



Bridge Buff

November/December 2009



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A Publication of Unit 116, Buffalo, New York

President's Message

My term of President ends with this Newsletter. I look back at the last two years with much gratitude for the work that the Board of Directors has done. We increased the number of unit games and had greater attendance at the Sectionals and Unit Games. The President's Race Contest was reinstated and well received. The result was a significant increase in our treasury. Because of this increase, we were able to subsidize the cost of the annual meeting. My thanks to all the Board members who made my job very enjoyable.

On a personal note, my father, **Harold Harrison Levy**, passed away on October 15th at the age of 92. Although not a bridge player, he played gin, pinochle and participated in a regular poker game until his hospitalization six months ago. At an early age, he taught me many card games and my love of cards, I owe to him. *Thanks DAD!*

Jay Levy
Your President

The Bridge Buff editors wish to congratulate the following to a 3-year term on the Unit Board: **Fran Kurtz, John Marvin** and **Sue Neubecker** and **Stan Zionts** to a one year term. **Pat Rasmus** was named ACBL "Volunteer of the Year".

UNIT 116 - Presidential Masterpoints Race

0 to 100 MP's

- 1 12.78 Franklin Kidd
- 2 12.29 Peter Patterson
- 3 10.97 Florence Boyd

100 to 300 MP's

- 1 17.27 George Donsky
- 2 17.08 Carol Bedell
- 3 15.78 Betty Metz

300 to 1000 MP's

- 1 16.75 Richard Czarnecki
- 2 14.25 Dale Anderson
- 3 14.20 Chongmin Zhang

1000 to 2500 MP's

- 1 34.85 Judith Padgug
- 2 28.76 Dian Petrov
- 3 25.84 Kathy Pollock

2500 + MP's

- 1 63.41 Jim Mathis
- 2 48.29 Randolph Seidenberg, Jr.
- 3 43.98 John Kilmer

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Important! Please Read

Editor's Note

To accommodate members without e-mail access, there will be limited printing of the Buff. **PLEASE READ AND RETURN COPY TO DESK OR TABLE.**

Judie Bailey asks that anyone with an e-mail address contact her at j.anneb@verizon.net and they will receive the Buff by electronic delivery.

The Buff is also available on the Unit 116 website courtesy of **Dick Rasmus**. It can be read or downloaded from that facility.

Thanks for your attention.

Bernie and Dick Czarnecki, Editors



The editor interviewed a soft-spoken talented bridge player. Her name is **Joanne Kelley**:

Bridge:

- Joanne started taking bridge lessons from **Rhoda Jacobs** in 1980. After two lessons she showed up at the local duplicate game.
- **Jim Gullo** convinced Joanne to try bridge in the big city of Buffalo. She felt intimidated at first but met many wonderful people and was ready to improve her game.
- **Paul Thurston** was another helpful teacher, combining knowledge, patience and a superb sense of humor.
- **Joanne** is amazed at Brian Meyer's ability to analyze bridge hands. She loves to hear him think out loud. One of her favorite bridge memories was playing in a Buffalo Regional Swiss with **Jim Gullo, Donna Steffan** and **Judy Graf**. Joanne didn't have many points and she never once went to look at the board to see how they were doing. Jim asked if she wanted to know and she indicated "No". To her great surprise, they won the event and 19 gold points.
- Since her husband travels in his profession, she was able to play bridge in Hungary and in Namibia.
- Joanne feels that Unit 116 is loaded with talented players and it would be great to have some of the stars lead a discussion after one of the Unit activities about the hands and the best way to play.

Personally:

- Joanne is married to **Ted Schwalbe** for 30 years; they have two (2) daughters – Kate and Laura.
- Ted works as professor of communications and has enabled them to some unique travel opportunities.
- Joanne manages a small data base of sold properties in Northern Chautauqua County.
- She has been a Meal on Wheels volunteer for many years.
- She enjoys gardening, quilting, reading as well as playing bridge on Bridge Base.

The editor also interviewed a helpful and energetic bridge player. Her name is **Betty Metz**. Here is what she gave the editor:

How I got started in bridge.

My dad was a life master in the early 60's and he took me to lessons and had the patience to play with me in duplicate games at the Barrett Club. I fell in love with the game at this time. During these few years, I finished college, worked full time, got married and then had children. Decision Time!! Do I play half-heartedly or do I quit cold turkey? As is true to my nature of doing things well or not doing them at all, I decided to put bridge on hold. That is an understatement as I didn't come back to this game until 2005 (sounds like a lapse of 40 years): This wonderful game has progressed, grown and changed dramatically over time but it has been able to retain its intrigue. So bridge has stolen my heart once again and now I have the freedom of time to enjoy every pleasure, frustration and challenge that comes to me.

My teachers, mentors, favorite partners and friends are all wrapped up in one incredible package – The Bridge Center of Buffalo. I am overwhelmed with the support and encouragement I have received and I send my thanks.

Last year I was elected to the Unit Board. I love the involvement in the greater bridge community of Western New York. Being involved in local bridge decisions has made me far more appreciative of the local bridge events. I encourage my bridge friends -- give yourself the chance at this same opportunity by running for the Unit board. Like anything else you gain more than you give.

Personally

I am blessed with a wonderful and very understanding husband. Doug and I are coming up on our 48th wedding anniversary. It has worked because we like to do things together and in addition we have our individual interests. Doug is "Mr. Fix It". I mean he can fix anything even if it isn't broken. We have two grown children. In their busy schedules, they are very competitive in their own way... Our daughter, Becky, has rowed crew since college when she was on the US Team. Her latest race was in October when she rowed in the Head of the Charles (Boston). Our son, Jon, is a triathlete. This summer he finished his first Iron Man Triathlon (2.3 mi. swim, 112 mi. bike and a marathon). The next generation continues with our two, curious, energetic, wonderful grandsons (Connor 11 yr. and Eli 9 yr.)

Before retiring, I owned and operated a local tour company. We worked with groups both outgoing (all over the world) and to incoming (conventions etc. to WNY). It was a challenging and rewarding time in my life. I had the opportunity to travel worldwide, usually with 25 to 50 people under my care. This makes for some very interesting stories about human nature. The travel bug has long since left me and been replaced by 52 cards that appear simple and straight forward but under certain circumstances become the most complex, challenging, frustrating and rewarding game imaginable.

Congratulations

Congratulations-New Life Master
Dave Larcom

New Bronze Life Master
Ken Meier
Walter Olszewski

Unit Game Celebration
By Betty Metz

On Saturday evening, November 14, Unit 116 held a celebration/game in honor of **Joel Wooldridge, Jay Levy, Carolyn Siracuse, Dan Gerstman** and **Bert Hargesheimer** spoke about Joel's achievements on the National and International Bridge scene. Carolyn fondly remembered Joel's young years and his very beginning and growth in the game. Dan and Bert

emphasized not only Joel's success but the wonderful manner in which he achieved his goals, always as a gentleman. Jay, as president, presented Joel with a gift from the Unit.

Wonderful food and drinks were available before, during and after the game.

Congratulations Joel and much success in the future!!

HONORING JOEL WOOLDRIDGE
By Carol Siracuse

Unit 116 honored **Joel Wooldridge**, winner of two national championships and 279 Master Points at the 2009 Washington Summer Nationals on Saturday night, November 14th.

There was great hospitality at the Bridge Center. The unit supplied hors d'euvres and wine and various members supplied desserts. Carolyn Siracuse wove a story of memories of events in Joel's life into her speech which follows.

Joel, I was so excited when I heard the news that you won two national titles! Tonight we are all here to celebrate these well-deserved achievements.

When I received the news a flood of memories came to me and I'd like to share them with all of you.

I remember like it was yesterday, going to **Jeanette McKenzie's** games - your parents bringing you there as an **infant** with your baby blanket. You slept in Jeanette's little office while we were all in the next room playing bridge. I recall house parties while you were still a **baby**. You slept among all the coats on the bed and we all periodically checked on you.

I'm sure most of you remember a director we had, **Claire Chedrow** and her husband. On a hot summer night Val would take you to **Dick Rasmus'** game on Beach Road and buy you a big ice cream cone.

I remember when you were **11 years old** and Jeanette had an Easter Egg Hunt for you. You were so happy and excited when you found that Easter Egg!

When you were **a little older**, your parents started teaching you bridge. After you learned the basics your parent's asked if I would like to be on a Swiss team with the 3 of you. At that time, **Dick Rasmus** ran a Swiss Team Game in Hamburg once a month and a bunch of us would meet and park our cars at Nickel City Cafe at Main & Kensington. Then we would car pool to Hamburg. Pow gave me a choice of who I would like to play with on the team. I said I would partner with whoever would be most beneficial for the whole team. Your parents played together and you and I played together.

We were now up to the last match, we had won each match we had played. Here we were, pitted against the formidable team of **John Toy**. I am proud to say we lost by very little – 1 board. At the end of the game, several people ran over to your parents and asked, "Which one of them did something wrong on the board?" Jill replied, "Neither of them, Pow and I had a bidding misunderstanding!"

When you were **16 years old** I asked you how school was going and you said, "Just great! I have a lot of friends now. I got my Driver's License last week and all the kids are calling me up and asking me for rides!"

When I heard the news that you became the youngest Life Master, the **"King of Bridge"** at such a young age, I was overjoyed. I would go to tournaments and say, "You know, **Joel Wooldridge**, the 'King of Bridge'? He belongs to us, Unit 116."

Thank you, Pow and Jill, for sharing Joel's growing-up years with us.

Congratulations, Joel, and enjoy every moment of this special time in your life!

Sad Tidings

The Editor is sad to report that **Frank Long**, a retired OB-GYN player, passed away in October 2009. Even though he was not a Unit 116 member, he was witty, friendly and a very nice person

The Halloween Regional
By **Dick Czarnecki**

On November 3rd Buffalo News reporter **Jane Kwiatkowski** wrote a very informative article on

Duplicate Bridge and the recent Grand Island Holiday Inn Regional.

For those who may have missed it, some highlights were:

Jerry Fleming, President of ACBL, was impressed and said "Bridge players in Buffalo are very warm and friendly, more so than other places. From hospitality perspective, the tournament in Grand Island was one of the finest I've been to. There was something for the players all the time, between sessions, after the session. I was very much impressed with that."

Carol Bedell of Williamsville has five years of experience, plays 12 hours a week at the Bridge Center of Buffalo. "It's not easy to be in competition. You get kicked in the butt sometimes and you have to be able to take it and not be hard on yourself. People can get nasty. You see the character of a person at the bridge table, if they are bad losers or gracious. In the winter when other people are stewing over the weather, us bridge players don't worry about the weather. We have a place to go. We have friends. Most of us are bright. It's a bridge family."

John Toy has been playing bridge since college "It's a marathon. I've been playing since my early 20's and it never gets boring. I've had friends flunk out of college because of bridge."

Other interesting facts about duplicate:

1. Buffalo's competitive bridge community numbers about 1500.
 2. There are an estimated 2.5 million bridge players in the country.
 3. The average age of an ACBL member is 68.5.
 4. **Warren Buffett** and **Bill Gates** have committed \$1 million to a youth bridge initiative.
 5. The ACBL covers the US, Canada, Mexico and Bermuda.
 6. The ACBL's only Honorary Life Master is "Snoopy" was often drawn by **Charles Schulz** playing bridge in the comic strip.
 7. The youngest life master is 9-year old **Richard Jeng** of Johns Creek, Georgia. He started playing with his brother at the age of 6.
6. Unit 116 has a 100-year old player **Renzo**

Renzoni. So Richard has an activity that he can enjoy for the next 91 years.

Please note the following changes:

Name	Address	Phone	Cell
<i>Kidd</i>	11 Logan Lane-	725-3980	
<i>Frank</i>	Lancaster 14086		
<i>Pollock,</i>	298 Wood Acres Dr –	688-0054	
<i>Kathy</i>	East Amherst-14051		
<i>Rogers,</i>		684-2158	
<i>Pat</i>			
<i>Universal</i>	3047 East Pleasant –		548-
<i>Elaine</i>	Eden 14047		0093

The Quest for Gold
By **Bernie Czarnecki**

The Quest led down a yellow brick road where some refused and others agreed to play with me at Grand Island Holiday Inn, made famous by a recent Swinger Convention. I told Dick “Let’s mine the gold.

I was very lucky to line up four partners: **Tom Gibbons**, who was available one day, **Mercedes Reinbolt**, who I play with on a regular basis, **Bob Olin**. Who mentored me when I first starting playing Duplicate bridge and of course my husband, **Richard**, who helped me get started playing Duplicate Bridge

The first start in finding gold was with **Tom**, where we won a fraction of red. With Dick I played four sessions and we struck the mother lode on two sessions winning Section tops in “B” getting 2.66 MP in gold. In the other sessions with Mers and Bob, we met many interesting people from all over our country but we could not find the vein of gold. Mers was successful with **Jim Madan** and **Bob Lederhouse** in winning red points. **Dave Larcom** was successful at becoming a Life Master in this Regional. I found the hands very distributionally skewed and some could actually reach slam without a number of high card points. I also learned what a “Sandwich 1NT” is, do you?

While at the Holiday Inn, since I am a member of the Pool Club, I was able to swim during the 2-1/2 hour break between sessions. The water was refreshing and helped me to concentrate on the second session better. I really need that therapy because I played ten sessions of bridge starting on

Tuesday playing through Saturday. I NEVER PLAY THIS MANY SESSIONS OF BRIDGE BEFORE

I met a lot of sociable people from Florida, Atlanta, Georgia, Rochester, Toronto, St. Catherine’s and Petersburg. I also played against pairs that were there to win points and not to make friends; among them was an “Emerald Life Master who lectured his partner on what she was there for. Most of the out of towners commented that they enjoy playing in Buffalo for the price, the sociability, the hospitality, the caddies who were helpful and that the Directors were always available in the aisles.

I want to thank **Pat Rasmus** and **John Toy** for doing a superb job as Co-Chairs of this Regional.

I will be back next Halloween in my quest for the gold. Maybe I’ll even get a team together and try for the Knock-Outs

Editor’s Note: The Buff would love to publish your experiences at a Regional or National or even at a local club. Please e-mail them to bernieczar@aol.com

Bridge Club News



Bridge Center of Buffalo Phone # 834-4222 for reservations and information.

MENTORING ON
Tues. & Thurs. @ BCB

Newcomer Games, 0-20 master points, are held on Tuesday morning and Thursday evening, and are “mentored” games running in parallel with stratified pair games. Both games are preceded by a free Mini-Lesson a half hour before game time on Thursday evening or before lunch on Tuesday morning.

Buffalo Regional
Grand Island
Oct. 20 - 26, 2009

Tuesday Morning Side Game – 6.5 tables

MP’s	A	B	C	Names
2.58	1	1	1	Louis Dilorenzo, Robert Davis
1.84	2			Robert Padgug, Eugene Harvey
1.71	3	2	2	Jim Brown, Gloria Brown
1.11	5	4	3	Joyce Meskill, Joseph Rooney

Tuesday Afternoon 299ers – 10.5 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
2.97	1			Dennis Glazebrook, ON, Lane Bishop
1.67	3			Joyce Meskill; Joseph Rooney
1.70	4	2	1	Robert Lederhouse, Elaine Moon
1.27	6	3		Patricia Lakeman, Mary Terrana
1.25	4	2		Robert McGowan, Robert Silverberg
0.94	5	3		June Feuerstein, Barbara Sadkin

Tuesday K O Bracket 1 – 6 tables

MP's	Rank	Names
16.15	1	Jay Costello, Donna Steffan, Robert Cannizzaro, Jay Levy, Randolph Seidenberg, Jr., Brian Meyer

Tuesday Open Pairs – 28 tables

MP's	A	C	Names
9.98	2		Saleh Fetouh, John Kilmer
4.95		1	Walter Olszewski, Eleanor Whelan

Tuesday Evening Side – 14 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Name
3.64	1	1		Judith Padgug, Jay Sloofman
2.05		5	1	Peter Shul, Penny Shui

Wed Morning Side Game – 9 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
2.88	1			Walter Majewski, Stanley Kozlowski
2.58	3	1	1	Joe Miranda, Usha Khurana
1.82	6	3	2	Mike Silverman, Helen Panza

Wed Open Pairs – 27.5 tables

MP's	A	C	Names
13.30	1		Saleh Fetouh, William Rushmore
7.48	3		Jay Levy, Jay Costello
2.50		3	Henry Chudy, Jr, Lane Bishop

Wed Evening Swiss – 14 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
3.64	1			Jan Assini, OH, Susan Stark, OH, Bernard Fudor, PA, Anita Torrence, OH, Thomas Donnelly
2.73	4	1	1	Faith Perry, Jane Larcom, Ross Markello, Bruce Burr

Morning Compact1 – 15 tables

MP's	Rank	Names
11.36	1	Jay Levy, Bernard Fudor, PA, Jay Costello, Donna Steffan

Thurs Morning 299ers – 5 tables

MP's	A	B	Names
1.73	2	1	Marilyn Sultz, Ruth Wurster
1.19	3		Louis Dilozeno, Robert Davis
1.30	4	2	Joe Miranda, Joyce Greenspan

Thurs Afternoon Side – 10.5 tables

MP's	A	B	Names
3.19	1	1	Allen Beroza, Dorothy Boyd

Thurs Afternoon 299ers – 6 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
1.98	1/2	1/2	1/2	Stan Zionts, Terri Zionts
1.13		3		Joe Miranda, Arthur Kean

Bracketed KO II – B – 9 tables

MP's	Rank	Names
11.29	2	Chongmin Zhang, Xiao (Joe) Zhao, ON, Kathy Pollock, Judith Padgug

Bracketed KO II – C – 14 tables

MP's	Rank	Names
5.44	3/4	Laurette Oak, Pinky Regan, FL, Ken Meier, John Kirsits

Thurs Open Pairs – 22 tables / based on 21 tables

MP's	A	B	Names
10.85	1		John Kilmer, Elbert Hargesheimer III
3.82		3	Catherine Majewski, Joyce Kindt

Thurs Eve Side Game – 10 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
2.43	6	2	1	Steve Rashkin, Steve Stanley

Friday Morning 299ers – 4 tables

MP's	A	B	Names
1.49	2		Lance Pollock, William Rich
1.73	3	1	Mercedes Reinbolt, Robert Lederhouse
1.30		2	Carl Hasselback, Jan Hasselback

Friday Morning Side Game – 9.5 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
2.43	5	3	1	Mike Silverman, Helen Panza
1.40		5	3	Gary Wire, PA, Jack Miller

Friday Aft Side Game – 11 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
3.19	1			Jerry Fleming, NM, Patricia Rasmus
1.79	3			Alberta Brown, Stanley Kozlowski
1.26		4	3	Mike Silverman, Helen Panza

Friday Aft 299ers – 6.5 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
2.40	1	1	1	Kenneth Wagner, Natalie Abramson
1.80	2	2		Mercedes Reinbolt, Robert Lederhouse
1.35	3	3		Doanne Jackson, Donna Lawton
0.94			3	June Feuerstein, Barbara Sadkin

Friday Eve Side Game - 9 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
2.28	2	2	1	Manju Ceylony, Shakeel Ahmad
1.77	3	3	2	Peter Shui, Penny Shui

Friday Evening Swiss – 11 tables

MP's	A	B	Names
3.19	1	1	Lane Bishop, Marg Nash, OH, Liliane Thheberge. QC, Paulin Nault, QC

Saturday Morn Side Game – 9.5 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
3.03	1	1		Catherine Majewski, N Wolstoncroft
1.82	5	5	2	David Whitt, Carl McMurty
1.37	6		3	Lance Pollock, Charles Helmerl

Saturday Morning 299ers – 6.5 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
2.40	1	1	1	Linda Milch, Sharon Chang
1.50	3	2	2	Sushil Amiani, Jasbeer Makhija
1.13	4	3	3	Jack Cukierman, Gaurang Sheth

Saturday Aft Side = 13 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
3.03	4	1	1	Mike Silverman, Helen Panza
2.27	6	2		S. Luke Danielson, Nita Ferrell
1.94		3	2	Frances Witnauer, Marie Zayan
1.45		5	3	Bruce Bronstein, Florence Boyd

Saturday Aft 299ers – 5 tables

MP's	A	B	Names
2.12	1	1	Mercedes Reinbolt, James Madan

Fri/Sat KO Bracket 1 – 10 tables

MP's	Rank	Names
10.96	3/4	Jay Costello, Donna Steffan, Hans Jacobs, ON, Joseph Sauro, ON, Debbie Bennett, ON

Fri/Sat KO Bracket 2 – 9 tables

MP's	Rank	Names
6.12	3/4	Joanne Kelley, Chongmin Zhang, Judith Padgug, Kathy Pollock

Saturday Eve Side Game – 9.5 tables

MP's	A	B	C	Names
1.71	4	3	2	Peter Patterson, Linda Burroughsford ON

Flight A Swiss – 24 tables/based on 62 tables

MP's	A	Names
14.08	3	Christy Kellogg, Alexander Kowal, Elbert Hargesheimer III, John Kilmer

Flight B/C/D Swiss – 38 tables

MP's	B	C	D	Names
7.45	4	2	1	Lane Bishop, Guarang Sheth, George Donsky, Linda Burroughsford, ON
3.75	9/10	4/5	2	Peter Patterson, ON, Dorothy Soong, Diane Lyons, Henry Chudy, Jr.
2.39			3	Gary Schmitt, Barbara Landree, Franklin Kidd, Betty Metz
1.79			4	Joe Miranda, Stan Zions, Terri Zions, Marilyn Sultz

Try This!
By John Marvin

Dir: W	♠-T		
Vul: N-S	♥-KQT9		
	♦-764		
	♣-T9872		
♠-AQ98532	N		♠-K
♥-62	W	E	♥-7543
♦-A3	S		♦-KJT95
♣-J3			♣-AKQ
	♠-J764		
	♥-AJ8		
	♦-Q82		
	♣-654		

Two of Eleven 299ers at the Bridge Center of Buffalo made 11 tricks with these EW cards. I don't know how the play went at those tables but I'm guessing good defenders would start by taking the first two heart tricks. If they don't, it seems to me that declarer can make 12 tricks. After the heart plays there are three variations all of which lead to a trump coup. 1. A third heart making declarer ruff (which is what he wants). 2. A trump, which doesn't even slow him down. 3. A club which is probably the trickiest.

Intermediate and beginning players would benefit from trying all of the variations. Such exercises are good for your bridge health.

The Bridge “Gene-ie”
By Eugene Harvey

♠ J 8 7 5 2
♥ K 10 6 5
♦ Q 10 8 3
♣ ---

K Q 5	A 9
Q 4 2	9 8
K 7 6 5	A J 9
Q 10 3	A K 6 5 4 2

10 6 4
A J 7 3
4 2
J 9 8 7

N	E	S	W
P	1♣	P	2NT
P	3NT	Pass out	

Bidding: With N-S silent, E-W should reach the 3NT game easily. East opens 1♣ initially. After the opening, West jumps to 2NT, invitational, with 11 to 12 pts., no 4-card major, and a balanced hand. East clearly has enough strength to accept the game invitation.

Opening Lead: North - ♠5 – 4th from longest; With the ♥K and ♦Q as potential entries, it’s best to lead your longest suit, not your strongest.
Declarer Play: (West declarer) Assume you win the ♠A in dummy, then count your sure winners. Looks like a simple 3NT, right? We have 3 spade winners, 2 diamond winners, and 6 club winners. Well, it all depends on how you handle the ♣ suit. Some players will automatically lead low to their ♣Q, and, if they do so, they will find the bad news – there is a bad split in clubs.

Let’s take a moment to analyze how to handle this suit. First, when you hold 9 cards in a suit, the remaining 4 cards tend to be divided *unevenly* between the defenders. More often than not, the cards will split 3-1 instead of 2-2. Either distribution will work out for us, though. BUT! If the ♣s split 4-0, you still have a chance to take all the ♣ tricks, but only if South is the player holding all the ♣s. The most important thing to recognize is your ♣Q-10-3; this is called a *tenace*. A tenace is when you hold a slightly broken sequence in a suit; this combination can afford you a finesse opportunity you might not

have expected to take. In this case, you could use this combination to finesse South for the ♣J. You must play the ♣A first to “test the waters” in the suit. We are attempting to guard, or protect, against a bad split. We are guarding against South having all 4 ♣s. If he has all 4, next we should play low toward our remaining ♣Q-10 and finesse South for the known ♣J. Then we use dummy’s ♦A as an entry and cash the remaining ♣ winners, starting from the ♣K down. If North had all 4 clubs, there is no possibility to guard against the bad split. Why? Well, you have no finesse position. If you start with the ♣Q, which will win, and next play the ♣10, all North has to do is cover the honor with his honor – the ♣J – which will promote his ♣9-8 into a winner/stopper. We cannot guard against North having 4 clubs, but we can guard against South having all the clubs.

Recognizing the power of tenaces is VERY important in bridge as they could afford you finesse opportunities. Also, recognizing the strength and importance of good intermediates– 10s and 9s – might afford you with a finesse opportunity or a trick when you didn’t think you had one.

Automatically playing the honor from the shorter side first is not always the best play. Sometimes you must do so, but if you have a tenace position, you should consider *guarding* against a bad suit break whenever feasible. Learning how to play a suit correctly takes time and experience, and I encourage you to stop and think about those “worst-case scenarios” to see if – and how – you can prevent them. It’s all about developing your visualization of possible suit division, and sometimes the glass IS half empty...
(*in a booming voice* ‘Genie HAPPY! Send more!’ Eugene @ bridgegenie@gmail.com)

Happy Holidays from Unit 116 Board Members and the Bridge Buff Editors

