time for decadent card games like bridge, but his wife, Ludmilla, was an ardent devotee. She was always looking for a game, as Boris told us after consuming a half-dozen White Russians in the Intourist Hotel bar. Next thing we knew we were shuffling and dealing in Comrade Kryuchkov's upstairs parlor. It must have been our lucky day, since parked outside were several ZIL-4104 limos, indicating that high Soviet officials were meeting somewhere in the house.



ZIL-4104, V-1 model with automatic vodka dispenser

I want to get to the bridge story so I'll skip the details of how Bob faked a trip to the bathroom and placed a microphone on the wall of the room full of plotting Comrades. Ahh, the good old days, when bugging the KGB still gave you that special feeling.

Next, we had to slow the bridge game down so we could get back to the listening equipment. Finally, we figured out that these tottering, vodka-soaked commissars were about to put Gorbachev under house arrest and take over the country. Suddenly we had to get in touch with the US Embassy, and fast.

Back at the table, using signals developed by the Agency gaming unit, Bob suggested that one of us feign an appendicitis attack. No way, I said – I consider Soviet surgeons more dangerous than the KGB.

So – what to do?

By this time Ludmilla was declarer in 3NT on the next hand. Desperate, I suggested through table talk code that we give away as many tricks as possible, congratulate our hostess on making a tough contract, excuse ourselves, and head for the nearest payphone. That sounded better. (And what a great code we had! Imagine what real bridge players could do with it.)

Here is the hand, bidding immaterial since everyone was playing Eastern Orthodox Fairwood (known as *Scheinvald* in West Germany).

Vul: **ALL*** ♠ A4
 Dlr: **Secret** ♥ K104
 3N South ♦ KQJ1054
 Lead: ♦4 ♣ 8

ME		BOB
♠ 973		♠ J8652
♥ 9752	W	♥ AQ8
♦ J9742	N	♦ K108
♣ 4	E	♣ AK
	S	

Ludmilla

♠KQ10
 ♥ J63
 ♦ Q65
 ♣ J872

Okay: now to find a way to let South make this tricky contract. I considered leading my club Singleton but that seemed too obvious. I therefore led my fourth best diamond; Bob had all our honors anyway, and one of his specialties is terrible defense.

Ludmilla puts up dummy's Ace and Bob, in tempo, plays the King. Ludmilla thinks a bit, plays low, and calls for a club from dummy. Bob takes his King and leads the ten of diamonds, which holds when Ludmilla ducks. And that is that – after knocking out Bob's Ace of clubs, she gets three spade tricks, two diamonds and four clubs.

We congratulate her on making a tough contract ("*zhestkiy kontrakt*") with only 22 HCP. She is beaming. We make our excuses and rush for the street.

While we drive around searching for a working telephone, Bob commends himself for trashing our defense and creating an unsuspecting exit opportunity.

"You didn't trash our defense, I did. All I had to do was overtake your 10 of Diamonds with my Jack and lead a heart for five defensive tricks. Your unblocking of the King and then the ten was the only defense that would *beat* the contract. She can't let you get back to me with a low diamond so she ducks your ten and holds onto her Queen stopper."

Bob thinks for a moment. "Doesn't matter – it's the result that counts. Our hostess was happy and didn't suspect a thing. Hey, there's a phone booth – let's go save the world from Communism."

And so we did by making sure that Boris Yeltsin, leader of the pro-democracy faction, was way ahead of the plotters when the time came. You can just barely see us, way over to the right in the famous tank-top photograph, watching Yeltsin (with paper in hand) talking the soldiers out of firing on the new government. August 19, 1991 – memory still fresh.



Soon after, when Yeltsin became President of the new Russian Federation, his 1st act after banning the Communist Party was to hold a secret Kremlin ceremony where he gave us these magnificent Soviet uniforms.



Of course, we could never wear them in public. As far as I know they are still hanging in an apartment in Pumpkin Center, South

Dakota, next to a cardboard suitcase full of fading \$100 bills. Bob still keeps that stuff available just in case.

RUMINATIONS

By Robert S Brown



Some years ago, I asked Norm Coombs a simple question, "Board 29 – who deals and who's vulnerable?" Norm, apparently capable of dividing by 4, correctly answered that North was the dealer. But

he was stumped on vulnerability – I of course knew that both pairs were vulnerable. Indeed, I uniquely can recite the vulnerability of all 36 boards and I therefore justifiably deem myself superior to other players who merely excel in outscoring me.

After importunings from the Albatross¹, I have reluctantly agreed to reveal the simple mnemonic pattern which tracks the slight shift in the vulnerability sequence that occurs after every 4 boards:

<u>O</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>B</u>
1,17,33	5,21	9,25	13,29
<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>O</u>
2,18,34	6,22	10,26	14,30
<u>E</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>N</u>
3,19,35	7,23	11,27	15,31
<u>B</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
4,20,36	8,24	12,28	16,32

O = No one vulnerable

1, 8, 11, 14, 17, 24, 27, 30, 33

N = N/S vulnerable

2, 5, 12, 15, 18, 21, 28, 31, 34

E = E/W vulnerable

3, 6, 9, 16, 19, 22, 25, 32, 35

B = Both vulnerable

4, 7, 10, 13, 20, 23, 26, 29, 36

Although the issue is of little relevance to me², I must take issue with the ACBL's ranking nomenclature. First, there the irrational miscegenation of gemstones with metals; second, the intermingling of base and precious metals; and third, the mis-ordering of both gem and metal values. The proper ranking by value, compared to the existing insanity, is:

LIFE MASTER

EXISTING

Bronze
Silver
Ruby
Gold
Sapphire
Diamond
Emerald
Platinum

REVISED

Bronze
Silver
Platinum
Gold
Sapphire
Ruby
Emerald
Diamond

GRAND MASTER

"What you have to do and the way you have to do it is incredibly simple. Whether you are willing to do it is another matter." — Peter Drucker

"Life is being on the wire, everything else is just waiting."
— Karl Wallenda

The presiding elders of the ACBL lament the Game's declining appeal without considering their own culpability in this trend. Who would want to compete in a system whose Platinum Life Master rank above has a monetary value that is substantially less than each of the five levels below it!! Let's revise the Life Master tiers as outlined above and end the madness now.

BE NICE – HELP NEW PLAYERS LEARN ENJOY THEIR GAME



by Potter Orr

Most of us who play duplicate bridge on a regular basis thoroughly enjoy the competitive aspect of this form of the game. Every hand is an opportunity to crush the opponents - both those that are at our table now and the others sitting our direction. We expect close adherence to all rules by our opponents and know that the director is available if that doesn't appear to be the case.

Unfortunately, the take no prisoners approach is detrimental to the game we so enjoy. New duplicate players who lack the battle scars are often put off by our behavior. If we want to continue to have a supply of opponents in the future, we need to make very sure that we are not driving away newer players.

There are several simple steps that each of us can take towards this end.

Identify newer players. Most of us know the regular players at the bridge center and can easily identify new people. Even if we don't recognize them, it is usually obvious after a board or two who are new to duplicate players. Restrain your hypercompetitive instincts with these players. Here are some ideas about how you can do that.

1. No matter how much you want to "discuss" the results of the last hand with your partner, make sure to take the time to say hello to each new set of opponents who arrives at your table. Introduce yourself and your partner.
2. Resign yourself to taking a small hit from these players.
 - a. If they are bidding out of tempo, it is usually because they are uncertain what to do next and have no idea that taking extra time for a decision imposes a burden on their partners.

¹ Whose directives I observe sequaciously to avoid the condign retribution that would otherwise ensue.

² My remaining life expectancy and MP accumulation rate indicate a silver maximum.

- b. Their partners at the same time are very unlikely to draw a correct inference from the delay. Calling the director as you should with a more experienced player simply intimidates the new players and makes them wonder why they're here.
 - c. Failure to alert or announce is a similar issue with newer players. Sometimes they have just forgotten the convention but in other cases they simply don't know that they're supposed to alert.
 - d. Leads or bids out of turn and revokes change the play of the hand to such a degree that you will have no choice but to call the director as you should – but see number 3.
3. When it is necessary to call the director, consider the way in which you call the director.
- a. Raising your hand without a word to the opponents and calling for the director loudly or with an accusatory tone (you all know what that is) creates a tremendously high stress situation for newer players.
 - b. Mentioning to them in a quiet voice that you believe there may have been any irregularity and that you are planning on asking the director to come and explain the situation is an approach that has a good chance of making the experience less stressful for them.
4. If some of the situations that I described in bullet point number 2 have occurred and you have been farsighted enough not to make an immediate issue of them, you can gently explain the issue at the end of the round. When I make one of these explanations, I try very hard to emphasize the fact that I am not complaining about their behavior on the boards just played. Rather I like to cast it as a help to them in case it should come up again with someone less charitable.

You North, are dealer, vulnerable versus not. You pass with the following hand:

♠ 6 4 I agree with you since a vulnerable 2♥ in the first seat should have a bit more, at least the ♥10. LHO passes and partner opens 1 NT and RHO bids 2♣, Alerted as one suited hand. What do you bid?

You have not discussed agreements so 2♥ seems natural. Partner alerts and it goes pass by RHO and 2♠ by partner. RHO doubles. Now what? The bidding so far has been:

N	E	S	W
P	P	1N ¹	2♣ ²
2♥ ³	P	2♠	X
??			

¹ (15-17)
² (Alerted as a one suited hand)
³ Meant as natural but partner alerts

If you bid 3♥, you are not a very good bridge player. This is my firm belief and if you disagree with it, I want to ask you why do you play bridge? Debbie Cummings in my view one of the best bridge players in Cincinnati. I say this from years of experience of playing against her and sometimes with her. We did not get in this business to win, but to learn and improve. And I am asking all of you to decide NOW. Do you want to play good bridge or do you want to win, because it is NOT the same thing.

This was the full hand and you can see the results from a pair game on Jan 1 2019 (Happy New Year!!)

Board 21

North Deals
 N-S Vul

♠ 6 4
 ♥ K J 8 7 6 5
 ♦ 10 7
 ♣ J 6 2

♠ K 9 8 7 5 3
 ♥ A 3
 ♦ K 8
 ♣ Q 9 3

♠ Q 2
 ♥ Q 10 9
 ♦ A 6 4 2
 ♣ 10 8 7 4

♠ A J 10
 ♥ 4 2
 ♦ Q J 9 5 3
 ♣ A K 5

EW 2♠; S 2♥; N 1♥; NS 1♦; EW 1♣; Par -110

Results versus Process: What are you chasing?



By Amit Raturi
 Michael Rosenberg https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Rosenberg is my hero in bridge, Not because of his playing ability (obviously that's pretty darn good) but because his book (https://books.google.com/books/about/Bridge_Zia_and_Me.html?id=oF42etBX3zIC) has the best afterword on bridge ethics. If you don't review it after this column, my time is completely wasted.

Contract	Lead	Score		Matchpoints		Pair	Pair E-W
		N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W		
3♠	W -1 ♦ 10	50		7.38	0.63	7-Torello-Earls	7-Etson-Koppenhafer
1NT	E -1 ♦ Q	50		7.38	0.63	10-Hall-Francis	2-Ringel-Barrett
3♥	S -1 ♠ 7	100		4.56	3.44	1-Singerman-Cook	4-Albrecht-Felson
3♥	N -1 ♠ Q	100		4.56	3.44	3-Fisk-Pleatman	9-Lipp-Wisner
2NT	S -1 ♠ 7	100		4.56	3.44	6-Goodman-Berliant	5-Gerowitz-Duncan
2♠	W 2 ♦ 10	110	2.31	5.69	2-Kloecker-Outcalt	6-Ma-Vasudevan	
3NT	S -4 ♠ 3	400	1.19	6.81	4-Barron-Essig	1-Wilson-Campbell	
2♠x	S -3 ♠ 10	800	0.06	7.94	5-Cummings-De Lany	3-Raturi-Vogel	

So this article is not about winning bridge. It is about the right way to play the game. What are Debbie's obligations at this stage?

First, partner has alerted her natural bid....so if she bids 3♥, an ethical partner would treat that as a cuebid showing a good hand for spades. Is that what you want? Now you will be in 3 or 4 Spades, obviously doubled when playing with an ethical partner. So she must assume that partner will behave ethically and not pass her 3♥ bid assuming that partner's original assumption showed 5 spades in the N hand is not going to change with the hurried runout. Most good bridge players at this stage will not stake their reputation and further exacerbate the problem. She knows that partner thinks she has spades and partner's alert is a luxury that she (they) have been given by the Laws of Ethics (disclosure) in bridge. She will not milk that luxury to her advantage with a disturbed/nervous 3♥ bid.

Debbie passed!!! We got a top. And trust me when I say this. I did not want that top.

Sometimes when you act right, even a win by your opponents is not worth it to them. I don't play bridge to win. I play the game right and try to good results by doing the right things. Your mistakes are not feathers /jewels in my cap. There is no joy in winning like this. And when opponents like Debbie Cummings offer you a good board by doing the ethical thing, they make you proud of the game that you play, not because you got a good result, but because you feel you live in a community of GOOD people.

W	N	E	S
1♣	P	1♦	P
1N	P	4♣	P
4♦	P	6♦	AP

Any partner of mine that tells me that I should do something because it's the "winning" line can go to hell. I mean that. I have

played with many players who believe that and I don't agree with them; some of them were pretty darn good players too (or so the ACBL rankings said). Eugene (ya, our BOSS) tempers and assists my thinking here which is why I like playing with him. "If you play for results, you will NEVER have a good partnership"...direct quote. Both Agnes and Debbie are great bridge players. Results don't matter. What they taught me on this board was good bridge is about being a good person and the process of playing bridge matters more than the results you get.

And I really wish Amy Fisher would start writing for us again as she touched on these matters in ways that I had not visualized before.

Editor's Note: What is their agreement?. If transfer, then Debbie is right to pass. Debbie made the wrong bid. If natural then Debbie is allowed (AI to know partner forgets) to bid naturally. What she may not do is pass fearing partner will continue. MI from an improper alert

can get complicated. Whenever MI arises, call the director who first determines facts. If your side is defending and you caused MI, call the director at the end of the hand. For more on ethics, see the [D11 Ethics Handbook](#) and any of the many discussions on [Bridge Winners](#).

Trick One Defense Problem

By Otto Walter

Do you lead your Ace against the opponent's suit slam contract? It is often right to do so in order to prevent the declarer from discarding his or dummy's holding in that suit on some other running suit. What if you hold two non-trump suit Aces, do you lead one of them? Here is a hand and the bidding from the November 29th club game:

Vul: NS	♠ J83	
Dlr: W	♥ 98542	
6♦	♦ 93	
Lead: ??	♣ 876	
♠ K107		♠ Q952
♥ KQ6		♥ AJ3
♦ 1075		♦ AKQJ65
♣ KQJ2		♣ --
	♠ A64	
	♥ 107	
	♦ 84	
	♣ A109543	

Lorna Davis has often impressed me with her logic when making bids and leads. This hand is another example of good decision making. She was on lead with the South hand and reasoned that

declarer must be void in a suit in order to bid slam missing 2 Aces. Because of her ♣ length and West's ♣ bid, she felt the void had to be ♣. The opponents bidding did not suggest a 2nd long running suit and so her ♠A should score later in the hand.

Lorna led the ♦8 and was rewarded when declarer had to make a guess in ♠s and guessed her for the ♠J. Declarer lost 2 ♠ tricks for down 1. Note that the lead of either Ace would allow the slam to make easily. Well done yet again Lorna.

[Ed. Note – Declarer should know that leading away from a Jack is very bad too. Lorna is not likely to do that either. Often the best lead against a small slam is passive – trumps].

"Every society honors its live conformists and its dead troublemakers." — [Mignon McLaughlin](#)

"You can only be as good as you dare to be bad." — [John Barrymore](#)

"If it's a good idea, go ahead and do it. It's much easier to apologize than it is to get permission." — [Rear Admiral Grace Hopper](#)

BIT & Blue HAWAI'I

By Steve Moese

Hawai'i - a dream vacation for my wife and for me. NABC Bridge? Not so fast – my wife doesn't play, and I don't want to travel with her all the way to the Islands just so she is a beach bridge widow.

We stayed 2 blocks from the Hawaiian Village, but were rarely there – Waikiki and Honolulu simply offer too much to see and do.

I attended the Board of Governor's Meeting Sunday Morning to fulfil my District 11 obligation. Bridge? What could another NABC do to surprise us? Well, planning 7 years prior left the ACBL with high room rates at the host hotel, and a room quota that was impossible to fill. The loss would be tremendous. I have no official word as to the total but high 6 figures seems right. We can't say with certainty why the ACBL saw such poor attendance (6034.5 tables, the lowest table total since 1985 Winnipeg's 5533). Perhaps the wild fires ravaging California did impact how many west-coasters could get to Hawai'i. We can't know. Such a shortfall doesn't help the local volunteers who put their hearts into running a top-notch tournament at a world class site. My wife and I found many nice affordable restaurants within walking distance or a short ride from the Hotel by taxi or trolley. Public transportation was abundant. Uber worked great. And the weather, Oh, the weather. Even the rain showers were gorgeous and delightful.

Perhaps the size of the loss will force reluctant Board Members to look hard at cutting costs and at the entire NABC contract process. Today, NABC Tournaments are generally booked 5-7 years in advance and often require a second trip to the same venue within 5-6 years, usually with more favorable pricing for the Hotel. Go ahead, try to predict what the economy and comparable hotel rates will be that far in advance. The advent of the internet and AirBnB as well as alternative rental options has tightened the window on NABC economics.

A 5-day stay in Hawaii could have cost \$1200 for the host hotel, \$1000 for airfare (\$4000 business class) and \$750 for food and refreshments. That's \$600 to \$1200 per day! Compare that to \$50 entry fees (now \$60-70 per day) and the bridge organization is on the wrong side of the spend. From the player's perspective as little as 10% of what the player spends goes to the tournament itself. From the ACBL's perspective the player spends \$1500 (Hotel plus 5 days' entries) toward the cost of the tournament. The ACBL plans to earn more than \$2MM profit from the 3

NABCs each year. Hawai'i changed that for 2018. Not going to happen.

During the Blue Ribbon Pairs (NABC+) a very strange appeal was lodged under circumstances with elements that to this day have not been fully addressed.

The following detail is from Bridge Winners at <https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/honolulu-brp-7nt-lead-discussion/>

This post garnered more comments (1992) and discussion than any other post.

Event: Blue Ribbon Pairs

Session: First final session

Date: Nov. 29, 2018

South Deals All Vul	<i>B Glubok</i> ♠73 ♥642 ♦KJ843 ♣1042	
<i>B Levin</i> ♠K92 ♥KQJ95 ♦ ♣AQJ75	North West East South	<i>J Grue</i> ♠AQJ1065 ♥A107 ♦Q95 ♣K
	<i>H Antonsen</i> ♠84 ♥83 ♦A10762 ♣9863	

S	W	N	W
P	1♥	P	1♠
P	3♠	P	4♣
P	4♦	X	P
P	4N	P	5♠
P	7♠	P	7N
P ^a	P	P	

Final contract: 7NT
Opening lead: ♦4
Table result: Down 2, N-S plus 200
Director ruling: 7NT down 2, N-S plus 200
Director panel ruling: 7NT making 7, N-S minus 2220

Facts: The director was called to the table after the end of play. West complained that South hesitated for a long time before his last pass. South agreed that he broke tempo. West thought that the BIT suggested a diamond lead. On the other side of the screen, North said that the BIT was not that big; East said about one minute. North justified his diamond lead with:

- (a) Not a long BIT
- (b) South didn't double 4♣

(c) East made a comment while they waited for the tray: “Maybe I should not have done that because partner might be void.”

We established the BIT and confirmed the comment made. Six players were polled. The questions asked were: “With the auction and comment, what would you lead?” and, “What lead does the hesitation (without the comment) suggest?” In response to the first question, three of the pollees said they would lead a diamond and the same players said the hesitation suggested a diamond lead. The other three players said they would not lead a diamond. Two of these pollees said the hesitation suggested nothing; the third said that partner would have doubled clubs with the ♣A and doubled 7NT with the ♦A, so he would not lead a diamond anyway, and that the comment was irrelevant for him.

Director’s Ruling: We considered that either the comment or the hesitation in isolation were enough to wake the leader up to the possibility of defeating the contract. Also, the fact that half the pollees did not think that the hesitation suggested a diamond meant that the BIT, in our opinion, did not demonstrably suggest the winning action, and the action allegedly suggested by the BIT was also suggested by the Authorized Information (the comment).

The Appeal:

- The comment was irrelevant as per the pollees.
- The hesitation clearly indicated possession of an ace.
- A lead away from a king against a grand slam is highly unlikely, especially when the location of the king is known, so there is no guess on alternative lines of play.
- Only with the knowledge that partner has an ace would one choose a lead that could give away a trick.
- It was the unethical use of partner’s BIT that produced the diamond lead.

The Decision: A further poll was conducted. Five players were walked through the auction. When asked what they would lead, two chose a diamond – with one, the king was considered. One considered a spade or a diamond; one considered a spade or a club and one chose a spade. When given the information that the tray was slow, all deemed this suggested a diamond lead. Based on the new polling, it was determined that the pause of the tray suggested a diamond lead and all other leads were logical alternatives. Therefore the result was adjusted to 7NT by E–W making.

DIC: McKenzie Myers

Review panel: Gary Zeiger, Matt Koltnow, David Metcalf, Kevin Perkins

This incident has so many fascinating features.

First and foremost it calls attention to what a Break in Tempo (BIT) causes at the bridge table. Breaks in tempo are not themselves illegal or unethical. **However partner MUST NOT use any information implied by that break in subsequent call or plays.**

[I/N players have a hard time with this. Often people believe that they have the right to make their intended bid regardless of the BIT. Not so. The law requires that the BIT’s partner not choose any call or action that is demonstrably suggested over any logical alternative to that call. This fancy language means if the BIT says bid 4 spades, then you can’t bid 4 spades as long as there is a logical alternative (usually pass, but it could be another bid). When a BIT occurs, real bridge ends. The hand is taken away from that side and rests with a peer panel. If the peer panel finds no Logical alternative or no demonstrability, then the call or action chosen may stand.]

Here the BIT was at South’s FINAL pass before the opening leader was to choose what to do.

What’s not stated above is that the appeal was lodged late in the round and was not heard until a later round. The results would be a full board swing either way for Levin and Grue.

This hand was played behind screens where the disclosure rules are more liberal (more is required) and the BIT was clearly the responsibility of H Antonsen.

Joe Grue mentioned to Glubok that he thought he had made a mistake bidding 7N because his partner could be void. It is unclear from the evidence as presented at what point in time Grue’s comment occurred. Likely Grue was attempting to be fully transparent with his screen mate opponent.

The original ruling found the lead appropriate as the panel (informed of Grue’s comment) found the ♦ an indicated lead without the BIT, so they ruled the BIT did not demonstrably indicate a ♦ lead.

The appeals panel essentially retried the case (are they allowed to do this or must they confine their investigation to the ruling and findings already made?) by calling another panel, ignoring the findings first, and using the second panel itself to define whether Grue’s gratuitous comment was relevant. This seems inconsistent with

rules and process on the surface. However there appears to be nothing to stop an appeals committee from conducting their own panel of peers and ignoring the original panel results found but the director. I find this disturbing on so many levels. Panels are very tricky to run in an unbiased way. If one panels says yes and another of the same size says no, you don't get to choose – you have a clear maybe. When the panels contradict each other there can be no demonstrability.

Whether the gratuitous comment is relevant is not a topic for the player peer panel to decide – it is a matter of rule or law. And here things are woefully unclear. To not offer that fact to all peers polled based on the relevance opinion of 2 of the 6 peers seems unorthodox and unjustifiable.

If you read the Bridge Winner's post carefully you will see that top level players of world class caliber all come down on the side of the second ruling. Their rationales are somewhat contradictory:

- 1) The standard or expected lead against a grand slam in NT is the most passive lead available (here a ♠), or
- 2) The pause indicated that partner had to hold an Ace and since the ♦ suit was in focus, it had to be the ♦A.
- 3) They dismiss whether the lack of a double of 4♣ is indicative.
- 4) They dismiss the at the table comment to the leader as irrelevant (??? – the comment is AI after all).
- 5) They also claim that a double of 7N would show the ♦A. (Not resolving the self-contradictory assertions with pt 2 above).

What is clear – if it hesitates shoot it.

The contradictions and the potential for bias among those polled was never explored.

David Burn pointed out the problem with the current Director Appeals augmented with player peer polls:

"In the old days, TDs ruled in favour of the non-offending side (if any) and appeals committees made bridge judgement decisions where necessary. Nowadays we do the same thing in the opposite order - we collect the judgements first and then the TDs rule in favour of whoever "wins". But they could do that without being very very very good players or TDs - they're just tallying votes.

The reason this stinks is that formerly, [the players who were supposed to judge their peers could ask those at the table why they did what they did, and could investigate far more thoroughly what methods were being employed.](#)

[Latterly, such evidence is not even collected \(though the write-up does indicate at least that the rulers of first instance asked Glubok why he led a diamond\)."](#)

I find one more element of this whole situation astonishing. Did you see it? As published in the DAILY BULLETIN look again at the 5th bullet point from the appeal write-up:

- [It was the unethical use of partner's BIT that produced the diamond lead.](#)

The rules and regulations of bridge allow no one to accuse any player of unethical behavior in public. Yet, this was published in the Daily Bulletin case write up. I wrote the ACBL to ask for an investigation into who wrote the summary and whether disciplinary action was to be taken. Rob Gordon (National Recorder) replied that the incident was indeed very unfortunate and that the ACBL was looking into the situation. However, since the accusation in the write-up occurred at the NABC, he deferred to the Chief of Field Operations, Nancy Boyd. She told me that the matter was under investigation and she could not comment at that time. Paul Linxwiller, the editor of the ACBL Bulletin and the Daily Bulletin at the NABCs, was kind enough to call and explain to me that the appeal itself had gone late into the night bumping up against the publication deadline for the next day's bulletin. He claims that the summary was indeed poorly written by directors who did not have sufficient experience, and that the late submission to the Bulletin caused it to go unchallenged to press. Later the mystery author turned out to be Jill Levin (see the BW Article) and she apologized for the poor use of language.

I will say this. As simple as the game can be, when we enter into BITs and unauthorized information decisions, we are no longer playing bridge. I do not recognize the game after BIT, but I'm smart enough to know 3 things:

- 1) The price we pay for BITs make them too expensive for my game. I will do a better job anticipating my next several moves to avoid unnecessary delays caused by lazy thinking or poor planning.
- 2) Having a prestigious event won because of a bottom to top score change on appeal is terribly unsatisfying regardless how well the situation is addressed in the current law. Something here has to change.
- 3) Even in the face of BITs or Misinformation or other infractions allowing score adjustments, there should be no way any score is adjusted to a result not gotten at any other table and

impossible to get given the cards in play. Equity cuts both ways. What happened to the field, and the 1st place finishers in-waiting, is unacceptable.

Here are the overall results. A top was 25. The difference between 1st and 2nd was 24.61 – do the math.

Nov 29, 2018 - Thursday 7:30 pm
KAPLAN BLUE RIBBON PAIRS Overall

Session **6**

26.0 TABLES

mps	Color	A	Overall Score	Player 1	Player 2	Personal Scores
190.00	Platinum	1	805.82	Joe Grue New York, NY	Robert Levin Henderson, NV	Scores
142.50	Platinum	2	781.21	Chris Compton Dallas, TX	Eldad Ginossar Chicago, IL	Scores
106.88	Platinum	3	765.97	Bart Bramley Dallas, TX	Kit Woolsey Kensington, CA	Scores
87.69	Platinum	4	762.69	Jeff Meckstroth Clearwater Bch, FL	Eric Rodwell Clearwater, FL	Scores
81.43	Platinum	5	749.99	Joel Wooldridge Astoria, NY	Kent Mignocchi Bronx, NY	Scores

See the Daily Bulletin page 9 at:

<https://cdn.acbl.org/nabc/2018/03/bulletins/db9.pdf>

“Great things never came from comfort zones.” - **Ben Francia**

“You miss 100% of the shots you never take.” – **Wayne Gretzky**

“Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.” — **Goethe**

“Security is mostly a superstition. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.” — **Helen Keller**

“It’s not because things are difficult that we dare not venture. It’s because we dare not venture that they are difficult.” — **Seneca**

“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far it is possible to go.” — **T.S. Eliot**

“I can accept failure. Everybody fails at something. But I can’t accept not trying. Fear is an illusion.” — **Michael Jordan**

“Opportunity dances with those on the dance floor.” — **Anonymous**

“Yes, risk-taking is inherently failure-prone. Otherwise, it would be called ‘sure-thing-taking.’” — **Jim McMahon**

“People who don’t take risks generally make about two big mistakes a year. People who do take risks generally make about two big mistakes a year.” — **Peter Drucker**

“99 percent of success is built on failure.” — **Charles Kettering**

“Progress always involves risks. You can’t steal second base and keep your foot on first.” — **Frederick Wilcox**

SAVE THE DATES



Spring NABC in Memphis TN
March 21–31, 2019

Memphis is a short flight or one day drive away. The weather will be warm and the barbecue plentiful. Platinum Points here we come!



Don’t miss the District 11 Grand National Teams finals. This year Flights B and C can send two teams if at least 8 teams show up to compete for the District title.



Get ready to get those elusive SILVER points at the club all week. Great way to practice for Gatlinburg. Check the Unit and clubs websites for game times. Remember a top finish across the District wins extra points.

Don’t forget about the ACBL’s 4th NABC – well it feels that way at 1/3 the price! Gatlinburg is a favorite venue for players of all levels. Don’t miss it!



Coming June 1 & 2 – The Robert Todd Seminars. I/N Players will appreciate Robert’s approach to the game!

Coming June 3 & 4 (at the CBC) – the ACBL Best Practices Teachers workshop.

Coming June 3 – 9, 2019 – The Cincinnati Flying Pig Regional Tournament.

Anything that is successful is a series of mistakes. - **Armstrong**

Do one thing every day that scares you. –

Eleanor Roosevelt

“Go out on a limb. That’s where the fruit is.” — **Jimmy Carter**

“Necessity is the mother of taking chances.” — **Mark Twain**

Holiday at the Brown Estate

December revelry among great bridge friends at the downtown abode of the honorable Robert S(-quire) with all the trappings. A time shared well in the spirit of the season indeed.



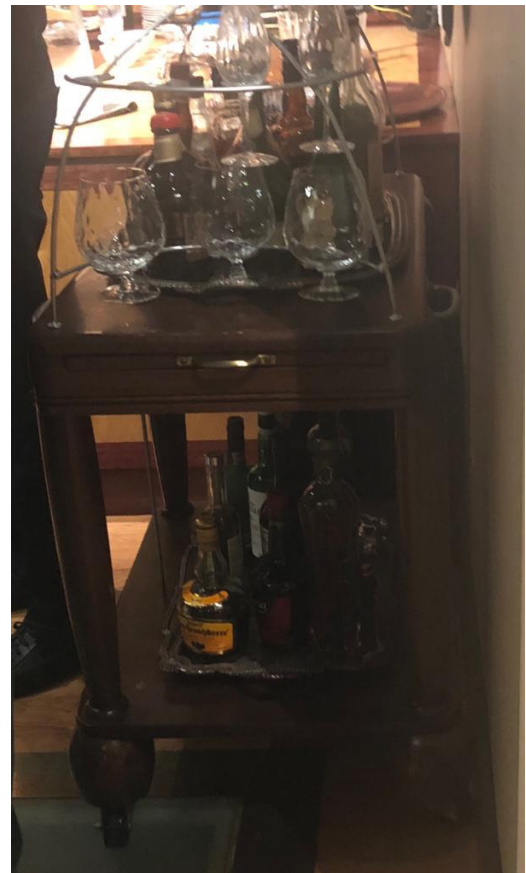
John Meinking, Mike Lipp and Steve Moese



Steve & Mike Ma



Steve, John and Kathy Meinking



The National Treasure – the original Maisonette Desert Cart put to an intentional use.



Delightful Oysters, Sashimi and other delectable treats



Steve Felson, Steve Moese, Robert S, Laura Moese, John & Kathy Meinking



Dr. & Mrs. Herb Shapera in the spirit of the season



Steve Moese, Isaac Stephani and Reeta Brendamour
Isaac & Reeta won Flight C in the Holiday Club
Championship

Here's to a Healthy,
Happy, Prosperous New
year for Everyone!