



KIBITZER



Newsletter of Palo Alto Unit 503 of the American Contract Bridge League Volume XLVIII, Issue 1, January, 2010

Winter is here and so are the Swiss. The 199er Unit Swiss teams will open the New Year on Monday, January 4 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bridge Center. No advance sign-up is necessary.

The Swiss stay on later in January at the Bridge Center with the Unit Swiss Teams on Sunday, January 24 at 1 p.m. Please sign up at the Unit website or on the bulletin board at the Bridge Center. Attention 99ers! We hope to have you come. There is a special 99er section with its own director waiting for you! For information, contact Phyllis at 408-730-0654, zoma-opa-gaffney@comcast.net or the Bridge Center at (650) 940-1824.

The December Monday Unit Swiss with its new format limited to teams with an average masterpoint total under 200 drew 12 teams to this STAC. The team of Eric Byler, Omer Barnir, Mona and Irwin Maltz led the way in strata A and B with the quartet of Judy and Warren Goodnow, Dan and Manda Thatte first in C.

Brrr!!!
The Swiss Ski
In
Monday, Jan 4
Sunday, Jan. 24

Rah! Rah! Rah! Cheer for the Holidays! Cheer for Bridge! Cheer for Awards! As the *Kibitzer* goes to press, the Unit expects a full house at the Bridge Center on Sunday, December 20 for no-charge bridge and catered dinner to celebrate the holidays and a successful bridge year.. Eric Mayefsky, the Trophy chair, will present the Unit awards for Sportsmanship and Service. It's to be a surprise both to the members receiving the awards and the other members. The Sportsmanship award will go to Sue Johnston for friendship, a pleasant attitude and the practice of active ethics. The Service award will go to Alan Cummings, a recent Board member and Unit President. Currently Alan is responsible for setting up the library and lecture programs as well as the education fund. The co-winner of this award is Alan Templeton who has also served on the Board and as President, most recently several years as Treasurer and as Unit webmaster.

Holiday Hurrah
Held December 20

The Unit's thanks go to all those who donated toys going to the Palo Alto police who are collecting gifts to benefit the Children's Oncology Unit at the Lucille Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. Also thanks go to Roy Robinson who is coordinating the toy donation and also acting as photographer. More kudos to Eric Mayefsky, Phyllis Gaffney, the tournament chairs.

Sherie Greenberg's Thursday Bridge Club Has a New Home!

Sherie's Thursday afternoon game will no longer be at Cubberley. Due to factors beyond her control, starting January 7 the game will be at 11 a.m. at the new Oshman Family Jewish Community Center, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto. There will be a break for lunch, which may be available for purchase later. Check the Unit web site, www.paloaltobridge.com for the latest info. Enter the parking garage from Fabian Way and park in the Cultural Arts Hall parking area; elevator and stairs are nearby. Sherie says heat is controlled within the lovely Cultural Arts room. Note that there will be no games on Thursdays, December 24 and 31 because of the holidays.

New Board Elects Officers

At its December 1 meeting, the new Board elected the following officers:
President
Mike Ather-



ton (above second left), Vice President Eric Mayefsky (above right), Secretary Terry Lancaster (above left) and Treasurer Sue Griswold. (The Unit members express their appreciation to those who served so well and are leaving the Board: Nita Girand, Susana Krulevich, Steve Lubeck, Betsy Steele and Alan Templeton.

Seasons Greetings from the *Kibitzer* staff and contributors: Elinor Tanck, Marian Kelly, Lori Spaeth, Alan Templeton, John Hornback, Dee Hornback, Mike Atherton, Steve Lubeck, Gersh Wheeler, Sioux Atkinson, Carolyn Chaney, Mary Van Tamelen, Alan Cummings, Roy Robinson, Eric Mayefsky and Frances Miller.

Player Advancements

The ACBL December report shows that the players named below have moved up. Congratulations!



Junior Master	5 MP	Beverly Brockway, Andrew Dentai
Sectional Master	50 MP	Carol Kemper, Richard Treakle
Regional Master	100 MP	Margaret Becker, Lynn Giusti
Bronze Life Master	500 MP	Stan Charney

Unit News



LECTURE SERIES TIME CHANGE - Mark your calendar! The ever popular Thursday Lecture Series has a new time! Lectures now begin at **9:00 a.m.** and end at **10:30 a.m.** The change has been made to accommodate the new 11:00 a.m. start time for Sherie's game at the new Jewish Community Center. (see p.2 announcement). You will have plenty of time to get to the JCC for Sherie's 11 a.m. game or to relax a bit before the noon game at the Bridge Center.

Upcoming lectures in January:

Jan. 14 Matchpoint Declarer Play Frank Smoot
Jan. 28 Opening Leads Sue Johnston

Comments, lecture topics, speakers, donations, etc. are welcome. Contact Alan Cummings at alan.cummings@stanford.edu. Thanks to the 20 members who have donated \$2,750 to the ACBL Educational Foundation this year to support the series and to promote other educational programs.

Mentor/Mentee - The Unit has 29 Mentor Mentees at this time and would like to add more. The chair Jeanette McNeil needs help in finding mentors for seven mentees with from 5-70 masterpoints. A mentor commits to play with the mentee once a month and be available afterwards to give advice and answer questions. Of course, the partnership may want to take advantage of additional sessions. A mentor does not have to be a Unit member. Contact Jeanette, jmcsunset@aol.com or (650) 854-2249 to participate in this program.

Doubleton - Just a reminder that as of January, the Doubleton Club on Wednesday evening will convert its 0-49 MP game to 0-20. Therefore, the three flights will be Open, 199er and 0-20.

Big Game - Steve Lubeck and Marian Kelly managed a 70.24% game on Tuesday, December 1.

Election - Chair Ginger Herrick reports 90 members voted, but only 77 ballots were valid (no signature). Thanks to all who voted. And to everyone, please try to help our Unit and Board in any way you can. We are a family with many talents and need everyone to contribute to make us an even stronger, unified group.

Newcomer Games

Tuesday evening (Begin./Intermed.)
Wednesday afternoon (<50)
Wednesday evening (<20) & (<200)
Friday morning (<30)

NEWCOMERS

A warm welcome to new Palo Alto Unit 503 members: Donato D'Esopo, Don Dinsmore, Frederick Fluegel, Marcelo Gumucio, Susan Hinstorff, Jim Lyons, Virginia Lyons, Sandra Neuwelt-Truntze, Bob Shaffer, Benjamin Leitner, Nancy Sabbag and Jennifer Sheppard.

Unit Membership on the Rise

by Elinor Tanck

From October 2008 through September 2009, 37 new members joined the Unit compared to 29 the previous year. The editors believe that the 836 membership is the highest year-end total since 1990. The ACBL October QUIP reports the following information. In the last 12 months, the active membership increased 4.6% the new membership gains were 8.4% and the member losses 3.9%. In these three categories, the Unit ranked 4th, 6th, and 4th, respectively among the 22 District units. The report listed the average member age as 67 and the average years of ACBL membership at 18.

Gary MacGregor leads with 7,660 masterpoints, in second is Sherie Greenberg with 7,476, followed by, Don Rothschild, Hansa Narasimhan and Jim O'Neil. Tony Jackson is the player at the median and Mei Wu is closest to the average masterpoints. There was a decrease in the Unit masterpoint total from 2009 because Gene Simpson with his 26K plus masterpoints transferred out of the Palo Alto Unit.

Each October the ACBL provides membership data which comprise the information in this article. The table below compares the masterpoint distribution and other information for members from analysis of the ACBL data. Note the consistency of the percent who reside in the San Mateo and Santa Clara Units.



	2009	2008	MP Total	2009	2008
Members	836	799			
Juniors (<20MP)	218	198	0-1	75	64
Life Masters	280	284	1-5	50	48
Highest MP	7,660	26,322	5-10	35	32
Median MP	110	134	10-20	58	54
Average MP	544	576	20-50	98	85
Total MP	454,429	460,944	50-100	82	85
			100-300	129	118
Unit Residence	511 (61%)	496 (62%)	300-500	67	79
Santa Clara	115 (14%)	108 (14%)	500-1000	109	106
San Mateo	182 (22%)	173 (22%)	1-2.5K	88	86
Other D-21	19 (2%)	17 (2%)	2.5-5K	36	32
Outside D-21	6 (1%)	7 (1%)	5K+	9	10
Unlisted	3	2			



“Are you having fun?” That’s what Kevin O’Leary, the recently-retired popular director of Monday’s game, has been striving for. He thinks the social aspect of bridge is more important than the game itself and he aims to make all players comfortable. Very happy himself, upbeat and optimistic, Kevin loved directing here, fostering newer players, calming frightened newcomers and making sure everyone is nice—both to partner and to opponents.

Born in San Francisco and brought up on the Peninsula, Kevin is married to Nadine and is the father of four “Irish Catholic quadruplets,” a daughter and three sons born in quick succession. Now they have six grandchildren as well, ranging in age from four to 21.

As a young couple getting together with neighbors over pinochle games while the children romped in another room, Nadine suggested they try bridge. Within three hands, Kevin knew he had a knack for the game and was the best player at the table. He took a few lessons from the Savstroms, went to Cameron’s Wednesday night game, asked “get me a partner,” and was hooked.

Kevin attended Serra High School in San Mateo but had no real interest in school. Against his mother’s objections, he joined the army for two years then worked in a hospital, where a co-worker suggested he work for a painting contractor. For 34 years he was a painter and a foreman, working indoors and out. He managed huge projects--factories, both the San Francisco and San Jose airports and buildings at Stanford. When his crew was larger than twelve, he didn’t paint himself. He was happy recently to hire someone else to paint his own house, “any color except off-white.”

Kevin’s current goals include playing more bridge and entering more tournaments. He has a favorite partner from Arizona and is very interested in the mentor program. That won’t leave much time for other interests: gardening, traveling (Europe, Mexico, all the states, the National Parks), reading mysteries and biographies.

A bridge director, Kevin says, should be someone who likes people, who is well-respected and who has done a lot for the Unit. That seems to fit, most of us would agree, someone very much like Kevin himself.

KEVIN O’LEARY

By Mary VanTamelen



NEXT BOARD MEETING:

Tuesday, January 12, at 3:45 p.m.

Bridge Center

All games take place at 2639A Terminal Blvd., Mountain View 94043 unless otherwise noted.

DAY	BRIDGE CLUB	TYPE	TIME	DIRECTOR(S)	PLACE/OTHER INFO
MON	Bridge Mix	Open/<2K	11:00 a.m.	Coleman/Prior	
TUES	Tuesday Noon BC	Open/Strat.	12:00 p.m.	Walter Miller	Unity Church, YES Rm, 3391 Middlefield Rd, PA
	Alpine BC	Open/<1K	12:00 p.m.	Will Watson	
	Just For Fun	Begin./Inter.	7:00 p.m.	Solna/Omer	No master points given. Call Solna at (408) 685-5323
WED.	Bridge 'n Brunch	Open/Strat.	11:00 a.m.	Sue Johnston	
	Wed Aft. 49er	<50 M.P.	1:00 p.m.	Walter Miller	Unity Church, YES Rm, 3391 Middlefield Rd, PA
	Lori & Sue's Dblton Club	Open/Strat.	7:00 p.m.	Spaeth/Johnston	
	Lori & Sue's Dblton Club	<200 M.P.	7:00 p.m.	Spaeth/Johnston	
	Lori & Sue's Dblton Club	<20 M.P.	7:00 p.m.	Spaeth/Johnston	
THUR	Thur. Afternoon BC	Open/Strat	12:00 p.m.	Beardsley/J. & L. Mattis	
	Sherie's BC	Open/Strat.	11:00 a.m.	Sherie Greenberg	Jewish Community Center 3921 Fabian Way, PA
FRI	The EZ Game	<30 M.P.	9:00 a.m.	Roy Robinson	
	Friday Morning BC	Open/Strat.	10:30 a.m.	Claire Coleman	
	Friday Night Barometer	Open/Strat.	7:30 p.m.	Will Watson	
SAT	One Club	Open/Strat.	12:00 p.m.	John Prior	
SUN	Sunday Afternoon BC	Open/Strat.	1:00 p.m.	Coleman/Watson	

SPECIAL EVENTS

- 199er Unit Swiss Teams, Monday, January 4 at 6:30 p.m. Bridge Center
- Regional, Monday, January 4-10 at Hyatt Monterey
- Unit lecture, Thursday, January 14 at 9 a.m. Bridge Center. Frank Smoot on Matchpoint Declarer Play.
- Sectional, Saturday, January 16 at Janet Pomeroy Ctr, San Francisco
- Sectional, Saturday, January 23 at Hart Middle School, Pleasanton
- Unit Swiss Teams, Sunday, January 24 at 1 p.m., Bridge Center
- Unit lecture, Thursday, January 28 at 9 a.m. Bridge Center. Sue Johnston on Opening Leads.

Clubs Closed

- Christmas Eve, Thursday, December .24, Sherie's BC
- Christmas: Friday, December 25: Friday Morning BC, The EZ Game, Friday Night Barometer
- New Year's Eve, Thursday, December 31, Sherie's BC

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