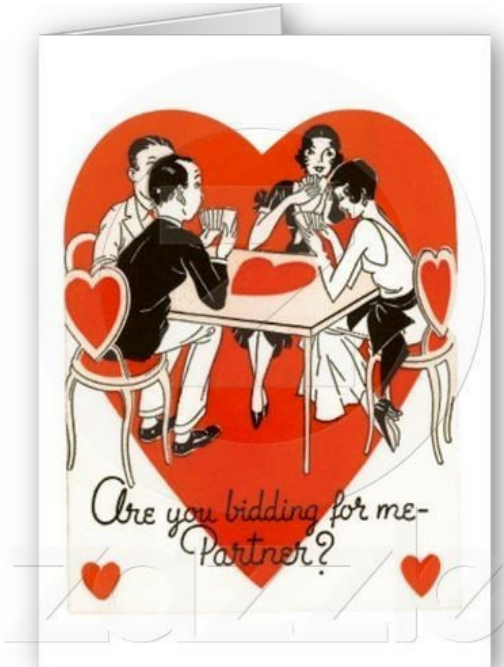




President's Letter February, 2021



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

For the love of the game - Play more bridge!!!

The pandemic may finally be loosening its grip, but there is still much uncertainty. Promising vaccines seem to heighten the chance that the coronavirus will be contained at some point, but virus mutations have added a new challenge. We all miss seeing one another and playing bridge in our Clubs, something we once took for granted. We will value those moments even more once we return to face-to-face bridge.

New! District 16 has joined Districts 7's **0-99er program**, the "99er Nite Club", offering our 99ers a game just for them! These games are offered 7 days a week at 6pm. **If you are a 99er, ask your Club if they are participating.** Your Club has to "opt in" for these games to participate. District 16 wants every 99er to have the opportunity to play as much as possible and have the best experiences. There are extra perks of this game--Lynn Berg provides mini-lessons @ 5:30pm, a wide variety of professionals (including Larry Cohen) conduct a postmortem at about 7:30pm and these are bigger games offering more masterpoints!

Congratulations to **Scott Humphrey** who has been promoted to Associate National Director. District 16 has two other National Directors in its midst: Kevin Perkins, Associate National Director and Melody Euler, Tournament Director.

Awards - Betty Starzec

A second round of applause for **Rebecca Brown**, the Jacoby Award recipient for 2020. Normally, the award would have been presented at the Dallas Labor Day Regional, but it was cancelled. An official presentation will be held at the next face-to-face Regional to be held in the District.

Congratulations to the 2021 Star & Goodwill Recipients!

	STAR	GOODWILL
Unit 172	Everett Lewis	Evelyn Pitman Lynn Pierson
Unit 174	Sam Khayatt	Charles Dalton John Erickson
Unit 176	Ed Yetter	Rebecca Page
Unit 183	Jacque Montgomery	Kim Dorsey-Newman Jean Helmers
Unit 187	Tom Neagli	Marilyn Macdonald Ruthalee Taylor
Unit 201		Nadine Pearce Flo Ferguson
Unit 207	Sandy Potts	Billie Ogens Dean Truair
Unit 209	Lonnie Yee	Linda Buzan
Unit 224	Jeff Lewis	
Unit 225	Charles Ford	Lisa Looney
Unit 233	Dale Allen	Jan Hart George Holmes
Unit 254	Phyllis Culp	
Unit 353		David Hertzog Patricia Robinson

Bylaws - Rebecca Brown

At the February 8 Board of Directors meeting, the Board approved the proposed amendments to the Bylaws. The revised bylaws will be posted on the website shortly.

Charity - Nancy Strohmer

April 12-18 - ACBL Charity Week - more points!

More charity games - More points!

August 2: ACBL Grass Roots Fund

August 3: D16 Charity Fund

August 4: ACBL Grass Roots Fund

August 5: D16 Charity Fund

Support ACBL with a Smile!

AmazonSmile, that is. Why not support ACBL when you shop? Sign up at <http://smile.amazon.com>. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable

organization of your choice...why not make it American Contract Bridge League Charity Foundation Corp?

District 16 Board News

Regrettably, **Jim Bauer** has resigned from the board due to personal reasons. Jim served on the Board for four years as 2nd Vice President, U176's board representative, GNT Coordinator, Scorecard Committee Chair and as author of the Conflict-of-Interest Policy. Jim has been a cherished asset on the board—we will miss him!!! Fortunately, Jim is continuing his contributions to District 16 by working on another project for the board.

Steve Shirey has been appointed to serve out Jim's term which ends in February, 2022. Steve brings years of experience in the bridge world with him--we are happy to welcome him to the Executive Committee!

District 16 Website - John Magyari

Keep up with the latest news by going to: <https://d16acbl.org/>.

District Director's Report - Paul Cuneo

I was selected to chair the Strategic Committee again this year and continue to serve as a member of the Governance Committee.

Overall membership is currently declining at a rate of 8.5% per year. We finished the year 2020 with 154,600 members versus 162,500. Realistically, our only hope to reduce the loss rate before a full return to face-to-face bridge is to focus on getting more members playing online. Marketing has developed a toolkit for use at the unit level and communications have been sent to all Unit and District Presidents. I want to encourage every unit to have a calling campaign to engage those not playing online.

Key items for the Board in 2021 in my view are:

1. Determine the role of face-to-face and virtual clubs in post-pandemic bridge and set goals for management in this area.
2. Continue to move bridge related activities to management as we prepare to shrink the board to 13 members by the end of 2024.
3. Plan for an aggressive membership growth campaign post-pandemic which will include reaching out to lapsed members and encouraging them to return. On January 25, the Board approved the 2021 budget which included funds for Marketing to begin this campaign.

The outlook for tournaments to return to face-to-face prior to summer is not good. Vaccine supply remains limited and the mutations of the virus are producing more virulent strains. ACBL will continue to prioritize employee and player safety very high versus the desire to see face-to-face tournament play.

The discipline pipeline of alleged online cheating cases is actively being worked. Most involve lower-level players and the total number of cases is <50 at this point. The National Recorder's office has more under investigation. ACBL has worked to ensure

that everyone is fairly treated and the process has several defined steps including review by the Appeals and Charges committee of the Board.

With over 45,000 members playing in sanctioned online games, I don't believe cheating is "rampant". As a virtual club manager, I've had one pair that I believe was cheating the one time they played in my game and they are no longer allowed to play in it. A player memo was filed by one of their opponents. I've had several lower-level players allege cheating by the opponents, but when I've investigated or asked higher level players to investigate, cheating was not indicated.

I bring this up to say that while we should encourage players to file player memos if they believe someone is cheating, we should also encourage them to report suspicious activity to their club manager for review.

Education - Sally Sassen

All sorts of good things have come out of the D16 Membership Task Force in which Sally is a member. A monthly Lecture Series directed at Intermediate players was one of the initiatives.

Sally organized the program and secured the first lecturer, **Buck Buchanan**, who spoke on "Sharpening Your Defense: Learning to Think Like Declarer Thinks." It was a resounding success—the attendance exceeded our Zoom capacity! We have since increased our Zoom capacity, so there will be plenty of room for future lectures!

Monthly lectures will take place on the second Saturday at 12:30pm. Our second lecture took place on February 13 with **Rosemary Kelley** speaking on "Beyond the Basics: Drury, Sandwich Notrump & Leaping Michaels." It was another HUGE success!

We are very fortunate to have such seasoned lecturers—thank you Buck and Rosemary for kicking off the Lecture Series with a bang!

The next lecture will be on Saturday, March 13 at 12:30pm: **Charles Ford** will be speaking on "New Minor Forcing: The Rest of the Story." Hope to see you there!!!

*Thank you, **Sally**, for making "Education" come alive in District 16!!!*

Thomas Rush has been appointed to coordinate the Lecture Series program—let Thomas know if you are interested in lecturing (playbridgewiththomas@gmail.com).

A monthly Lecture Series directed at Beginner players was recently approved by the board. The first lecture will be Saturday, April 3 at 12:30pm CT. More information is on its way!

Online Teaching Lite Workshop - Buck Buchanan

Another initiative that has come out of the Membership Task Force

of which Buck is a member is the Online Teaching Lite Classes. What was intended to be one class resulted in two because of the overwhelming response. Our hope is that these teachers will teach online as well as hold classes for those new players who attend Patty Tucker's Bridge in a Day on February 27. *Many thanks to **Buck** for hosting these classes!*

Facebook - Rachell Jackson

Join your District 16 friends on Facebook and enjoy the bridge articles, lessons, announcements and shared bridge interests.

Here's how to join and post on the D16 Facebook page...

First, join Facebook:

Go to [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and click Create New Account. Enter your name, email or mobile phone number, password, date of birth and gender. Click Sign Up. To finish setting up your account, confirm your email or mobile phone number.

Then, join the D16 group:

Go to the ACBL District 16 Facebook page: Either search on "ACBL District 16" (look for the magnifying glass), or [CLICK HERE](#).

Click + Join Group. It's just below the cover photo.

Tell the group what's on your mind:

Type over the text, "What's on your mind, your name?" Or paste in that field. You can enter text, paste text, graphics, or video

GNT - Scott Nason

District 16 will run its Grand National Teams District Finals online on BBO the weekend of April 9-11. As we have done in person, we will begin the largest flight B on Friday 4/9 and start the other three flights on Saturday 4/10. All flights will begin with a two-session qualifying and continue with a Knockout format.

Eligibility for each flight will be based on meeting the district residency requirement and masterpoints as of August 6, 2019.** That is 2019, not 2020. Flight C is limited to non-life masters with less the 500 points, flight B to players with less than 2500, and flight A to players under 6000. There is no limit for the Championship flight.

We are currently working out some of the details, including session start times and security protocols and will share them shortly.

*****The District 16 website will have a listing of Masterpoints as of August 6, 2019 shortly.***

Membership - Sandy Potts

The Membership Task Force has accomplished a lot during the pandemic.

We've had ACBL offer teachers on-line certification and we've

hosted Patty Tucker with Bridge in a Day for new bridge players! We also started an intermediate lecture series.

Now, it's time for all of District 16 to help out!

We need your assistance in encouraging people to take Patty Tucker's "Bridge in a Day" (BIAD) class. This class is geared for people who have never played bridge.

It's FREE for participants, courtesy of D16.

Saturday, February 27: Technology component at 12pm / BIAD Workshop from 2-4pm (Technology part is required for the class.)

How can you help?

Advertise by word of mouth or however you can! We want family members, friends, acquaintances from work, etc. to come get a taste of bridge!

How else can you help?

We need you to recommend teachers for beginning students! We were all new players at one time. Let's see if we can grow our membership and support our bridge community!

Questions? Please feel free to contact me!

Sandy.potts5@yahoo.com / 512-258-1882 / 512-658-9795 cell

I am convinced that Sandy never sleeps!!! She works on Membership day and night—THANK YOU, [Sandy](#), for your total commitment to increasing and retaining District 16's membership!!! Your leadership as Chair of the Membership Task Force is making a difference!

NABC - BJ Sanders, Chair and Sally Sassen, Co-Chair

And, in case you would like a little good news about our future, the Fall NABC is scheduled to take place in Austin at the JW Marriott, November 25 through December 5, 2021. Yes, that is just nine months away!

The Austin Team is hard at work handling logistics for the three simultaneous tournaments that will be occurring - a Novice tournament, a Regional tournament and the National competition. And to those in the 0-20 masterpoint range, there will be a special Free two-hour lecture followed by 14 deals led by an expert teacher on Sunday, November 28 at 10 am.

In the very near future, we will be sending out information to your e-mail address on how you can have a game named after a person/player of your choosing or even sponsor an entire day in their honor.

The ACBL and JW Marriott are working diligently to make this a safe event. Austin is working on the fun of playing in-person!

Cheers!

NAP - Larry Davis

The NAP will be held virtually at the 2021 Spring Nationals.

The ACBL headquarters will contact the district-level qualifiers who qualified to go the 2020 Spring Nationals (which was cancelled). They may instead compete at the 2021 Spring Nationals.

Club-level qualification begins this June and continues through the end of August.

Tournament Results - Ira and Ellen Hessel

We received a request to report Tournament Results during this past year of the pandemic. **Ira** and **Ellen** quickly accepted the task—**THANK YOU!!!** For results of the ACBL events: [CLICK HERE!](#)

I hope that you and your loved ones have stayed well. If you were one of those who contracted the virus, I hope you had a mild case and are on the mend.

Now...we have the Arctic blast to contend with...brrrrr! Stay warm!

My very best,

**Nancy Strohmer
District 16 President**

