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THE DECLARER



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF UNIT 131 OF THE AMERICAN CONTRACT BRIDGE LEAGUE

JULY 2025



From the President



Partnership in Bridge

I am going to write about partnership in bridge as a player, rather than as your unit president. Any serious bridge player will agree that having a good partner is crucial not only for winning games, but also for simply having a good time face-to-face or online. Yet, very few bridge articles cover the topic of how to find and develop a good, long-term partnership.

The more competitive you become, the more important a good partner becomes. You need to work together over a long period to make progress together. For those of you who have a fixed partner, congratulations! Others are not that lucky. Maintaining effective communication and growth with different partners adds another layer of complexity to the game.

The other day, I saw an article by a well-known bridge writer titled something like, "How to Deal with Multiple Conventions with Different Partners." The author's tip was to stick to one convention with everyone. That is easier said than done and impractical.

I like to read bridge books, newsletters, and magazines. Many times, I encounter good advice that includes side notes stating conventions or calls made during the auction phase, whether "natural" or "artificial" are between partnership agreements. The ideal situation is to be on the same page with your partner in these subtle areas. That is not easy at all since we are not even reading the same books. However, waiting to study the subject until you find a long-term partner to grow together in sync is often wishful thinking. Those days may never come. Instead, study alone and improve so that you can play with any partner.

Ultimately, bridge is a game meant to be enjoyed! A good partner makes the experience more enjoyable, reducing stress and making the game more fun. I remember one time, after I laid down my cards as the dummy, my partner commented, "You don't have enough points to pass!" This made me feel less guilty as my hand was such a yarborough. Another regular partner, after a competitive auction that made me the declarer, liked to say, "As long as you're playing, the contract is never too high!" What a vote of confidence in my declarer play capability.

All in all, partnership, just like any other valuable relationship in life, is worth the effort to nurture and develop. At the same time, fate and fortune can have a significant impact on it too. I want to align my partnership interests with someone who has a similar attitude toward the game itself, so we can build system notes and go through postmortem sessions together.

On the other hand, randomly assigned partners have also given me enjoyable moments. My personal best score of 65%+ was achieved in a 299er national tournament game a decade ago with such a partner. At our regional tournament, three or four years ago, I was paired up by the partnership desk with a gentleman from a neighboring state. He and I had a good AM gold rush session. But after lunch, I could not help but notice that he was visibly off, as if he was a different player from the morning. He looked laid-back, bid aimlessly, and played sloppily. During the hospitality break, he apologized to me. It turned out the gold points we won in the morning catapulted him to the Lifemaster rank. He could not wait to have one too many drinks to go with his lunch. In closing, keep learning, encourage each other, and have fun!



email all submissions/requests to:

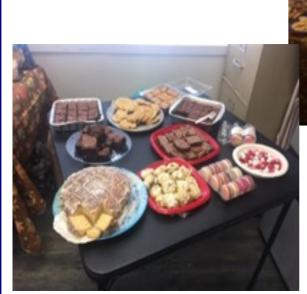
Declarer Editor — Jana Henderson jlhtenor@kc.rr.com Layout Designer — Beth Malone bdawson I 346@gmail.com

Four is **Enough**

Four is Enough was held on February 23rd at the studio and was a success. There were 11 tables and variety of good food.







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Jump Start Bridge

A Day Well Spent - Jump Start Bridge

By Aline Zimmer

In early spring of 2025, volunteers from Unit 131 helped demonstrate how to play bridge at the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics Spring Conference held in Kansas City. Over the course of three days, close to 300 math teachers were introduced to Jump Start Bridge, a free program that teachers can use to show how the game of bridge is not only fun but allows players to apply math, logic and problem-solving skills during the play of the hand.

As volunteers, we sat down at the table with teachers and played a round with them, and they saw how kids would love the game and how easy it was to learn. They were immediately excited by the potential to engage students in applying everyday skills in a fun activity. One teacher came to the conference looking for something to bring back to her Kansas City high school, and this was it! Another, from Texas, was excited to use the support to establish an after-school bridge club. The booth was extremely popular as teachers realized the potential to make their math classes fun and relevant, and a total of 23 teachers from 14 states jumped on board immediately to treat a total of 1240 students in their classes to the game of bridge.

Patty Tucker, a well-known proponent of bridge education, founded the program and was there to assure teachers that she would provide support via videos and local contacts. Teachers who enrolled in the program receive free playing cards, boards, manuals, flash cards, and more, as well as stipends and grant opportunities.

Of course, the goal is to introduce a new generation to bridge with the hope that for many it will become a lifelong activity. Bridge is so much more than a hobby – it provides a built-in community, is inclusive, and promotes friendly competition and sportsmanship – in real life instead of via a screen.

Jump Start Bridge will host a booth at math conferences this summer and fall. To date, the program has had 461 teachers representing 20,218 students from 36 states and 2 provinces register their classes and order supplies. Due to its high success rate, it is seeking increased funding. Please consider a donation of time or money to attract and nurture future bridge players. Learn more at jumpstartbridge.org.







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May 1-3 Sectional

Eleven (11) youth who take lessons from Kathy Rolfe played in the afternoon session of the Spring Sectional Friday May 2nd.



Georgiana and Nancy (her grandmother) received 51.32% and .32mp; Ana and Tom are the other two youth.



Angela and Daniel (standing in back of picture) received 58.82% and .78mp; Charlie and Alex



Robert and Rose; Frankie and Gabe



A large group of players at the Spring Sectional



Hong Chen, 131 Unit President, and Trisha Pitts, 131 Unit Treasurer, lead the 131 Unit Annual Membership meeting at the Spring Sectional.

Beginner Graduation Game





Beginner Graduation Game was held June 2nd at the Studio. It was a full house of 17 tables. Thirty-four (34) beginners were seated EW playing along with experienced players seated NS in the duplicate game.

After the game, Lee Goodman encouraged the group to keep taking lessons and announced the top 7 EW pairs who earned masterpoints.

Mark Davis - Becky Davis 71.52%

Peggy Hendricks - Diane Watterson 66.65%

Patty Jenson - Joyce Williams 62.14%

Judy Hensley – Ken Hensley 60.62%

Elaine Cavener - Vicky Burnett 60.37%

Lou Elder – Michelle Bautisk 59.57%

Patty Weniger – Pam Sweeney 48.33%

In Memoriam

Bob Axtell Barbara Hicks Irene Strauss April 2025 May 2025 June 2025

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Our Rising Stars



NEW LIFE MASTERS



New Life Master

Gay Ramsey

New Gold Life Masters

Arnold Nelson Jr. Nancy Trager

New Bronze Life Masters

Zhuang Li Gay Ramsey George Schaefer Lale Sokullu

New Diamond Life Master

William Bleish

New Silver Life Masters

Jacqueline Baskett Milton Brod



RISING STARS



New Junior Masters

Denna Angle Mary Lou Bizal Linda George

New Club Masters

William Fromm Gabrielle Cohen Larry Goldstein Paula Halsey Linda Trout

New Regional Masters

Vicki Dubois Robert Farris Kevin Foley Tracy McGinnis Lois Roszak

New Sectional Masters

Jeanne Cooper Michelle Krause Vernon van Slyke Charnell Swenson

New NABC Masters

Sandra Loos Pamela Wells

New Advanced NABC Master

Theresa Griffin

Kansas City 5 Ulm @ Sectional

August 28-30,2025

First Church of the Nazarene 11811 State Line Road Kansas City, MO 64114



Tournament Schedule

Thursday, August 28th & Friday, August 29th

9:30 A.M. Flight A - No restrictions (Unlimited/3000)

Flight B - No player over 1500 (1500/750)

Flight C - No player over 300 (300/100)

2:30 P.M. Flight A - No restrictions (Unlimited/3000)

Flight B - No player over 1500 (1500/750)

Flight C - No player over 300 (300/100)

Coffee, Donuts, Soft Drinks

Lunch to

Available Thursday & Friday Cash only

Saturday, August 30th

10:00 A.M. Open Bracketed Swiss (Bracketed by Attendance)

Stratification within flights based on average masterpoints

Entry Fees

Flighted Pairs: \$15 per person per session* Student (under 25): \$8

Swiss Teams: \$168 per team for 2 sessions (Includes Lunch)*

Credit Cards Only

*\$4 additional for unpaid ACBL members

Tournament Contacts

Co-Chairpersons: Jill Ferrel 913-226.6875 jillferrel@kc.rr.com

> Alan Hierseman 913-484-6647 alan26482648@yahoo.com

Partnership:

Shawn Tate 816-465-1540

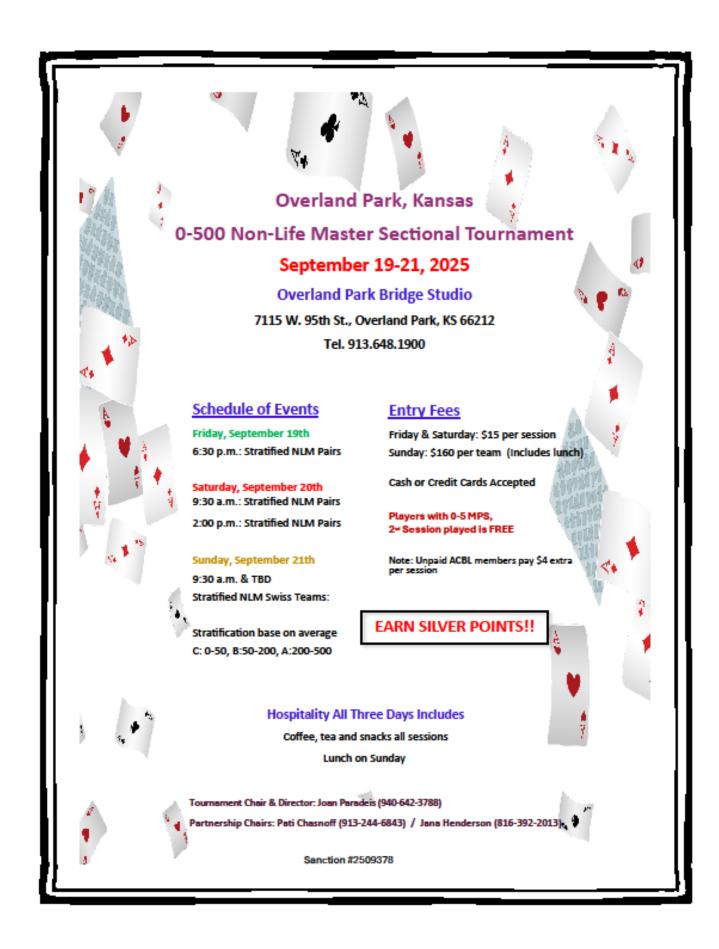
tatorcoupmil@yahoo.com

Director-In-Charge: Joan Paradeis

Unit 131 Website

www.acbl-unit131.org

Sanction # 2508305



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Kansas City Fall NLM Regional & Open Sectional



November 6-8,2025

First Church of the Nazarene 11811 State Line Road Kansas City, MO 64114



Tournament Schedules

Non-Life Master Regional Tournament

Open Sectional Tournament

Thursday, November 6th & Friday, November 7th

9:30 A.M. Stratification 750/300/100

9:30 A.M. Stratification Unlimited/3000/1250

2:30 P.M. Stratification 750/300/100

2:30 P.M. Stratification Unlimited/3000/1250

Saturday, November 8th

& TBD

10:00 A.M. NLM Bracketed Swiss (Bracketed by Attendance)

10:00 A.M. & TRD

Open Bracketed Swiss

(Bracketed by Attendance)

Stratification within flights based on average masterpoints

Flighted Pairs: \$15 per person per session*

Student (under 25): \$8

Swiss Teams: \$168 per team for 2 sessions (Includes lunch)*

Credit Cards Only

\$4 additional for unpaid ACBL members

Coffee, Donuts, Soft Drinks

Lunch to Purchase

Available Thursday & Friday Cash only

Lessons

essons (with handouts) for I/N players will begin at 1:45 Thursday and Friday.

Tournament Contacts

Co-Chairpersons: Susan Urich 913-526-8525

susan.urich@gmail.com

Beth Malone 913-492-7170

bdawson1346@gmail.com

Shawn Tate 816-465-1540 Partnership:

tatorcoupmil@yahoo.com.

Director-In-Charge: Joan Paradeis

Unit 131 Website

www.acbl-unit131.org

Sanction # 2611306

