



## Unit 174 June 2025 Newsletter



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#### Contributors

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*Report about the 2025 District 16 GNT Finals by Thomas Rush*

#### In Memoriam

#### From the Editor

Please visit the Unit 174 [Website](#) to view additional information about the activities in our Unit and at our Clubs.

## President's Message



**Betty Starzec**

### Nearly Summer Sectional

The start of June not only brings in more of the already hot weather but offers a great opportunity to compete with friends at the **Nearly Summer Sectional**, June 6-8, at the Arabia Shriners. Karen Nussbaum and Gary Kerr are working to provide a great sectional including free bagels (and toppings) on Sunday morning. They are accepting contributions to help defray the expense of this special treat. (Toasters will be provided.) Please note that this will be the last in-person unit sectional until October. As I mentioned in the May issue, we were unable to secure a location for our traditional August tournament so it was rescheduled as a Unit 174 STaC.

### Fall October Sectional

Speaking of our **Fall October Sectional**, it will again host an I/N Regional in addition to the regular Fall Sectional events. This is another great opportunity for our Intermediate/Newcomer players to pick up more of those elusive gold points. This year we will not be going to Galveston but will again be at the Arabia Shriners. The flyer for this tournament will be out at the June Sectional. Brigitte Sandifer is the chair of the tournament and Judi Whaling is working with her as co-chair.

### Barbara Phillips Lone Star Regional

There is an update regarding the **Barbara Phillips Lone Star Regional (LSR)**, January 19-25. Albuquerque has moved their regional to the prior week, which should bode well for our attendance. The schedule for the regional is on the ACBL website and the flyer will be out shortly.

### New Events

This LSR will have two new events on the schedule. The first is the **Soloway Style KO** (knockout). This event has become the go-to event at many top regionals across the ACBL. (Some of you may recall we tried this event a number of times. However, it was not held in Houston as it was designed.) The Soloway Style KOs are bracketed and will have a 2-session Round Robin qualifying event with the top four teams playing two sessions on the second day to determine the first to fourth place. Bracket sizes will be 9-11 teams. What this means to you is that your team is set for two days in case your team places 1-4 since then you will play the next day. If your team does not place 1-4, you can play in a regular Bracketed Round Robin the next day with the same team or a different one. This event will be held three times starting Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Regular Bracketed Round Robins will be held Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. Masterpoint awards are better for the Soloway and offer a chance to accumulate even more gold by wining just one event.

The second new event in the LSR is the **Bracketed Pair** event. This is a two-session event like the Bracketed Round Robin Teams. Pairs are organized into groups of similar masterpoint levels. This is a new event that has become very popular at regionals where it has been tried. Unit 174 is planning to try it on Thursday and Sunday only. Masterpoints are awarded based on strength of field – so, those A players (in their own bracket) will *boost* the masterpoint awards for every bracket in the event.

On Thursday we will not have a Gold Rush event so our regular Gold Rush players can participate in this event and receive the benefit of the masterpoint award boost. *Please remember everyone will be playing against players at the same masterpoint level like in Bracketed Round Robin Teams.* Hopefully, you will give it a try and we can give our feedback to the ACBL.

### Renamed Event

You will notice the name change from Bracketed Swiss Teams to **Bracket Round Robin Teams** – this is exactly the same event, but now it has the proper name. Having a Swiss means after every round you go up against a team with pretty much your same current record in the event, which is not the case when the event is bracketed where you typically play each team. The ACBL would like to promote an event by its proper name to which we are happy to comply.

### Sectional Tournament Sites

We are continuing to look for other locations to host our sectional tournaments. Gary Kerr, who is working with Paul Cuneo, and Brigitte Sandifer are developing a list of requirements a facility needs to have for us to begin consideration of that location. Having the right prerequisites for

cost, space size, parking, lighting, and restroom facilities are the first step for considering a site. We have received a number of suggestions for sites, but it is difficult for us to visit each one unless we know they have met an initial scrutiny by the person suggesting the location. Therefore, we hope that those sites suggested to the board will have passed this initial scrutiny before we make an in-person visit. Many thanks to all who are assisting the board with this important endeavor.

Hopefully, I will see many of you at the tournament!

Betty Starzec  
[lstarzec@comcast.net](mailto:lstarzec@comcast.net)



## New Members and Rank Advancement



### New Members

ACBL notifies us each month about the members new to our Unit and those who transferred into our Unit. Please welcome the following players to our Unit:

**New Members:** Paula Altman, William Cowsar, Paula Divalerio, Rinaldo Divalerio, Lucie Dunwoody, Kelly Hebert, John Hightower, John Knott, Ann Matthews, Poonam Mittal, Barbara Ryan, Giang Tran, Lindsey Trenholme, Charisse Viator

**Transfers:** Irene Lee Pagan, Ms. Kumkum Ray

**Welcome!**



### Masterpoint Milestones

Listed below are the Unit 174 Masterpoint Milestones reported by ACBL as of May 1, 2025. An explanation of ranks may be found on the [ACBL website](#).

**Junior Master**  
Ann B Muffeny, Janice Sauve

**Club Master**  
Chris L Manley, Steve Vandoorn

**Sectional Master**  
George W Edwards

**Regional Master**  
Julie Etta Davidson, Mrs. Linda M Spiegelhauer

**NABC Master**  
Pam Johnson, Mrs. Cissy Wortham, Bob Yelli

**Advanced NABC Master**

Judi Whaling

**Bronze Life Master**  
Hua Chen

**Silver Life Master**  
Mr. Michael P O'Shea

**Ruby Life Master**  
Ms. Linda S Marlin, Mr. Terry A Sucher, Irene White

**Gold Life Master**  
Mrs. Liane Tsai

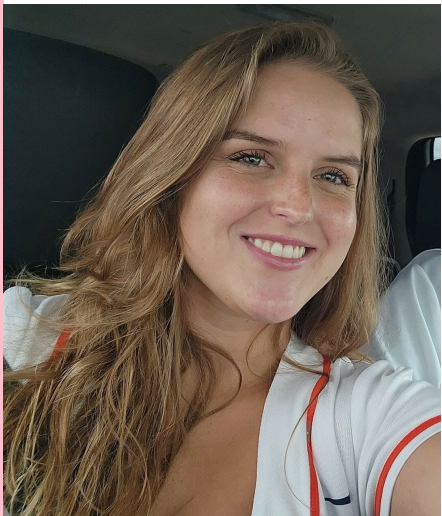
# Member Profile



## Meet Mariah Stopper

BY SARAH SPRINGER

Those who play bridge in the Houston area have most likely noticed one of our younger players, Mariah Stopper. She has made appearances at various clubs around and has done really well. She has gone from a new player to directing games, and now she is the owner, manager and director at the Sugar Land Duplicate Bridge Club. Who is this up-and-coming personality in our Bridge World?



Mariah was born and raised in Houston and has a wide variety of interests. She is a certified scuba diver, a world traveler, and an accomplished chef, among other talents. Her beef enchiladas are legendary and she artfully presents each of her culinary creations to those lucky enough to dine at her table. Mariah also sings and plays the guitar. She is enrolled at the University of Houston where she is expecting to graduate this year with a degree in business.

Mariah started her bridge career at the age of 11 when her grandmother, Nancy Strohmer, sent her to a bridge camp. She fell in love with the game and knew from the start that she would never stop playing. Bridge, of course, is her most enjoyable activity but she also finds time to play sports, ski, fish, and play chess.

In addition to finishing her degree, Mariah is focused on growing the Sugar Land DBC. Currently the club is averaging about eight tables. She hosts all STaC games and does all she can to maximize masterpoint awards for the Sugar Land players. The Club has games on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. at Lago Mariscos Mexican Restaurant right off Highway 6. The players are a friendly group, and most of them stay after completing the game and eat together at the restaurant.

Somehow in the midst of this very busy life, Mariah has also found time for love – she will be married in September.

When you see Mariah, give her a hearty hello – we will all be seeing a lot more of her as she progresses through what already is an impressive bridge career.

Sarah Springer is the immediate past Unit 174 president, the Unit 174 *Scorecard* reporter and a Ruby Life Master. When she is not playing bridge, she is a Family Law Attorney.

## Unit News





## Coming Tournaments

Date	City	State	Unit	Category	Type
June 6-8	Midland	TX	209	Sectional	Open
June 6-8	Houston	TX	174	Sectional	Open
June 7-8	Georgetown	TX	207	Sectional	I/N
June 9-15			176	STaC	Open
June 19-22	Houston [Spring]	TX	174	Sectional	I/N
June 30 – July 6	San Antonio	TX	172	Regional	Open
July 26-27	San Antonio	TX	172	Sectional	I/N
August 2-3	Austin	TX	207	Sectional	I/N
August 7-9	Tyler	TX	225	Sectional & I/N Regional	Open & I/N
August 18-24	Houston	TX	174	STaC	Open
August 27 – September 1	Allen [DFW]	TX	176	Regional	Open
September 4-7	New Braunfels	TX	172	Sectional	Open
September 11-14	Houston [Spring]	TX	174	Sectional	I/N
September 15-21			D16	STaC	Open
September 25-28	Austin	TX	207	Sectional	Open
October 2-4	Denton	TX	183	Sectional	Local
October 4-5	Austin	TX	207	Sectional	I/N
October 10-11	San Antonio	TX	172	Sectional	I/N
October 15-18	San Antonio	TX	172	Sectional	Open
October 17-19	Fort Worth	TX	183	Sectional	Open
October 17-19	Houston	TX	174	Sectional	Open
October 20-26			D16	STaC	Open
October 29-November 1	Dallas [DFW]	TX	176	Sectional	Open
November 3-9	Houston	TX	174	STaC	Open
November 8-9	Austin	TX	207	Sectional	I/N
November 10-16	Puerto Vallarta	JA	205	Regional	Open
November 13-16	Spring [Houston]	TX	174	Sectional	I/N
December 6-7	Austin	TX	207	Sectional	I/N

You can find tournament information by clicking [ACBL Tourneys](#).

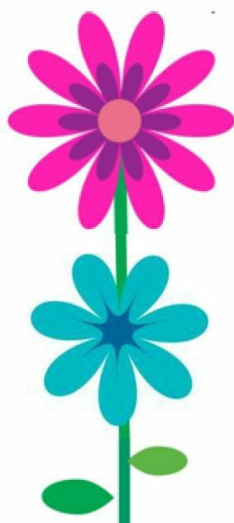
## Nearly Summer Sectional



# Nearly Summer Sectional

## Houston Unit 174 June 6 - 8, 2025

Arabia Shriners  
10510 Harwin Dr.  
Houston, TX 77036



### Stratification

#### 299er Pairs

A: 200-299 B: 100-199 C: 0-99

#### Open Pairs

A: 5000+ B: 2000-4999 C: 0-1999

**Note:** Stratifications for all events are based on average MPs. If an event has an upper MP limit, every player must fall within that limit. All Strats may be adjusted by the director to balance for strength of players"

### Tournament Chairs

Karen Nussbaum  
(832) 524-5233  
karenunit174@gmail.com

Gary Kerr  
(281) 543-8712  
madk86@aol.com

### Partnership

Chloe Ella Fackenthall  
(281) 493-0294  
cfackenthall@hotmail.com

### Hospitality

New box lunch choices available \$10  
\$1 coffee & sodas  
Free bottled water

Cris Emmons  
(713) 825-4475  
cris@emmonslegal.com

### Friday & Saturday, June 6-7

10 am & 2:30 pm	Stratified 299er Pairs	Single Sessions
10 am & 2:30 pm	Stratified Open Pairs	Single Sessions
10 am & 2:30 pm	Bracketed Swiss Teams	Two Sessions

### Sunday, June 8

10 am & 2:00 pm	Stratified 299er Pairs	Single Sessions
10 am & 2:00 pm	Stratified Open Pairs	Single Sessions
10 am & 2:00 pm	Bracketed Swiss Teams	Two Sessions

**Note:** Smooth traffic flow will be assisted by a policeman directing traffic out of the parking lot on Friday after the games. Security will be enhanced by a guard patrolling the parking lot during games all 3 days.

*This is a fragrance-free tournament.*

### Fees

\$16 per Session  
Cashless Tournament  
Credit Card only



### Accommodations

**TownePlace Suites by Marriott**  
10610 Westpark Dr, Houston TX 77042  
(713) 266-2210

### IN

Maria Luzia Turner  
(832) 633-9433  
jturner102@att.net

## BCOH 499er Sectional





499<sup>er</sup> Sectional  
June 19<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

4688 Louetta Rd, Spring, TX | 281-651-6550 | [thebridgeclub@sbcglobal.net](mailto:thebridgeclub@sbcglobal.net)

<b>Event Schedule</b> <i>Thursday thru Saturday</i> <i>June 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> Single Sessions</i> ♠ 499er Pairs 10am ♠ 499er Pairs 2pm	<b>Entry Fees</b> <i>(Per Session - Cash Only)</i> Current ACBL Members \$12 Lapsed ACBL Members \$16 <i>ACBL number required to play.</i> <i>120 day guest membership</i> <i>available free at</i> <a href="https://www.acbl.org/membership/">https://www.acbl.org/membership/</a>
<b>Stratification*</b> A(300-499) B(100-300) C(0-100) <i>* Strats may be modified by</i> <i>Director</i>	<b>Snacks / Lunch</b> Free snacks and drinks. Lunch available for \$8 <b>Cash</b> each day if ordered by 10am.
<b>Need a Partner?</b> Contact Kas Rangan 539-210-1333 <a href="mailto:kas.rangan99@gmail.com">kas.rangan99@gmail.com</a> <i>Ambassador available for all</i> <i>Sessions.</i>	<b>Lodging</b> SpringHill Suites 20303 Chasewood Park Dr., Houston, TX 77070 has a discount rate of \$105 + tax per night, and free cancellation 24 hours before check-in. Contact hotel directly at 832-953-2228 and ask for Imagine Peels and mention BCOH Bridge Tournament.
<b>Notes</b> ♠ BCOH is a fragrance-free facility. ♠ <i>Life Masters with less than 500</i> <i>pts can play.</i>	
<b>Tournament Chair</b> Charles Woody 832-443-4412 <a href="mailto:woody@okwoody.com">woody@okwoody.com</a>	

Silver Points – Silver Points – Silver Points

Future Life Master



Future Life Masters of Unit 174

[www.flm174.org](http://www.flm174.org)

*The fun is just beginning!*

**Greater Houston is great for new players!!**

**3 games each week for FLMers**

**Tuesdays, Saturdays, Sundays**

**99er**

**Bridge Academy of West Houston** **NEW!**

**BAWH: 10510 Harwin Dr., Houston (Shriners)**

**Tuesdays at 10:30 AM**

**Starts  
6/10**

**99er**

**Clear Lake Bridge Club**

**Saturdays at 1:00 PM**

**CLBC: 16614 Sea Lark, Houston, Tx**

**49er**

**Bridge Club of Houston**

**Sundays at 1:30 PM**


**BCOH: 4688 Louetta, Spring, Tx**

**ALL GAMES WELCOMING SINGLETONS!**

**EVERYONE PLAYS!**

**99er Nite Club**





# THE 99er Nite Club East

**GREAT PLAY, LESSONS  
& LOADS OF FUN!**

**And...It's only for you, New Players!**


District 16 now has a BBO game just  
for the 0 to 99 players  
**the "99er Nite Club East"!**

**When:** 6pm, 7 days a week  
**Where:** ACBL Clubhouse\*

**Perks:**

- ✓ **More Masterpoints**  
(cross club scoring)
- ✓ **Mini-Lessons**  
by Lynn Berg at 5:30 pm

\*Check to make sure your club is participating.  
If your club has questions they should  
contact Janice Rush at:  
[janice\\_hardcastle@hotmail.com](mailto:janice_hardcastle@hotmail.com)



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## 199er Nite Club

# 199er Nite Club East

*Ready to Graduate from  
the 0 to 99 Game?*

## D16's 199er NITE CLUB EAST GAME ON BBO IS YOUR NEXT STEP!

**7 DAYS A WEEK AT 6:00 PM CST**

- ✓ Recent graduates of the 0 to 99 group can play in a game with players of the same ability.
- ✓ Work during the day? Graduates continue go grow skills at a time that's "worker friendly".
- ✓ Safe environment where no sharks are allowed, because the game is limited to 199 mpts.
- ✓ Clubs benefit too and cointue to receive payments for their participating players.

*Clubs must be signed up to participate, just like for the 99er NITE CLUB game.*

*Contact Janice Rush for details:  
janice\_hardcastle@hotmail.com*

*New Game in Town*



## Club Table Counts

Unit 174 has many ACBL-sanctioned clubs so that means many games both Face-to-Face (F2F) and Online.The following information might be interesting:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Table Count</u>	<u>Number of Clubs in Unit 174</u>
2019	32,137.00	30
2020	30,401.00	28
2021	30,365.00	24
2022	20,451.00	24
2023	18,183.00	25
2024	16,900.00	24

The ACBL website is still broken however, ACBL Executive Director, Bronia Jenkins was able to provide a tool that she is using to gather this information. The following numbers are the Unit 174 table counts from January 1- May 26, 2025 :

Total Tables:	6,977
Total F2F:	6,235
Total Online:	286
Total Swiss Teams:	451

We are down to 22 clubs from 24 at the end of 2024. The top five clubs are:



- |                                    |                                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Clear Lake Bridge Club:         | 1,812 Tables, all F2F             |
| 2. Bridge Club of Houston:         | 1,224 Tables, 938 F2F, 286 Online |
| 3. Bridge Academy of West Houston: | 943 Tables, all F2F               |
| 4. Lone Star Bridge Club:          | 639 Tables, all F2F               |
| 5. Apple II DBC                    | 387 Tables, all F2F               |

One other bit of information, Unit 174's Clear Lake Bridge Club is still the District 16 leader for F2F tables with 1812, followed by Bridge Center of Austin with 1393, and Bridge Club of Houston with 1224 tables. So, Unit 174 has two clubs in the top three for District 16.

Also, watch the July/August *Scorecard* for an article about Clear Lake Bridge Club and the Bridge Center of Austin. Both club's made it into the 2024 ACBL Top 50 Clubs.



## Club News

Below please find the information reported by some of the clubs in our unit. Please send your club news to: [unit174news@gmail.com](mailto:unit174news@gmail.com).

Additional information about all of the clubs can be found on the [Unit 174 website](#). Or, click a club name to jump to their website.

## Apple Clubs

Our games begin at 11:30 a.m. sharp at the Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Dr. 77042. Please plan to arrive by 11:15 a.m. All games are \$3.00 / person.

### New Clubs' Policy:

APPLE clubs (Susan and Tom) have agreed to let members of the board play free with a FLM that has less then 50 points.

APPLE II **upped** the offer: The normal game fee of \$3.00 / person will be *waived* if the pair has less than 100 MP's on average, so all of you FLMs should come on out on Friday and test your skill at *no cost*! In addition, any player who pairs up with someone under 100 points plays for *FREE*! Since many of our FLM's didn't take advantage of playing with a board member, the club is offering *FREE* plays to pairs that average less than 200 points! What a DEAL!

Apple DBC will be holding North American Pairs qualifying games on June 2 & 23. We will also be participating in the District STaC game on June 9.

June schedule for Apple II at Tracey Gee Center is as follows:

- June 6 Closed for Houston Nearly Summer Sectional
- June 15 Grass Roots Fund game & Birthday party for Byron Fackenthal turning 90!
- June 22 Quarterly Club Championship
- June 27 Quarterly Club Championship

For information, please contact:

Monday – Apple – Susan Johnson  
[sisbjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:sisbjohnson@gmail.com) - 281-536-1451

Friday – Apple II – Tom Jahnke  
[tomtomj211@yahoo.com](mailto:tomtomj211@yahoo.com) - 713-777-0333

Results and additional information [here](#).

Only drinks in bottles or covered containers are allowed. No food is allowed at the tables during play. You are welcome to bring food and eat before the game starts.

### Silver & Ruby Life Master Party

A Life Master milestone party was held on May 21 to celebrate Jim Woodward and Lauri Laufman on achieving the ranks of **Silver** and **Ruby** Life Master, respectively. Host Beverley Linskey treated attendees to a delicious assortment of food.



Chocolate Cake, Jim Woodward, Beverly Linski & Lauri Laufman

### Change to Game Schedule

Eric Watson stepped down from hosting the Fort Bend Tuesday game. The Academy picked up the game starting on May 13.

A Grand Opening party will take place on Tuesday, June 3 – come join the fun and festivities!

Beginning June 10, a 0-99er game will be held every Tuesday, except for the first Tuesday of each month, which will remain reserved for Mentor/Mentee Day.

### Upcoming Events...

#### 90th Birthday Party

A 90th birthday party will be held for the **Three Tenors**: Byron Fackenthall, Charlie Dalton and Alan Zane on Wednesday, June 11. This is an event that you won't want to miss.

#### The Longest Day

Our club is raising funds for the Alzheimer's Association as part of ACBL's 2025 The Longest Day Fundraiser. Raffle tickets are being sold for a chance to win 10 free plays. One ticket costs \$5, five tickets for \$20.

An [auction](#) is being held thanks to our Unit Players and Teaching Pros, who donated their services to help make this happen.

Please note that you will be asked to register prior to placing your first bid. All you need do is: (1) enter your name, email, set up a password, and click a few more boxes (2) check your email, confirm your registration and (3) you are good to go.

We will celebrate the Longest Day on Thursday, June 19. Proceeds go to the Alzheimer's Association.

### Mentor/Mentee



Our monthly Mentor/Mentee game is held on the first Tuesday of the month at 10:30 a.m. The next game will be on

June 6 – Mentor/Mentee

If you have not signed up and would like to participate please contact our coordinator Bert Onstott by clicking [here](#).

Mentees must have fewer than 300 masterpoints and Mentors greater than 300 points.

8 is enough Swiss Teams

Our 8 is enough Swiss Teams games are held monthly on Sunday at 1:30 p.m. The next game will be held on

June 29 – 8 is enough Swiss Teams

The Swiss Teams stratifications are:

- Level 1 – 0-1000 masterpoints (1)
- Level 2 – 1000-3000 masterpoints (2)
- Level 3 – 3000+ masterpoints (3)

For example one Level 3, two Level 2 and one Level 1 players total 8 as would four Level 2 players. Another example would be three Level 2 and one Level 1 players whose team total is 7 and it is OK to be less than 8.

The Swiss Teams has become an extremely popular event. For help finding teammates contact:

Linda McReynolds @ (713) 819-7812 [lindamcreynolds@comcast.net](mailto:lindamcreynolds@comcast.net)

Mini-lesson

Before each Wednesday and Thursday games there is a mini-lesson beginning around 10:00 a.m. taught by Joe Quinn.

Game Schedule

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Tuesday – Mentor/Mentee  
Tuesday – Open & 99'er  
Wednesday – Open & 299'er  
Thursdays – Open & 499'er  
10:30 a.m.  
Sunday – 8 is Enough Swiss Teams  
1:30 p.m.  
Arabia Shriners Center  
10510 Harwin Dr.

- \$7.00 per person
- Coffee & Snacks are provided
- Jennifer Breihan, Tom Jahnke & Janice Rush and directors

Game Calendar

Tue – Jun 3	Club Championship	Tue – Jun 17	North American Pairs
Wed – Jun 4	North American Pairs	Wed – Jun 18	North American Pairs
Thu – Jun 5	North American Pairs	Thu – Jun 18	North American Pairs
Tues – Jun 10	STaC	Tue – Jun 24	Club Championship
Wed – Jun 11	STaC	Wed – Jun 25	Club Championship
Thu – Jun 12	STaC	Thu – Jun 26	Club Championship
		Sun – Jun 29	Club Championship

Need a Partner?

Contact Linda or Tom Martinsen at 713-398-4907 [martinsens@comcast.net](mailto:martinsens@comcast.net).





## Bridge Club of Houston

Please consult our monthly calendar online for updates and complete listings: [BCOH Calendar](#).

### Lessons

- Tuesday Tidbits – Build a solid foundation with Julie Halperin, Diamond Life Master and ACBL Teacher. Enjoy a free lesson for all from 9:30-10:10 a.m. A game follows at 10:30 a.m. Text Julie at 713-857-8004 for more information.
- Beginner Bridge classes with Susan Banks-Johnson and Andrew Remson – June 28-October 25, 9:30-11:30 a.m., cost: \$130. For information and registration, please contact Susan and Andy at [BridgewithSusanandAndy@gmail.com](mailto:BridgewithSusanandAndy@gmail.com), 281-651-6550.

### Practice for Intermediate/Newcomers

- FLM 0-49 Game – Sundays at 1:30 p.m., \$5 fee. For more information, please contact [BridgewithCarol@gmail.com](mailto:BridgewithCarol@gmail.com), 936-650-8180.
- F2F Mentor Games – 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. To be matched with a mentor, for 2nd Tuesday call or text Judy Cupps, 713-320-5592, for fourth Tuesday call or text Bob Ziegler, 713-829-692
- Online Mentor Game – 1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:00 p.m. (Protege should invite and pay for game of mentor.) Contact Mike Linkins if you have any questions: [mlinkins@swbell.net](mailto:mlinkins@swbell.net)
- Online 0-20 Game – 2nd Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. (usually).
- F2F 299er Game – Saturdays at 12:00 p.m. (noon), for a partner or to register contact Kas Rangan, [kas.rangan@gmail.com](mailto:kas.rangan@gmail.com), 539-210-1333.
- I/N Game less 1000 – Fifth Tuesday of any month.

For more information about the games, please see [BCOH website](#).

### F2F Open Pairs Games

- Mondays 11:55 a.m.
- 1st & 5th Tuesdays 10:30 a.m.
- Wednesdays & Fridays 10:30 a.m.
- Saturdays – 12:00 p.m. (noon)

### F2F Swiss Teams

- 3rd Tuesdays 10:30 a.m.

### Online – Choose Houston! ([BBO®](#))

- Thursdays 7:00 p.m., [SE Carolina Club of Clubs](#)

### Coming Attractions

- June 1 – New Open Swiss Teams at 1:30 p.m., Stardust Week
- June 2 – \$5.00 Member Game
- June 3 – Open & New 499er Pair Games
- June 3-4 – NAP Qualifier Game
- June 6-7 – CLOSED for the Unit 174 Nearly Summer Sectional
- June 9-14 – District 16 STaC
- June 17 – Swiss Teams Game: Eight is Enough
- June 16, 20, 23-25, 27 – NAP Qualifier Games
- June 19-21 –BCOH 499er Sectional
- **June 21 – The Longest Day Benefit at BCOH**
- July 4 – Hot Diggity Dog

**Save the Dates!**





On June 21, join us at BCOH for The Longest Day Benefit in support of the Alzheimer's Association. Lots of specials and surprises are in the works and this year the benefit is in conjunction with our 499er Tournament! Watch for more information on the BCOH [website](#).

## Good Times with Good Friends!



Check the [BCOH Website](#) for more including details, potlucks and points each week.

## CHOOSE HOUSTON BASIC SCHEDULE - BBO ONLINE GAMES

Online Games for all levels every day! These dates will change if the ACBL has approved special games online so please check the Bridge Club of Houston and Clear Lake Bridge Club for updates.

### **Mentored Pairs**

1st & 3rd Monday @ 7:00 PM

### **Open Pairs**

Thursday @ 7:00 PM

### **Future Life Masters**

Tuesday (0-50) @ 3:05 PM\*

2nd Saturday (0-20) @ 9:00 AM\*

\*usually - see [flm174.org](http://flm174.org) for dates

### **SE Carolina Consortium**

<https://sites.google.com/view/se-club-of-clubs/home>

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Clear Lake Bridge Club



Clear Lake Bridge Club (CLBC) is located at 16614 Sear Lark, Houston, Texas 77062.  
The game fees are \$6.00 for members and \$7.00 for guests. Games are held every day of the week. The club closes for Unit 174 tournaments, Christmas and Easter. You can reach us by phone at 281-480-1911.

**Weekly Game Schedule:**

Open Games: Monday - Wednesday & Friday at 10:00 a.m., Thursday & Saturday at 1:00 p.m.  
0-299 Games: Monday & Wednesday at 2:00 p.m.  
0-749 Games: Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. & Thursday at 1:00 p.m.  
0-99 Game: Saturday 1:00 p.m.  
Swiss Teams: Sunday at 1:00 p.m.

**Teams Stratification & Registration**

The B players' upper limit is 2000 - 2500 masterpoints. If you are interested in playing in a Sunday afternoon Teams Game, please register at least one day prior before so that the director can have the set up done on time.

**8 is Enough Swiss Teams**

Game is usually on the first Sunday each month however this month it is moved to June 22. It is moved to the second Sunday when there is a sectional tournament.

The 8 is Enough Swiss Teams stratifications are:

- Level 1** – 0-749 masterpoints (1)
- Level 2** – 750-1999 masterpoints (2)
- Level 3** – 2000+ masterpoints (3)

For example one Level 3, two Level 2 and one Level 1 players total 8 as would four Level 2 players. Another example would be three Level 2 and one Level 1 players whose team total is 7 and it is OK to be less than 8.

**Partnership/Team Building:**

Chuck Ensor will assist anyone to get a team organized for any of the Sunday Swiss Teams games. You can either call Chuck at 713-502-0282 or [email](#) him.

**Mentor/Mentee Game:**

Every third Wednesday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. *Please note:* The June game will be on the fourth Wednesday (June 25) due to **The Longest Day Fundraiser**.

This game is held directly after the morning open game. Sandwiches are served for lunch. Reservations must be made in advance by noon on the prior Monday.

Mentees must be Non-Life Masters with less than 500 masterpoints. The Mentee pays the game fee for the Mentor. For information and to submit a contact form, please visit the [CLBC MM site](#) or contact Susan Hanna at [s.l.hanna@gmail.com](mailto:s.l.hanna@gmail.com)

*Please arrive no later than 15 minutes before the game start times.*

Game table fee is \$6.00 for members, \$7.00 for guests.

**Bridge Labs (Supervised Play):**

Sunday and Tuesdays from 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Bridge Lab table fee is \$8.00.

Check out [www.clearlakebridgeclub.org/bridge-education](http://www.clearlakebridgeclub.org/bridge-education) for new classes offered in 2025.

**Club News**

**U P C O M I N G . . .**

**Congratulations to Susan Kaplan, our newest Diamond Life Master**  
The club will celebrate with Susan soon. Watch for party announcements!

**Nonagenarian Celebration**

On Wednesday, June 4, during the morning game, CLBC will honor our *SEVEN* awesome nonagenarians (that’s right; they’re over 90!!): Dave Bradt, Bill



A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE ACBL  
AND THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION



**The Longest Day**

Wednesday, June 18, CLBC will participate in the ACBL's The Longest Day fundraiser in both the morning and afternoon sessions. Morning snacks & home-made lunch will be provided. Along with auctioning our top players (*STARS*) for a chance to play F2F, online or a later date, there will be a drawing for Free Plays. Donation to enter is \$1.00. All proceeds go to the Alzheimer's Association.

Judith Rebmann  
2nd vice president

P.S.

For more information, please visit our [website](#).



CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC  
& KATY DBC

**Cypress NW DBC** meets at the Richard and Meg Weekley Community Center, 8440 Greenhouse Rd, Cypress, TX, and games are played every Tuesday and Thursday starting at 11:30 a.m., with sign-up beginning at 11:00 a.m.

Coffee, tea, and snacks are provided. Games are \$3.

**Alert:**

**Katy DBC** is temporarily closed. Stay tuned for it reopening.

Coffee, tea, and snacks are provided. Regular games are \$3.

For more information, contact Jim Warren at **832/851-4745** or [jwarren760@gmail.com](mailto:jwarren760@gmail.com).

**CLUB OWNER RETIRING - BRIDGE CLUBS FOR SALE**

Cypress Northwest DBC  
Meets Tuesday and Thursday at Weekley Community Center

Katy DBC  
Meets Wednesday at Radack Community Center

Will sell both or separately.  
If interested please contact  
Jim Warren  
832-851-4745  
[jwarren7602@gmail.com](mailto:jwarren7602@gmail.com)



## CLUB

### Games:

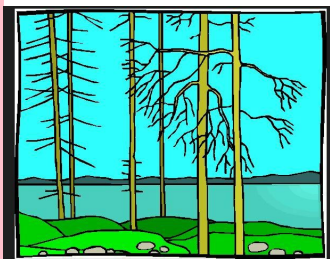
Wednesday and Thursday at 10:00 a.m. at the Kingwood Community Center, 4102 Rustic Woods Drive, Kingwood, TX 77345. Entries are still \$2 and \$3 for upgraded games.

On Thursday mornings, Bill Riley will be giving a short 20-30 minute presentation on various topics, conventions, etc., starting at 9:20 a.m. A schedule of topics will be published shortly. Coffee is available.

On Thursday, October 24th and 31st, the game will not be held due to early voting.

However, the games will be held on Wednesday.

For information, contact any of the following:  
Jim Simmons at (281)913-0441 or [jrsimmons2102@gmail.com](mailto:jrsimmons2102@gmail.com).  
Bill Riley at (832)289-3833 or [ichibanbill@yahoo.com](mailto:ichibanbill@yahoo.com).  
Kingwood Community Center Phone: (281) 348-2570  
Or Visit our [website](#).



## LAKE CONROE DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

### June 2025

Our Bridge Club is a very welcoming and friendly Club. We have players from all levels, so players new to duplicate will feel comfortable; and seasoned players will find a challenge. We would like to invite you and your bridge friends to join us every Friday. We meet at the Restoration Church, [107 Fish Creek Thoroughfare, Montgomery](#). As you enter the parking lot, drive around to the back of the property to the parking lot of the newer Worship Center and the older Children's Church building.

We currently have our games in the Children's Church building lobby. It is an easy access with no step or ramps.

We begin playing at 10:30 am. The game fee is \$5.00 per person. We offer sweet and savory snacks, hot tea, coffee and iced tea at no charge. A break is taken midday, so please bring your lunch. There is a refrigerator, ice maker and a microwave for your use. Monthly birthday celebrations are on the second Friday and a pizza lunch is provided on the fourth Friday of the month.



### May Birthday Love!

Our club always enjoys celebrating special days. We showed some birthday love to **Faye Vincent**, **Mary Drew** and **Anita Rothfuss** in May.

We also remembered and honored the men and women from all generations who served in the military on Memorial day.

Stay tuned for our special **July 4th Celebration** announcement. It's going to be great!

If you need a partner, please contact Carol Meade at 281-543-4541 or email her at [meadecm@icloud.com](mailto:meadecm@icloud.com) and she will do her best to assist you to get a

partner.

The following is what's happening in June:

June 6 – North American Pairs Game  
June 13 – District 16 STaC & June Birthday Celebration  
June 20 – Club Championship Game  
June 27 - No Game. See you on July 4th.

We welcome you to join us on Friday's at LCDBC and look forward to seeing all of you at the table.

Please contact me either by phone or email if you have any questions regarding playing at our Club.

Penny Grassedonio  
Club Manager  
832-361-4577  
[czthdaypig@gmail.com](mailto:czthdaypig@gmail.com)  
[website](#)



## LONE STAR BRIDGE CLUB

Lone Star Bridge Club (LSBC) in Conroe, Texas, plays at St Paul Global Methodist Church, 1100 Semands Drive, Conroe; the church is located within easy access from Interstate 45. Directions to our game may be found on our [website](#).

*Open games* are held Mondays at 11:45 am and Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. Mentor/Mentee games are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 10:30 a.m. If you would like to play in the mentor mentee game, please contact Anita Rothfuss (936-527-5039 or [larryandanita@gmail.com](mailto:larryandanita@gmail.com)).

Jeff Kroll gives a *free lesson* the first Monday of each month at 11:00 a.m.

### Need a partner?

Contact our partnership chairman Sandra Maalouf at 832-283-1674 or [smaalouf@icloud.com](mailto:smaalouf@icloud.com)

Snacks, coffee & bottled water are provided.  
Game fee is \$5.00.

### Special June Events

Monday, June 2 – Game, June Birthdays cake will be served & Free bridge lesson with Diamond Life Master Jeff Kroll at 11:00 a.m. Game begins at 11:45 a.m. Jeff's class will cover the play of the cards: These are the plays that strong card players make and ordinary ones don't:

- Entries: Timing/Transportation
- Unblocking
- What to Lead
- When to Duck and When Not to
- Playing to Set the Contract
- Remembering the Bidding

Monday & Tuesday, June 9-10 & Thursday, June 12 – District 16 STaC  
Monday, May 26 – Memorial Day Party at 11:00 a.m.

Thursday, June 19 – **The Longest Day - A Partnership between ACBL and the Alzheimer's Association.** The Lone Star Bridge Club is participating again this year in the annual ACBL Alzheimer's Awareness program. The club will hold a silent auction for the opportunity to play a game with an advanced player. All proceeds raised will go to the Alzheimer's Association. The winners of the auction will be announced at the game on June 19.

Please visit our website by clicking [here](#). You may also contact Mary



## PEBBLE CREEK DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Face-to-face games are held on Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. For further information, please contact Richard Duble at 979-324-8421 or [richard.duble@yahoo.com](mailto:richard.duble@yahoo.com) or visit our [website](#).



## STAR DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Games are on Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 am and are \$5.00 per person.  
You must have a partner.

For more info, contact Richard Duble at 979-324-8421 or [richard.duble@yahoo.com](mailto:richard.duble@yahoo.com) or visit our [website](#).



## Contributors



### Counting

BY **JIMMY  
BREIHAN**

I recall an interview where Geoff Hampson, a world class bridge player, was asked the biggest advice he could give to newer players. Not surprising to me he answered count, count everything. This means High Card Points (HCP), distribution, trumps. Old habits die hard, so the sooner you can start counting and get into the habit of doing it, the better results you will start to achieve, and the easier it becomes. This may seem daunting at first, but with just a little effort, you can make great improvements in your counting.

Let's start with the easiest, you always count your own hand first, right? So, you know your HCP, plus you can also count dummy's HCP. You already know half of the hands' HCP without doing much work at all. You know there are 40 possible HCP, so you know how many points are in the other two hands, you just don't know how they are distributed.

The bidding or non-bidding can potentially help you to get an idea about some of the other HCP and/or distribution. Even if this seems difficult, just start counting the trump suit. Suppose you are declaring a spade contract, and you have ♠AKxxx opposite ♠xxx in partner's hand. The best way to



count this trump suit is to know that you have eight spades (Five in your hand and three in partner's). That means the opponents have five spades between their two hands. So, you really only need to keep track of the five spade cards in the opponents' hands. You play the ♠A and everyone follows, that's two of the five spades. You play the ♠K and everyone follows, that makes four of the five spades. Now you know there is only one outstanding trump left AND you know they divided 3-2, which can help in counting the distribution.

Once you have conquered counting the trump suit, pick a suit which you think will be important on the hand you are playing and just keep track of that suit. Suppose you're in the same hand and have pulled two rounds of trumps and now you want to establish dummy's diamond suit. Let's say the diamonds are ♦AKxxx in dummy and ♦xx in your hand. That means you have seven diamonds between your hand and dummy, so the opponents have six diamonds between them. All you need to do is keep track of six diamond cards. If you play the ♦AK and both opponents follow, that's four of the six. If you ruff the next time and they both follow again, they were 3-3 and there are no more diamonds out. If one of them shows out on the third diamond, they were 4-2 and you know the diamonds are not good yet.

So, if counting is new to you, just start with these basic counting tips and build on them once you get more comfortable. I've created two extreme hands just to show you how counting can help you.

Extreme Hand 1:

D

8

N

undefined

♠ Q10875

♥ 543

♦ 43

♣ K98

W

N

E

S

P

P

P

2NT

P

3♥

P

4♠

P

P

P

W

undefined

♠ 632

♥ AKQ2

♦ J109

♣ 543

E

undefined

♠ 4

♥ 876

♦ K8765

♣ Q762

S

undefined

♠ AKJ9

♥ J109

♦ AQ2

♣ AJ10

4♠ S

NS: 0 EW: 0

Rewind

Previous

Next

Options

GIB

Play

B

Bridge Base

ONLINE

On this hand there are three passes to south who opens 2NT, partner transfers to spades and south decides to bid 4♠ with great spade support and controls. West leads the ♥AKQ and then switches to the ♦J. South wins the ♦J with the ♦Q and pulls trumps in three rounds. The entire contract depends on a 2-way guess in clubs. Experienced players will always get this one correct. They will finesse east for the ♣Q. Why? Because west is a passed hand and already showed up with ♥AKQ and ♦J. If west also had the ♣Q, that would be 12 HCP and they would have opened the bidding in first chair. Just a little counting of the opponents HCP led to the right solution on this hand.

Extreme Hand 2:

11

D

N

undefined

♠

K1098

♥

QJ4

♦

A98

♣

QJ7

W

N

E

S

P

6NT

P

2NT

P

P

P

W

undefined

♠

75432

♥

987632

♦

5

♣

5

E

undefined

♠

♥

10

♦

Q76432

♣

A86432

S

undefined

♠

AQJ6

♥

AK5

♦

KJ10

♣

K109

6NT S

NS: 0 EW: 0

Rewind

Previous

Next

Options

GIB

Play

B

Bridge Base

On this hand south opens 2NT and north bids 6NT. South has 11 tricks after knocking out the ♣A. South has a 2-way guess to find the ♦Q for the 12th trick. If you play all your side winners first, sometimes you get vital information about the distribution. On this hand, south sees that west has five spades, six hearts, one club and therefore one diamond, if declarer just plays winners first. South will therefore play the ♦A and then confidently finesse east for the ♦Q. You simply needed to keep track of the distribution on this hand; HCP were unimportant this time.

I made both hands extreme cases just to make the point of how counting can help.

Sometimes when you play your winners you can know the distribution but not have a 100% correct play. When this happens, it is best to go with the odds. For example, if on this last hand west had 4=5=2=2 and east had 1=2=5=5, you don't have a 100% play in the diamond suit as before, but it is 5-2 odds that east has the ♦Q (east has 5 diamonds to west's 2 diamonds), so you should finesse east for the ♦Q. Hope these tips help.

Jimmy Breihan is a professional bridge player with over 7000 masterpoints. He first learned to play bridge while living in Austin in 1998. Jimmy was one of the owners of Westside Bridge Academy in Houston until it closed down post COVID-19. He won the GNT Flight B, partnering with his wife, Jennifer, at the Las Vegas NABC in 2014. Jimmy is happy to answer any questions, just email [jimmybreihan@comcast.net](mailto:jimmybreihan@comcast.net) or ask him next time you see him playing.



## Report about the 2025 District 16 GNT Finals

BY THOMAS RUSH

**What's a GNT?**  
Many of you may be wondering, "What's a GNT?" That's the abbreviation of the Grand National Teams event – a grassroots event held every year by the ACBL. There are four flights, recently adjusted: Flight C is non-life master under 750 points. Flight B is under 3000 points. Flight A is under 6000 points. The Championship flight is open to anyone. In the GNT, you get a team of four to six players together (each must live in the district and meet the point qualification above by a specified date which this year was August 6, 2024) and play in the district final held in the spring of each year. The top team in each of the four flights goes on to play in the national final held at the Summer North American Bridge Championship (NABC). In flights B and C, if

there are eight or more teams in the flight at the district final, the district gets to send *two* teams to the NABC – sadly, our Flight B field was only seven teams, so just the top team gets a shot at winning the national title.

If the thought of playing for a national championship isn't enough, each of the 1st place teams gets a stipend to help with travel expenses – this year it is \$2400/team.

**Bring Home Lots of Gold & Red**

My team won the NABC finals for Flight B in 2019, and I can tell you it was thrilling. I encourage all members of D16 to get a team together for next year's event. At least in Flight B, we need to have eight contenders, so we can send two teams to the NABC. Oh – more sweetener for those in Flight C, the overalls at the District level pay a chunk of gold masterpoints! At the district level, the flight B winning team brought home 33.5 gold this year; the Flight C team earned 10 gold and 10 red masterpoints for winning at the district level. Who knows what success they'll have at the Philadelphia NABC?

**Hand Played in the Championship Flight**

This hand is one from the recent District 16 GNT final held in Dallas. It was played in the Championship Flight. My team made it to the finals, but were soundly defeated by the winning team, who will go on to play in the NABC this summer.

This is your hand:

South  
♠AQ93  
♥8  
♦Q97542  
♣A4

Opponents are vulnerable, you are not.

West opens 2♦, alerted as being 10-14 HCP with six diamonds and no 4-card major.

W	N	E	S
2♦	2♥	Dbl	?

Your partner bids 2♥, which is doubled without hesitation by East. What is your call?

W	N	E	S
2♦	2♥	Dbl	2NT
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Pass

Remember that 2♦ is what you might call an 'Intermediate' 2♦, not a Weak 2♦.

Right or wrong, I figured that my partner's 2♥ was in trouble, and I bid to 2NT. This bid was doubled by West, and I ended up playing 2NT doubled.

After the ♥9 was led, dummy appeared:

What do you think of your chances? How do you analyze the hand?

My thoughts (other than "Darnnnnnn") were along these lines:

- My RHO (East) is void in diamonds.
- Hearts are badly offside, and the ♥9 is probably a singleton.
- I think that spades must be 3-3 for me to make this hand. Giving West a singleton heart, if the hand has three spades, then it has six diamonds and exactly three clubs. This might give me a chance to make the hand... Three spades, three clubs, a heart and... a *diamond*! How can I possibly get a diamond when my LHO (West) has the ♦AKJT sitting over my lowly ♦Q9? Watch...

N	North	I
♠	J75	
♥	AJ10653	
♦	6	
♣	KQ9	
S	South	I
♠	AQ93	
♥	8	
♦	Q97542	
♣	A4	

(Order of play is approximate, but multiple roads lead to Rome, as it turns out...)

- Trick 1: West leads ♥9, ♥10, ♥Q, my ♥8.  
Trick 2: East leads the ♣5, ♣A, ♣3, ♣9.  
Trick 3: I lead ♠3 toward dummy, ♠6, ♠J, ♠K  
Trick 4: East leads ♣2, ♣4, ♣7, ♣K  
Trick 5: Dummy's ♣Q, ♣6, ♦2, ♣J  
Trick 6: Dummy's ♥A, ♥2, ♦4, ♦3.



Trick 7: Dummy's ♠5, ♠2, ♠A, ♠4  
Trick 8: I lead ♠Q, ♠10, ♠7, ♠8 (phew! They're 3-3! So West was 3=1=6=3, and I'm home...).  
Trick 9: I lead the fourth Spade, the ♠9, as West drops a diamond, dummy and East a heart.  
Trick 10: We're down to four cards. Only West and my hand matter. West has the ♦AKJT, and I have the Diamond ♦Q975.

When I play a low diamond, West is stewed. West can win this with the ♦J or ♦10 but will then be endplayed into giving me my ♦Q, no matter what he does. You can walk through the play by following this link:  
<https://tinyurl.com/28eh6z4c>

*Note:* I was asked why West opened with the ♥9 instead of a diamond. An expert thinks about the hand, not just the first trick. West was hoping that the heart lead would "hit partner" (that is, lead through dummy's strength to partner's strength) and that East would have a diamond to lead through declarer for a multi-trick set. As it turns out on this hand, the declarer can take eight tricks in No Trump with any lead – but if there were a weakness, West's lead of a heart was likely to do the most damage of any lead.

This was a "lucky hand" in that the distribution could have been different – but I used solid reasoning that my partner couldn't have less than he did for the 2♥ bid, especially given East's double. And I took the time to:  
1) Count my sure and likely tricks.  
2) *Work out a lie of the cards that would allow me to take the eight tricks I needed for my contract, given the auction.*

In a team game with IMP or victory point scoring, making your contract is your most important objective! On this particular hand we were +490 for making 2NT doubled at our table, not enough to swing the match in our favor, but enough to say we put up a fight.

Special bonus for B and C flight players in District 16 who have read this far: I feel so strongly about how important and fun the GNT events are that If you put together a team for the GNT in 2026, I will (time allowing) give a free 90-minute online coaching session to at least the first two teams in each flight that contact me. Send me an email at least a month before the District 16 event for your flight if interested: [PlayBridgeWithThomas@GMail.com](mailto:PlayBridgeWithThomas@GMail.com)

Thomas Rush is a regular contributor to the newsletter, served on the unit 174 board and is a bridge teacher who lives in the Houston area and teaches across North America using the internet and online bridge. His specialty is coaching partnerships to the next level of bridge: making sure your agreements and understandings are synchronized so that you get the maximum results when you play together. If you'd like to take your personal game or your partnership to the next level, contact him at [PlayBridgeWithThomas@gmail.com](mailto:PlayBridgeWithThomas@gmail.com), or 832-228-7835.



## In Memoriam

Paul V. Matranga, The Woodlands

\*Life Master



## From the Editor



Thank you to all of the people who contribute to the Newsletter. It takes a team of fellow bridge players to bring this information to you. Unit 174 runs on volunteers' energy.

*If you are interested in volunteering for Unit 174 events and activities, please contact Betty Starzec, Unit 174 Board President - [lstarzec@comcast.net](mailto:lstarzec@comcast.net).*

If you would like to have your club information or an article of interest published, or if you have a bridge accomplishment for which you are proud and would like to share in the Unit 174 Newsletter, please send your name, phone, email, and subject title to [unit174news@gmail.com](mailto:unit174news@gmail.com).

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Editor  
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♠♥♦♣