

San Antonio Bridge League (www.d16acbl.org/U172)

The Winning Finesse

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President's Column by *Nancy Tom*.

Howdy all! I just wanted to take a minute and let you all know the latest.

Lynn Baker, a lovely gal from Austin, wrote a fun article titled: "Our Bridge World at Its Best" in Bridgewinners.com. She wrote about both the Ed Rawlinson Sectional/NAPS and the accomplishments of Olivia Schireson, who recently achieved her Life Master Status. Everyone rallied around Olivia and her achievement. Our Unit is fantastic with, not only welcoming players into our games, but also celebrating the successes of our members. It's a great read, please look it up. The website is: <https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/our-bridge-world-at-its-best-2-rv8xbp3zy6/>

We want to always remember our yearly goal - membership recruitment. One of our top priorities this year is working on increasing overall membership. Inviting new people to the fabulous game of bridge is just one idea to help improve our membership. We are always looking for more. Please share any ideas or recommendations that will help, not only build our membership, but also encourage more face to face play. Rebecca Evans will be heading the Committee to increase our 499'er participation (rebeccashirley44@gmail.com). Please see her with any ideas you have.

I have talked with a lot of the 499er members. I asked them what held them back or what they were most worried about before starting to play bridge. The majority of the members stated that they are really fearful of the "Big Players," the players who have played for years, the players at the top of the leaderboards, the players with POINTS! I myself clearly remember that feeling. I too remembered feeling like I knew nothing compared to these "Big Players." As a result, I remember always wanting to play in the "little room" - because I felt safer. But I was encouraged to keep showing up, to keep playing, to keep practicing, and to keep learning. I would love to see part of our recruitment goal to be working with and encouraging all new players. Let's teach them what we know. Let's encourage them to come back, to show up, to play, and to learn. Let's help them love the game as much as we do. We want our newer players to know the excitement around earning points and earning levels. We want all of our players to realize that they not only learn from their mistakes, but grow from the experience. We want all of our newbies to learn from the more seasoned and more experienced players! Let's get them out of the 499er group. Let's all join in on this endeavor!

The next upcoming Sectional is the Roxana Tom Sectional, being held on April 10-13, 2024 at St. Thomas Episcopal Church located at 1416 N Loop 1604 East. This sectional is honoring my beloved mother, who passed away in April 2022. My mother loved bridge with a passion. My youngest memories included watching my mother play party bridge. She played with a group of local ladies and they played for pennies. My mother would ask me to be the hostess, which I did. I loved watching the ladies play. I especially remember the laughter. Oh, they all had such a good time. Later, my mother encouraged both me and my sister Roxana to also join the game. And guess what? We both fell in love with bridge. Although my mother loved all aspects of

bridge, she especially loved playing duplicate bridge. I remember attending many Nationals with my mother, sister, and their bridge friends; I wasn't playing bridge at the time, so I would tour the surrounding areas during the days. Then I would meet up with the bridge players for dinner, listening to them all "talk bridge." I remember it sounded like Greek, I didn't have a clue as to what they were saying. I just remembered that they were all talking excitedly about what had transpired throughout the day. It always seemed like exciting conversations. I was thrilled when I retired and had the time to learn the game of bridge. I was able to play, and learn, from my mother. It was exciting. I was now able to go to the after bridge dinners and, not only understand, but also contribute to the exciting conversations. I am excited for this upcoming sectional, and hope to see you all there!

"If you focus on playing good **bridge** then good results will come. If you focus on trying to get good results then you won't play good **bridge**." - Robert S. Todd

District Star, Goodwill Winners Announced! District 16 sponsors two programs to recognize outstanding individuals in each Unit in the District. The District Star award recognizes one individual who provides exceptional service to the Unit and its members. The 2024 winner is **Jo Ann Robertson**. If there was an award for Hospitality Queen, it would go to Queen Jo Ann. In partnership with the Unit, the District also recognizes two Goodwill Award winners. These are individuals who exhibit courtesy, kindness, and tactfulness and are "ambassadors of goodwill". The 2024 winners are **Barbara Morgan** and **John Hilbig**. The winners were announced at the recent Houston Regional and will be recognized in the District Scorecard.

Bill McCarty Qualifies for National NAP Finals! San Antonio hosted the District 16 North American Pairs Finals in conjunction with our Sectional in January. **Bill McCarty** won first in Flight A, playing with Thomas Rush from Houston. He qualifies to play in the national finals in Louisville, KY in March. Congratulations, Bill and good luck in Louisville.

New Championship Event Coming! It's about time!! The Unit will host its first 499er Championship. It will be Feb. 17 at the Jewish Community Center, 12500 NW Military Highway. It's a two-session Pairs event. The first session starts at 10 a.m. There will be a meal provided between sessions. Cost is \$25. It will be flighted, so there will be multiple champions. Partnership Chair is **Rebecca Evans**, (507)-358-9044, rebecca8891@gmail.com.

Kudos to Greg Hinze!! Greg was recognized in the ACBL Bulletin for passing 25,000 masterpoints.

Ed Rawlinson Sectional Results. The Sectional was held Jan. 11-14 at Shrine Auditorium. Unit 172 first place winners in the 6 Pair Games were: **Al Fulton-Martin Hester (B1)**, **Louisa Morton-Leigh Primerano (C1)**, **Catherine McGaffic-Elisabeth Kay (B1)**, **Jan Wingate (C1)**, **Ira & Ellen Hessel (A1 with 70.71%)**, **Jim Roff-Don Marcott (B1, C1)**, **Elisabeth Kay-Catherine McGaffic (B1)**, **Robert Christophel-Betty Jean Dobbins (C1)**, **Rosemary Kelley (A1 with 76.12%)**, **Barbara Morgan (B1)**, **Don Marcott-Jim Roff (C1)**, **James Cuccia-Joe Ramirez (A1, B1)**, **Sunny Won-Paul Fafoutakis (C1)**. Unit 172 winners in the Team Game were: **Greg Hinze-Patty Hinze-Ellen Hessel-Ira Hessel (A1)**, **Sunny Won-**

Helen James-Barbara Haley-Sandy Souchon (C1). The top 5 masterpoint winners were: **Ellen Hessel (25.46), Gary Anziani (19.22), Ira Hessel (18.92), Ed Rawlinson (18.89), Greg Hinze (16.33).**

Membership Matters. We welcome the following new members and transfers: **Tracy Graham, Oran Houck, Sharon Wheeler, Donnelle Blahuta, Sharon Doerr, R. F. Doerr, Nick Lazazzera, Paul Shukis.** All those who received higher ACBL ratings: new Junior Masters: **Jean Lee;** new Club Masters: **Gwynne Mayer, Bertina Schreiber;** new Regional Masters: **Gloria Harkey, Mary Massey;** new NABC Masters: **Pattie Thompson;** new Gold Life Masters: **Susan Hernandez;** new Sapphire Life Masters: **Martin Hester.** Congratulations to all!

An Oddity and Behavioral Frailty at the Sectional *By Ed Rawlinson.*

♠KJ102
♥107
♦QJ3
♣AQ109
♠A
♥KQ94
♦K97642
♣J2

At the recent Sectional, I experienced an odd situation. I won a heart trick with the 7 and that was the only heart trick won by either side. The opening lead was the ♥6 (fourth best). The Rule of 11 says there are 5 hearts out higher than the 6, and I had all 5. So the 7 won. I led a spade to the Ace and led to the ♦Q and East's Ace. East held ♠Q9765/♥5/♦A85/♣K754 and, having no more hearts and not wanting to lead a black suit into the dummy's tenaces, led a diamond. I cashed the diamonds, pitching a heart and 2 spades and led the ♣J. East won and had to lead to the good dummy.

♠K	N	E	S	W
♥95		1D	2D	P
♦AK10865	P	P		
♣8764				
♠97643				
♥AQ1074				
♦Q				
♣K2				

I was South. As soon as I saw dummy, it was clear that partner made the right bid by passing my Michael's cue bid, but at the time the bid was made, my confidence in partner's bid was, as one opponent put it, betrayed by my scowl. One more reason to keep a straight face. I'm not sure we would have ever gotten to our good diamond contract if I had not bid them!!!

Calendar.

499er Championship	Feb. 17	10 & TBA	Jewish Community Center
Awards Day-Pairs Game	Mar. 9	12 (11:30 Snacks)	St. Thomas Episcopal
Roxana Tom Sectional	Apr. 10-13	10 & 3	St. Thomas Episcopal

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