

Unit 174 President's Post – September 2026

Maybe the recent cool evening last week featuring a lunar eclipse followed by morning rain is a sign that September might really be a touch cooler than what has been a scorching August? Fingers crossed. Thinking of getting away next week and wanting to include some bridge, but not sure where to head? Well, my friends, the [Dallas Labor Day Regional](#) might just be the place to head! Tournament runs Wednesday to Monday, September 2-7.

When I started playing bridge in 2004 and was working full time, I was thankful there were plenty of evening games, along with weekend options. Driving after dark was no big deal. I remember during the week some die-hards would play in the day game, grab dinner, and come back for the evening open, mentor-mentee, or maybe a barometer game. And on Sundays even a two-session team game starting early in the afternoon with a dinner break before the second session. Since COVID closures – and maybe even before then – evening games have disappeared. But here's the big news: an evening game is starting soon, so keep reading!

Awesome August Sectional Success!

The Awesome August Sectional at Bridge Club of Houston (BCOH) was not only well attended but also showed a small profit. It was a joy to see players representing every club in our unit – from Galveston/Clear Lake to Bryan/College Station – along with several players from outside our unit. The table count was 223.5, up 16 tables compared to the same three days in 2024.

A huge thank you to the many BCOH volunteers who kept the hospitality and lunches flowing, and to our tournament chairs, Fred Gregory and Susan Banks-Johnson. I also wish to express my gratitude to our directors, Kevin Perkins, Scott Humphrey, and Janice Rush, for keeping the tournament running smoothly.

Finally, thank you to everyone who played. Your sportsmanship was top-notch, especially while navigating the tighter table configurations. As we look ahead, we welcome your feedback about holding a future summer sectional at BCOH.

New Board Member Nominations

Clif Rice, thank you for agreeing to serve as our Nominating Committee Chair again this year. Each year, the terms of three of our nine board members come to an end. Clif along with committee members Janice Rush and Phyllis Dillard are currently seeking six qualified candidates for the slate. If you are interested in getting more involved and serving on Unit 174's Board of Directors, please contact [Clif](#).

New Evening Game at Clear Lake Bridge Club (CLBC)

Winner-winner, without the chicken dinner! CLBC is starting a weekly Tuesday 7:00 p.m. "Fast Pairs" open game on September 8. Even though I'm not known to be a super speedy player, I look forward to coming down to play. Bets are on as to whether I keep up with the pace! You can see the flyer for this new game in this issue.

Special Upcoming 99er Game

It always pleases me when I learn of new bridge class being offered or games made available for our "Future Life Masters" so would be remiss not to give a mention to the following 0-99 game being held 10am on Saturday, September 12 at Trini Mendenhall Community Center in Spring Branch. This fun and relaxed style game is for YOU even if you've not played duplicate bridge, face-to-face, or joined ACBL. Make sure you check out the flyer in this issue for all the details.

Fall Colors

While we probably won't see autumn colors for quite a while within our unit's geographical area, we will see a variety of black, silver, red, gold and platinum colored masterpoint opportunities over the balance of this year and moving into next spring. As each color has different requirements for how you earn them along with how many you need for advancing ranks, [ACBL's webpage on Masterpoints](#) provides detailed information. Upcoming opportunities are:

[499er Sectional](#) September 17-19 and December 10-12: BCOH will be hosting this "silver" event.

[Digital NABC](#) September 14-19 on BBO® and RealBridge™: This NABC offers events for all levels including Gold Rush and limited games. Masterpoint awards will be in gold and/or red at 80% of face-to-face awards.

[Fall Open Sectional and Non-Life Master \(NLM\) 0-750 Regional](#) October 15-17: Held at the Arabia Shrine Center on Harwin. Silver in the Open Sectional or gold and/or red in the NLM Regional. If you are a NLM, you can play in any event.

[District 16 Fall 2026 Royal STaC Week](#) October 19-25: Held at participating clubs throughout our district, with points listed initially in silver and later converted to 25% gold, red, silver, and black.

[Unit 174 Thanksgiving STaC](#) November 9-15: Held at participating clubs within our unit – Hi-Yo Silver (points, that is), and away!

[499er Sectional](#) December 10-12: BCOH will be hosting this "silver" event.

Two Premier Events Not to Be Missed

[Milton and Betty Freedman Houston Lone Star Regional](#) January 25-31, 2027, at the Marriott Westchase: This is our unit's annual premier event. Our 7-day regional will be filled with a variety of bridge games for all levels. [Event Naming Opportunities](#) are in progress! Marsha Bernstein is ready to walk you through this, so give her a call (713-857-6088). You can see the flyer for both the tournament and the naming events in this issue.

[Dallas North American Bridge Championships \(NABC\)](#) March 11-21, 2027, at the Dallas Hyatt Regency. Filled with bridge games and educational opportunities for players of all levels as well as several really fun evening events, if you haven't ever attended an NABC, pen it in on your calendar now! Reservations can be made through Conference Direct beginning September 22 by phone (855-956-0776) or online via a link which will soon be on the event website. If interested in volunteering, please contact the volunteer coordinator, [Judy Wood](#) and let her know what you would like to do – partnerships, registration, hospitality, novice/intermediate programs, etc.

Speaking of NABC's, ACBL has been working hard on reimagining the way these are run. The Fall 2028 NABC in Austin will be the first to use this new model. Many of you have been asking what's changing, some of you have worried that those of us with "not so many points" will be left out. This will not be the case. [Here's a little sneak preview of what's to come.](#)

Hope to see you in September either in Dallas next week and/or back here at the bridge table,

Lauri Laufman

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