



## ALERT!!

A publication of ACBL Unit 206

January, 2022



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Features Editor: Cheryl Whitfield

### A message from the president...

Happy 2022. I hope it is a better year for all!



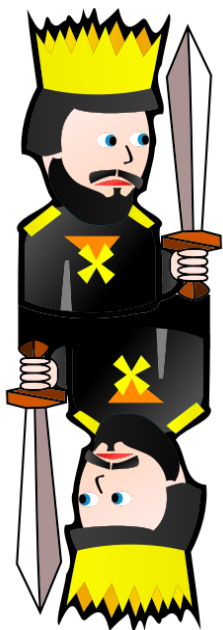
We have 3 sets of classes beginning or continuing in the new year. Please consider taking one of these classes to improve your game. Thank you, Mike, for coordinating our education program.

This month, I would like to introduce you to (or refresh your memory about) what is available on our web page. Just type in Chattanooga Bridge Center and you will see our web site. Here you can find a variety of information. ONE NOTE: Our website does not work very well with the internet browser Firefox. You will need to use a different browser. We are working hard to make sure this information is kept up to date. Tyler Smith is our webmaster. Please email him with any incorrect data or suggestions on how to improve our site. Please copy me on these emails.

On the right side of the page, you will find our calendar. On the left side of the site is a list of links that will take you to the underlying documents. We will be updating some of the tabs in the coming months. I suggest that everyone click on the tab Policies/Board. Here you will find copies of our past minutes. By reading the monthly board minutes, you will be up-to-date on all of the issues the board is tackling. I think you will see that each meeting covers a wide variety of issues and ideas for improvement. Also listed is the current board of directors and committee chairs. If you see any problems at the CBC, this list will tell you who to contact. Even better would be for you to look over our list of committees and see where you could lend a hand! Remember, we are an all-volunteer board.

I'm looking forward to seeing lots of you at the bridge table in 2022!

*Iris*



## A Smidgen of Smith

Should I finesse when I have 10 cards in a suit, missing the King?

Seems like just playing the Ace would drop the King at least half of the time, right? Let's look at the probabilities:

22% of the time, the missing cards are split 3-0. Dropping the King would fail. 52% of the time (2/3 of 78%), the missing cards are split 2-1 and dropping the King would fail.

Therefore, by just playing the Ace, 74% of the time dropping the King will fail — and only 26% of time time will you drop the singleton King.

So, as you can see, as much as you may hate losing to a singleton King, the odds are highly in your favor to FINESSE!

**Ron Smith**

## CLASSIFIED ADS Employment

### Photographer Needed

Are you looking for a rewarding part-time opportunity? Look no further. Our success at **Alert** starts with our people, and we are seeking someone just like you to fill a critical vacancy. Why not join our growing, enthusiastic team as our staff photographer? Duties involve capturing the perfect shot at special events, team games, tournaments, parties, etc., so we can preserve our fun and comradery for posterity. Salary is commensurate with experience. Equipment needed: Cell phone with a camera. If you think you have what it takes to fill this position, please contact Sandy Cervantes at 423.315.1953 or [sandycervantesnm@gmail.com](mailto:sandycervantesnm@gmail.com). Don't let the fun pass you by!



## To All Our 99ers...

### Don't Forget

This coming Thursday, January 6, our new limited 99er game will begin at 12 noon at the Chattanooga Bridge Center. There will be a 30-minute lesson followed by a 12-15-board sanctioned game. Only players with 99 master points or fewer are eligible to play in this limited game. We encourage you to make arrangements with a partner, but if you can't find someone with whom to play, don't worry. We will have an ambassador available. This is a great opportunity for newer players to earn master points on a more level playing field. Mark your calendars so you won't miss this event.





# A Magical Time!



On Saturday, December 11, we gathered at the Chattanooga Bridge Center for Unit 206's annual meeting and holiday party. As players arrived, they were overwhelmed by the CBC's transformation from utilitarian table-and-chair game room to magical holiday party site thanks to Cheryl Whitfield's flair for decorating. Blue, white, and silver were the festive colors of the day. Players were treated to a variety of appetizers. (Mary Jane Emrath shares her much-praised recipe on Page 5.) A delicious lunch of ham was served accompanied by a tantalizing array of delicious side dishes and desserts. After a brief business meeting at which President Iris Abelson and Treasurer Buddy Landis presented their reports, three new board members were elected. We said adios and gracias to Iris Abelson, Sue Shramko, and Tyler Smith. Iris' and Sue's good-byes were short as they were reelected along with new board member Jan Alexander. After the meeting, players settled down for a delightful afternoon of competitive bridge. We are truly sorry that we don't have a photo of the beautiful table and scrumptious feast. (Too many last-minute details derailed our attention.) But, speaking of being derailed, we could use some help. **Anyone out there interested in taking on the official photographer duties?** If you are interested, contact Sandy Cervantes.

## Top winners were:

### North/South

1st—Stephanie and John Felker

2nd—Myra and Larry Reneau

3rd—Susie Crouch and Rosalie Basten

### East/West

1st—Ann Keown and Bruce Antman

2nd—Mary Jane Emrath and Anne Donnovin

3rd—Kenneth Thompson and Joe Viola

Make sure you don't miss out on January's fun. Plan to play in our next special game on Sunday, January 23.

## Hardy, Har, Har

After a particularly disastrous game at a faraway regional tournament, a married couple quickly left the playing area not even looking at each other. They got in the car and started the awkward, long drive home without saying a word. After a short time, they passed a field where there were seven or eight donkeys munching on the grass, and the husband foolishly decides to break the silence by asking the wife: "Relatives of yours"?

"Of course," she quickly replies. "In-laws".



## HATS OFF TO...

A very big thank you to Cheryl Whitfield for the beautiful blue, white and silver decorations providing the festive backdrop to our holiday party and annual meeting. The main table was adorned with silver tablecloths, blue burlap ribbon and an elegant tall crystal vase filled with blue and silver ornaments. Strikingly innovative, repurposed silver CDs tied together with blue ribbon were the base for the glass and candle centerpieces on each bridge table. Cheryl's taste and talent truly transformed our ordinary bridge club into a magical holiday scene.

Thanks also to Chef D'Vine for handling the cooking responsibilities for the delicious ham that was our main course.

# *It's time to pitch in*

Chattanooga Spring Sectional Tournament at  
East Ridge Center

March 11-13

## Tournament Volunteers Needed



Volunteers are needed to purchase and organize snacks and drinks (coffee, tea, soft drinks) for our upcoming Spring sectional tournament and to ensure that the event stays stocked. Expenses will be reimbursed. It would be ideal if someone would volunteer to coordinate this activity and lead a team of 5 or 6 additional volunteers to monitor the kitchen as needed.



During the Swiss team game on Sunday, we typically have a caddy who is a teenager or young adult to assist the tournament director that day. This volunteer will receive a small stipend.

Anyone interested in helping out here, please contact Tournament Chair Richard Spangler at 805.231.8917 or [raspangler58@gmail.com](mailto:raspangler58@gmail.com).



## Mark Your Calendar

Thursday, January 6

Inaugural 99 Limited Game, 12 Noon  
at the CBC

Monday, January 10

Online Mentor/Mentee Game, 7 p.m.

Friday, January 21

Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee Game,  
12 Noon, CBC

Sunday, January 23

Special Team Game, 1 p.m.

Monday, January 25

Online Mentor/Mentee Game, 7 p.m.

## Online Mentor/Mentee Game

There is no better way to start the new year off than by playing in the Online Mentor/Mentee game. This game is on BBO at 7:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Mondays of the month. The dates for January are the 10th and 24th. The dividing line between a mentor and mentee is 500 points. These games provide a chance to play with a new partner and help a less experienced player develop his or her game. The games are always fun and the results are rarely predictable. Mentors will be matched with their

mentees early so that they have enough time to develop a convention card. If you would like to play, either as a mentor or mentee, email **Bert Shramko** at [stdoms48@gmail.com](mailto:stdoms48@gmail.com).



# Do you know...

## Lavinthal Discards?



In December's newsletter, we featured Odd-Even (or Roman) discards as an option to standard and upside down carding. Lavinthal discards offer another alternative to the more common discard signals. This signaling method was devised by Hy Lavinthal in 1934, and many bridge experts cite it as having an enormous effect on defensive play. Lavinthal discards are used only at your first opportunity to discard to let partner know which suit you prefer. They are also known as McKenney discards in England.

If you play standard discards, you must discard a card of the suit you want at your first opportunity. Playing Lavinthal discards, you camouflage your interest and discard an unwanted suit. The rank of the card discarded tells partner your preference for the higher or the lower of the two remaining suits.

Those players who choose to play Lavinthal discards think there are two major advantages over standard discards. Firstly, you can keep every card in your preferred suit rather than having to use one as a signal - something that can be very important in setting a no trump contract when you have a long running suit.



Secondly, you have the option of choosing from two suits to give a signal to your partner. Because of this, it is usually easy to find a card you can afford to discard to show a suit preference.

The main fault with Lavinthal discards is that there is no neutral card that carries no meaning. Even if you have no preference for a switch, every card in your hand carries a message. To overcome this problem, some partnerships have agreed to identify 5s and 6s (sometimes 7s) as neutral cards.

## Thanks, Mary Jane!

So many at our annual meeting commented on the delicious appetizer provided by Mary Jane Emrath. I asked Mary Jane if she would be willing to share her recipe, and she was delighted. She was quick to emphasize how easy the recipe was.

### Chutney Cheese Ball

1 lb. cream cheese, softened to room temperature  
2 Tbsp. sour cream  
1/2 cup scallions, thinly sliced  
1/2 tsp. ground curry powder  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/2 jar mango chutney  
1 cup shredded sweetened coconut flakes.

Plain rice crackers (to serve), such as Good Thins Simply Salt.

In a large bowl, combine cream cheese and sour cream. Add scallions, curry powder and salt, and stir until thoroughly mixed. Lay out a sheet of plastic wrap and transfer cheese mixture to the plastic wrap. Use the wrap to form into a ball (it is very sticky at this point). Place in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes, longer is better.

When ready to serve, unwrap the cheese ball and transfer to a platter. Pour chutney over the cheese ball and sprinkle coconut flakes to cover. Serve with rice crackers.



# We Need You to Get Involved!

Every month the Chattanooga Bridge Club has a special game for its members to enjoy a delicious meal and earn extra points. Turnout has been great, and everyone leaves happy and full. But, all this fun doesn't come without effort, and we need help hosting these events. We need you to jump in and take a turn. It's lots of fun and really not a boatload of work. You can tackle it on your own or grab your favorite partner to help. Once you commit to a date, you need to decide on an entrée and make a poster to detail the event and to ask players to bring the "extras." Prior to the game, you need to buy drinks and ice and set up the main table. Turn in your receipts and you will be reimbursed. Everyone usually chips in to pick up, and we will schedule the cleaning lady for a more thorough job. **Those of the masculine persuasion, please take note:** this is not a single sex volunteer effort—men are more than welcome to host a special game and show their team spirit! We invite any members who haven't participated to put their skin in the game so the ones that regularly volunteer can take a break. Anyone up to the job?

Myra Reneau is working on the 2022 club calendar, and as soon as dates are firm, we will have a sign-up sheet at the club. For more information, or to let her know that you would just love to volunteer, email Leigh Broadway at [lhbrway@pm.me](mailto:lhbrway@pm.me).



## FF2F

### Friday Face-to-Face



Can you believe we had 13 tables at our Third Friday Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee game? And, this was during the holiday rush. Come join us January 21st and see if we can beat our 13 table record. If you are interested, Mentors and Mentees alike need to let Sue Shramko know. You can call or text Sue at 423.304.7017 or sign up at the CBC.

December winners were:

#### North/South

1st-**Shayna Scott/Barbara Anderson**  
2nd-**Cheryl Whitfield/Carole Rowland**  
3rd-**Susan Rothberger/Sandy Boone**

#### East/West

1st-**Myra Reneau/Anne Donnovin**  
2nd-**David Vine/Peter Elvin**  
3rd-**Beverly Richards/Linda McKinney**

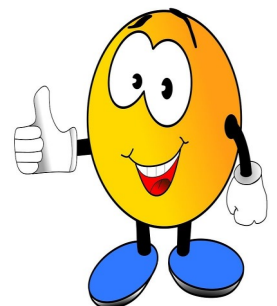


## Cheers

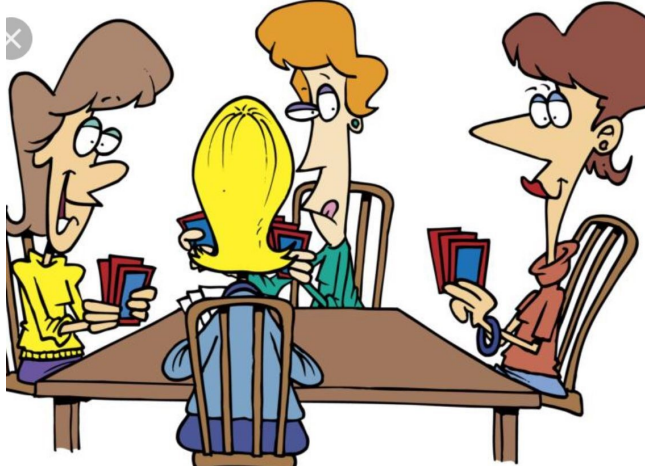
We are sending our warmest congratulations and best wishes to Pat Whitaker and Ralph Altman on the announcement of their engagement. We wish you both a joyful and blessed life together.

## BRIDGE ETIQUETTE

All players should have a completed convention card at the table, but are not allowed to refer to the card during the auction or play. Opponents, on the other hand, may ask to see your card whenever it is their turn to bid or play.







## January Special Game

Time to grab your favorite partner and then identify your most formidable opponents. Once you've sorted through the field, (remember the adage "keep your friends close and your enemies closer") ask them if they would be willing to join you to form a team to compete in our January Sunday Swiss Team Event. The date has been set for **Sunday, January 23 with lunch at 1:00 and the game set to start at 1:30.** Lunch details are still to be determined—but you know it will be delicious.

Team games are always fun because the game strategy is different. When you play teams, the score you get as NS is compared with the score your teammates get on the same hand sitting EW. Scores are added together to get a net score which is converted to IMPs. For example, if you bid and make 4H NV as NS, you get a score of 420. If your teammates play against a contract of 3H making 4 for -170, the aggregate score is +250 which translates into + 7 IMPs. On the other hand, if their opponents bid the NV game also, the aggregate score is 0 and no IMPs.

In a pairs game, each hand scores alone and a bottom is a bottom. Hand over—move on. But, in a team game, scoring is cumulative and the amount by which you beat (or lose to) your opponent on each hand counts. A bottom is not just a bottom—it can mean complete disaster!

Bid vulnerable games if they have a good chance of making. If you must, take risks to make your game contract, but don't take risks to make an overtrick. Be careful if you choose to sacrifice. Being doubled can be very expensive. Risky overcalls also can be especially costly. Pay attention to your opponents—who they are and what they might bid can help you develop a successful strategy.



**Game on—Mark your calendar  
January 23, 1 p.m.**



How would you answer the question...

"To me bridge is \_\_\_\_?"

"A great game and a wonderful way to meet interesting people. It saved my sanity in the year I quarantined at home."

**MJ Levine**

# One Last Thing...

By John Friedl



This month's column deals with "Values Doubles." Actually, this is a concept that goes by several different names. Some call it a "cooperative double," sometimes you'll see it referred to as a "card-showing" double, but the name I like best is the one that Larry Cohen gave it in a series he wrote for the ACBL Bridge Bulletin magazine back in 2012. He called it the "DSI Double." More on that later.

The idea behind the Values Double is that there are times when you don't have the right shape for a second bid in a suit or no trump in a competitive auction, but you've got too much to pass and you want to be able to tell that to your partner. Here's an example:

Your hand looks like this:

♠KQ972    ♥753    ♦K10    ♣AJ8

Your partner is the dealer and opens 1 Diamond. Right Hand Opponent (RHO) passes and you respond 1 Spade. Now your Left Hand Opponent (LHO) bids 2 Hearts, and partner passes, as does RHO. What do you do?

You have a good hand with opening values, opposite a partner who has opened, so you definitely don't want to pass. You have enough high card points to bid game, if you can find the right game to bid. You know you don't have an eight-card spade fit because partner didn't make a Support Double, which would show 3 card spade support. You have a couple of useful cards in partner's diamond suit, but you can't bid 3 Diamonds with only two-card support, and you can't bid 3 Clubs with only a 3-card suit. Nor can you bid 2 No Trump without a heart stopper.

The solution is to make a "Values Double," which throws the ball back into partner's court. It says to partner "I've got too much to pass, not the right shape to rebid spades or support diamonds, so I'm asking you to decide. If you think we can beat 2 Hearts, then pass or bid no trump; otherwise bid something else."

This type of double comes up more often than you might think at first. There are frequently situations where you don't want to pass and give up the auction to the opponents when your side has the majority of the strength in the hand. But when there is no clear suit bid to make, the Values Double is the best alternative, because it gives your partner the option of converting to a penalty double by passing, or bidding a suit or no trump to compete further.

The key concept to remember in using the Values Double is that it is rarely meant for penalty, unless partner decides to convert it by passing. There are, of course, exceptions when a low-level double is intended to be for penalty, but they should be fairly obvious.

If you are in a game-forcing auction and the opponents interfere, a double that is not otherwise defined as conventional (such as a support double) is typically intended to be for penalty. In the auction: 1H (P) 2D (3C); X -- assuming you are playing 2/1 game forcing system, the double of opponent's 3C bid is intended as penalty (although the 2 Diamond bidder is free to bid again). Vulnerability will come into play in this decision as well. Or if your side opens a strong 2 Clubs and the opponents interfere, unless you are playing a convention in which a double of their bid is artificial (like DOPI where a double shows zero kings or aces), a double would be for penalty.

But generally speaking, a low-level double is meant to show values without a clear bid in a competitive auction, and it asks partner to make the decision.

Now for the explanation of Larry Cohen's reference to the "DSI Double." In his words, DSI says to partner "Do Something Intelligent." Makes sense in this context, doesn't it?