

# The Bridge Express

Unit 539 – Serving the San Diego Bridge Community

Issue 1  
Spring 2017



## Welcome to our first newsletter

*Unit539's outreach to its members*

Unit 539 is the second largest of the 25 units in District 22. As of Apr 1st, 2017, Unit 539 has 710 members: 416 NLM, 292 LMs including 66 over 2500 Gold LMs. The SD unit is currently run by a Board of 10 elected or appointed Officers who serve a 2-year period. Our charter in a nutshell is to preserve and promote the best interests of competitive duplicate contract bridge in the San Diego area. We accomplish this by holding bi-monthly Unit games, and 3 Sectional tournaments per year, with one of those catering to the Non Life Master community. We promote bridge for Intermediate and Novice players by offering an educational segment before each unit game, led by expert Maritha Pottenger.

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### *Why a Newsletter?*

A general membership meeting is held annually, following the election of the new Board of Directors (BOD) to share the results of the new appointments and provide a financial summary of our unit, as well as communicate any significant events. Unfortunately, this meeting by design cannot be far reaching as it only touches the players who participate in the Unit game that particular day. As a result, the BOD has recently decided to institute a newsletter in an attempt to reach out to a bigger audience. Initially, we are emailing this to those members with emails on file, and snail mailing to everybody else. Our long-term goal is to transition this communication to an electronic- only format for obvious reasons – printing and mailing costs. For this to work however, we need to maintain an up to date directory of members and their contact information. We moved away from a paper directory a few years ago, and have built up

our online directory to 250+ members. This is still a far cry from covering our 700+ members and we hope that you'll volunteer your contact information (name, email, mailing address and phone numbers) to assist us in building up our online directory. To do that, simply send an email to [info@sandiegobridge.com](mailto:info@sandiegobridge.com) with this information. Your email will provide us the authorization to include your contact info online. Note that we will protect your privacy and not abuse it by sending out a deluge of emails.

Shifting to an electronic-only format will also allow us to issue regular newsletters (quarterly or semi-annually), and we hope to include contributions from you as well. An added benefit of an online communication is that you can just hit "Reply" and send us instant feedback! We know we can improve and we'd like to hear from you.

*Lamya Agelidis  
Prez*

## Special Events

Our unit, San Diego Unit 539, hosts high-masterpoint-paying pairs games which are held every 1<sup>st</sup> and every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, and some 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays, of every month. In addition to these regular unit games listed on our yearly calendar, we also host many special events and trophy games throughout the year, along with two Open Sectionals and at least one Non-Life Master (NLM) sectional yearly.

We hold a special unit game in April to bring attention to the masterpoint achievements of our players in the prior year, including the Mini-McKenney awards which go to the top overall masterpoint winners in our District and the (Helen Shanbrom) Ace of Clubs awards which goes to the top masterpoint winners from club games in our District. In each case, awards are given to top masterpoint award winners at each rank/level (Regional, Life, Bronze, Silver, Ruby, Gold, Diamond, etc.).

We hold an Election and Annual Membership Meeting in June where your new unit board is introduced post elections and a unit Appreciation game in October. For each of these special events, even higher masterpoints are awarded players who place in the overalls than those awarded at our usual Unit Championship games.

We also hold two Unit Charity games a year – one for the ACBL Foundation, targeting Education, and one for a local charity of our choice – in 2016, we donated to the Monarch School; in 2017, we will donate to Meals on Wheels.



## New Bylaws Done and Dusted

Our Unit 539 Bylaws, which in accordance with ACBL policies documents all Unit responsibilities and operations, were drafted and revised over the past decades by previous Unit 539 boards to guide the running of our Unit. Over the past year, we have reviewed these bylaws meticulously in an attempt to bring them up to date. The changes made revolve mainly around the impact technology has had on our unit, providing us the opportunity to operate more effectively and cost efficiently. Since we've introduced the use of email and our Unit 539 website ([www.sandiegobridge.com](http://www.sandiegobridge.com)) for communication of announcements and event results, it seems only apt that we update our bylaws accordingly to incorporate that use.

In addition, the election process has been reviewed and minor adjustments have been made to allow for the slowly decreasing number of candidates on the annual election candidate slate. Special guidelines approved by

the ACBL for unit elections are included in the bylaws for cases where the number of candidates on the ballot is no more than one more than the number of positions to be filled. Use of our unit website and email for voting and communication of election results is also addressed.

Lastly, we have better defined various board member and committee responsibilities in this latest version of the bylaws – which is dated 2/19/2017. This updated version of the bylaws is posted at AIB on our Unit 539 Bulletin Board and on our Unit 539 website ([www.sandiegobridge.com](http://www.sandiegobridge.com)) for your review.

The 2015-2016 Board spent many hours reviewing, discussing, and approving these changes. The updated version of our bylaws will be brought to the membership for an approval vote at our Annual Membership Meeting to be held before our unit game on Sunday June 4, 2017.

## Spicing up the Sectionals

Our March Open Sectional was held at Marina Village once again. Reviews from our attendees were very positive: the spacious Captain's room was a success and enjoyed by all, hospitality was plentiful, players looking for partners were matched and the beautiful San Diego weather didn't let us down. And yet, our table count was down: we only had 260 tables, a 4-year low! We need your help in understanding why we had such a large drop (down 22 tables from the last couple of sectionals) and what we can do to entice you to attend your local sectionals.

Our next Open sectional is scheduled for the weekend of

Aug 4-6. We welcome your feedback in making this a success.

Our third sectional of the year is scheduled for Oct 13-14 and this will be a joint NLM Sectional with the La Jolla Unit, directed by our very own Davis Bennett. We are planning on holding it at the Jewish Community Center in La Jolla, a very central location, and easily accessible from all freeways. The facility is beautiful with ample parking, and we promise you two days of great hospitality. Capping off this 2-day event will be a 999er game at AIB on Sunday Oct 15<sup>th</sup> with the NLM Pairs Trophy up for grabs that day!



Marina Village



Jewish Community Center

## UNIT 539 RACES AWARDS 2016

### ACE OF CLUBS

|              |                   |
|--------------|-------------------|
| 0-5          | Delynn Kelly      |
| 5-20         | Raj Patel         |
| 20-50        | Edward Kaufman    |
| 50-100       | Davis Bennett     |
| 200-300      | Mike Koscielski   |
| 300-500      | John Howard       |
| 500-1,000    | Tom Herzog        |
| 1,000-1500   | Linda Gu          |
| 1,500-2,500  | Larry Sherman     |
| 2,500-3,500  | Mary Huffaker     |
| 3,500-5,000  | Sam Jordan        |
| 5000-7,500   | Budak Barkan      |
| 7,500-10,000 | Maritha Pottenger |
| Over 10,000  | Roger Doughman    |

### MINI-McKENNEY

|              |                      |
|--------------|----------------------|
| 0-5          | Delynn Kelly         |
| 5-20         | Harry Arora          |
| 20-50        | Edward Kaufman       |
| 50-100       | Davis Bennett        |
| 100-200      | Jake Williams        |
| 200-300      | Mike Koscielski      |
| 300-500      | Charles O'Malley Jr. |
| 500-1,000    | Tom Herzog           |
| 1,000-1500   | Linda Gu             |
| 1,500-2,500  | Dorn Bishop          |
| 2,500-3,500  | Marty Roth           |
| 3,500-5,000  | Andy Loh             |
| 5000-7,500   | Paul Darin           |
| 7,500-10,000 | Mac Busby            |
| Over 10,000  | Steve Cooper         |

# Unit 539 Auction

*A first, and a success*



Many thanks to all those who participated in the first annual **Bridge with the Pros** auction, which benefited our San Diego Unit.

For a first year event, we proudly surpassed our fundraising goal of \$3,000. Even more important, the Pro Auction created excitement and fun for our bridge community.

The event would not have been nearly as successful if not for all those who helped to make it possible. We are especially grateful to the incredible collection of local players, teachers and writers including: Andy Loh, Bill Grant, Cameron Cotton, David Abelow, Ken Monzingo, Kent Hartman, Kitty Cooper, Lynne Feldman, Mac Busby, Maritha Pottenger, Paul Darin, Phyllis Yates, Rick Roeder, Robert Rosenblum, Roger Doughman, Steve Cooper and Wirt Gilliam for their participation in the Auction. Every single Pro was extremely supportive of our efforts and we are grateful for their time and generosity.

The following are some interesting Analytics from the Auction:

- 834 page views appeared on our online Auction site
  - 62 total bids were entered online and at live events
  - Bidding tables with a poster display at the Spring Sectional and San Diego Regional
  - \$3400 raised to help our local bridge community
- The value of countless volunteer hours was priceless. Mostly, we are grateful to the participants who gave generously to help support our efforts. We hope the winning bidders will have a memorable and instructional bridge game with their Pro.

We are so appreciative of your support and thank you for making the Auction so successful.

For a complete update of the auction results, please visit our website:

<https://www.32auctions.com/bridgewiththepros>



## Online Directory Drive

One thing we're certain of is that everybody likes a complete phone and email directory. Our goal is to have one San Diego directory shared by the 5 units in San Diego County. It will be online, since a paper directory is not cost effective unfortunately. With your help, we can get there. Again, we can't publish your contact details without your written approval, so just hit "Reply" to this email, or contact one of your Board members to share any contact changes with us.

# What's Up For Grabs?

*A trophy for everyone*

Many folks have asked about trophies associated with our unit because they've seen various trophies mentioned in our published calendar from our website, in our advertisement in the Forum, or in our calendar posting on our Unit 539 bulletin board at Adventures in Bridge (AIB), the club within our unit which currently hosts our Sunday unit games. These trophies are located on shelves and above the kitchen cabinets at AIB.

We have special trophies meant to congratulate top play at every level: non-Life Master (NLM), Life Master, and Open. In addition, we have a special trophy game each year to pay tribute to our bridge friends who have passed away.

Here's the list of games for which our trophies are updated yearly:

**Open Pairs Trophy Game** – All pairs in this game are eligible to come in first overall and have their names engraved on the trophy.

**NLM Pairs Trophy Game** – In the 1990s, this trophy was established to commemorate a popular and well-known NLM Player at the time named Audre Erhardt, who had passed away. The top scoring pair of non-Life Masters are granted this award, even if playing in a mixed field. Strong efforts are made to have a separate section from which to award this trophy to the winners.

**Masters Pairs Trophy Game** – The top scoring pair of Life Masters are granted this award when playing in an Open field.

**Tribute Trophy Game** – Also in the 1990s, this trophy was established to commemorate a highly regarded top player who had unexpectedly passed away, Marc Rothblatt. It has since been adapted to commemorate the passing each year of our dear friends who played bridge with us. All pairs in this game are eligible to place first overall and have their names engraved on the trophy.



Our unit has a rich history of top players who are or have been members, and many have won these trophy games and have their names engraved on our trophies. Your name could easily be listed alongside these great players! Another great reason to come play in our Sunday unit games, which award significantly higher masterpoints than regular club games.

## Intermediate/Newcomer (I/N) Education

The Unit is very fortunate to have Maritha Pottenger as one of its esteemed pros and teachers. Maritha presents a free 20-minute mini-lesson before each of our Unit games. She typically presents four bridge hands, all focused on a single theme. These are designed to be easily understood as well as useful for players at all levels. A lot of interaction happens between the audience and Maritha. If you haven't attended those, you are well advised to. In the upcoming months, Maritha will be covering wide-ranging topics including the following:

- **Losing Trick Count:** Bid Games more Accurately with this bidding tool
- **Extra Tricks with Length:** ANY 5-card suit has the potential to be developed. Check to see if you have the resources (and entries) to do so.
- **Discards:** A few simple guidelines will solve the majority of your discarding problems
- **Hand Evaluation as the Bidding Progresses:** some hands improve; some get worse.
- **Extra Tricks with Ruffing:** Learn to recognize hands where a Cross-Ruff or Ruffing in the Short Trump Hand will bring home the contract.
- **Count Declarer's Tricks:** Good defense requires you to count Declarer's tricks (and potential tricks) and figure out how to foil him/her.
- **Third & Fourth Hand Openings:** NOT the same as 1st and 2nd.
- **Extra Tricks with End Plays:** Get the opponents to help you make your contract!
- **Who Has What?:** You can often figure out the position of most of the cards in a suit when you lead, see dummy, note partner's card and see what Declarer plays. Think about it!

## Looking for Tournament Venues

As most of you know, San Diego used to host its sectionals at its largest club in town, Adventures in Bridge (AIB). Unfortunately for us, with AIB's relocation to a smaller space on Balboa Avenue, we have had to relocate our sectionals to Marina Village in beautiful Mission Bay. Recognizing that this is not the perfect solution – spread out across various rooms making it a challenge for our Directors and hospitality volunteers alike, and certainly open to the weather (for better or for worse), it has nevertheless been an acceptable venue for us in 2017 and continuing onto 2018. However.... It was a brief respite, and we are facing the venue issue again starting in mid-2018 since Marina Village will be closing indefinitely for renovations. Our Board has resumed its search and time will tell what we find. This is not an easy task on many fronts: finding a

venue that is 5000+ sq. ft., with sufficient parking, in a central and accessible part of town, with reasonable rents, and not requiring a prohibitive Food and Beverage minimum commitment, is asking for a miracle to happen! Nevertheless, we have no choice but to persevere in our search and keep our commitment to you to continue to offer our popular Sectional tournaments.

Religious and educational institutions are typically much more affordable but are restrictive due to our requirement for weekend hours. Large hotels have beautiful ballrooms but are very expensive. Smaller hotel chains cannot offer the capacity required. As a member of our San Diego bridge community, you may be able to help us – are you aware of any local venues in your neighborhood that might fit the bill? Let one of your Board members know, or drop us an email at [info@sandiegobridge.com](mailto:info@sandiegobridge.com)

## ARTICLES WANTED!

Anything you want to share? Any articles you want to contribute? Contact us at [info@sandiegobridge.com](mailto:info@sandiegobridge.com)

Contributors: Lamy Agelidis, John Boackle, Kathy Byrne, Mike Koscielski, Maritha Pottenger

## HELP WANTED

Try as we may, your Board cannot do it all alone. We need help, especially at tournament time. We need you! Please contact one of your Board members, or drop us an e-mail at [info@sandiegobridge.com](mailto:info@sandiegobridge.com) if you are willing and able to volunteer for any of the positions and/or committees listed below.

### **NLM Sectional Planning Committee:**

Assist in the planning and execution of the joint SD/LJ NLM Fall Sectional. This year's tournament is scheduled to take place in Oct. Please contact [mkoscielski@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mkoscielski@sbcglobal.net).

**Tournament Photographer:** Take pictures of winning Pairs and Teams at our Unit Sectionals and the Regional. Please contact [lamya.agelidis@gmail.com](mailto:lamya.agelidis@gmail.com).

**Tournament Greeters:** Assist in placing game signage when multiple rooms are involved in our Open Sectionals. Act as greeters to direct players to the appropriate game rooms. Please contact [gidgettepc@aol.com](mailto:gidgettepc@aol.com).

**Hospitality Committee:** Assist in the planning, procurement, set-up, distribution, and clean-up of drinks, snacks, and lunches for our Sectional tournaments. Please contact [lamya.agelidis@gmail.com](mailto:lamya.agelidis@gmail.com).

**Hands On Deck:** Provide general help at our Sectional tournaments. This includes preparing for the games by setting up tables, chairs, bidding boxes, pencils, etc. for the game; taking down equipment after the games. Please contact [lamya.agelidis@gmail.com](mailto:lamya.agelidis@gmail.com).

**Publicity & Prize Committee:** Assist in the design, preparation, and publication of tournament flyers and winner's certificates. Please contact [gidgettepc@aol.com](mailto:gidgettepc@aol.com).

**Partnership Chair:** Assist players in finding partners and/or teams for our Unit Games, as well as our Sectional Tournaments. Please contact [lamya.agelidis@gmail.com](mailto:lamya.agelidis@gmail.com).