

On March 5, members of the Palo Alto Bridge Club received this email from the board of directors and club owners:



“Due to the Corona Virus outbreak here in Santa Clara County, the Unit Board of Directors and Game Owners have decided to suspend regular and unit games as well as other events at the Bridge Center **starting immediately.**”

This was a surprising announcement at that time (almost 2 weeks before official government instructions.) Most neighboring clubs were still “business as usual.” Rather than causing upset, the announcement prompted expressions of appreciation and support from most players. During the next week, there were numerous small games set up in homes, hoping to keep our minds sharp during what we hoped would be a brief interval. Some players went to other clubs to play. There was the sense that this would soon pass. Of course, things quickly progressed and soon all clubs were closing their doors. I thought: “I never viewed bridge as such a risky activity.”

Some players immediately turned to the internet (primarily Bridge Base) to practice with their friends (or with robots) or to play in a competitive environment. Starting on Sunday, March 15, our unit set up practice tournaments on BBO to facilitate more competitive play. Although I’d never played online, I figured there’s always something to learn. It actually was a lot of fun! With Will Watson as the director, we knew the games would be run well. Yesterday (this is submitted on 3/20), ACBL and BBO started official online tournaments, with most of the money going to our local clubs. Keep informed; developments are occurring daily.

The last event held at the Palo Alto Bridge Club was the 6th Annual Bay Area High School Bridge Championship. 40 students from 12 high schools participated in this year's event. Many long-time SiVY kids have shared their love of bridge with their peers by teaching bridge classes, leading bridge clubs, and mentoring. We had many players new to the game.

The Lynbrook High School team came in first for the second year in a row. Competing for the first time, Menlo School came in second place. Olivia Schireson started their bridge club this year. Sarah Youngquist held a practice session the week before the championship. At one point, Olivia broke off with her Menlo kids to review some basic bidding points, like what the shape of opener’s hand is when he bids one diamond. Leland High School came in third with a player who had been playing for one month. (Special thanks to Stephanie Youngquist for this report. What a delight to hear about the growth of bridge among youth.)

Thank you to our unit leaders for making tough decisions in the interest of health and safety of all members. We are all looking forward to “normal days.” Stay healthy. Judi



Lynbrook High School winning team Arthur Zhou, David Zheng, Michael Hu, and Alex Zheng.



Menlo School team: Olivia Schireson, Lucas Allard, Annika Porteous and Brynn Brady.