



Table Talk

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Volunteer Profile



Carol Poto

Carol Poto has always been an active person, a character trait that has continued into her 2011 “retirement” from Long Beach City College (LBCC), where she was a tenured professor in the Physical Education Department and the women’s tennis coach.

She was born and raised in Connecticut where, as she put it, “we had six months of winter where everyone except the dog and cat plays cards.” She, her two brothers, and parents played several different card games to pass the time, including lots of poker and a bidding game called Setback that involved a lot of yelling and trash-talking when someone slammed down THE CARD that set the contract.

Events January 2021

Online Schedule Daily Games

ALLIANCE games are held at www.bridgebase.com.

7:00 a.m.	\$7	0-299 Blue
7:00 a.m.	\$7	Open
7:30 a.m.	\$7	0-499 Green
8:30 a.m.	\$8	0-1000 Pink
10:00 a.m.	\$8	0-199 Lt. Blue
10:00 a.m.	\$7	Open
10:15 a.m.	\$8	0-399 Gray
10:30 a.m.	\$8	0-99 Red
11:30 a.m.	\$8	0-1000 Pink
12:30 p.m.	\$8	0-299 Blue
1:00 p.m.	\$7	Open
2:45 p.m.	\$8	0-499 Green

Obviously, cards were always destined to be part of her future.

Carol also enjoyed and played different sports with her brothers from the time she was little, with sandlot baseball dominating from ages 9 to 14. At age 25, her work friends in Boston invited her to join an indoor tennis club as part of a corporate membership. She did and, from the moment she stepped on the court, she was hooked! A year later she quit her job and moved to Long Beach, Billie Jean King’s home town, where she could play tennis year round. Once in

Long Beach, Carol found her way to the 20 tennis courts at LBCC, where she played on the women’s tennis team for two years and met her husband Frank, who played on the men’s team. Carol recalled, “He saw me playing tennis with a friend, came over, and said he ‘liked my forehand.’ It was the perfect pickup line for a tennis nut like me, and we’ve been married for 40 years.”

Carol earned her undergraduate and Master’s degrees in Physical Education at Cal State Long Beach

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January 2021 **table talk**

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(CSULB) and, in 1984, was offered a fellowship at LSU in Baton Rouge to earn a Ph.D. While she studied, Frank passed the CPA exam, and Shaq was tearing up the basketball court for LSU in the Pete Maravich Center on campus. They took Cajun dance lessons, went to Mardi Gras, and let the good times roll. Carol and her husband returned to Long Beach where she finished her doctoral work and began teaching part-time at LBCC and CSULB. Eventually, she landed her “dream job” of teaching and coaching tennis in the P.E. Department at LBCC, and continued playing tennis every day for another 20 years. Ultimately, she started having hip problems from all the side-to-side movement so, when she retired from LBCC in 2011, she also retired from tennis.

That same year, on the way back from the hairdresser, she stopped by an Open House at the Long Beach Lawn Bowling Club in Rec Park where she was shown how to bowl. It was love at first roll, and lawn bowling was a perfect substitute for tennis competition as it too had national, regional, and local tournaments that offered prize money. She quickly became a “big fish in a small pond”—qualifying to compete in singles and pairs national championships, winning the U.S. Open Singles title in 2014, and qualifying as the U.S. singles entrant in the 2015 Scottish International Open in Perth, Australia, where she competed against the best indoor players in the world. Carol was trounced in the first round by the man who eventually won that tournament. Carol added, “The whole experience was exhilarating, playing before a live audience, with

TV cameras and a commentator throughout the match. It was definitely a high point in my wide world of sports!”

It was at the bowling club that Carol met Sandra Schlosser. Sandra was taking OLLI classes with another bowling club member, and encouraged Carol to explore other activities together “for when we can’t bend down and bowl anymore.” So, they started taking bridge lessons from Inge through OLLI. When Long Beach Bridge began working with OLLI, Carol and Sandra transitioned to lessons with Bob Mault and George Welsh at the club.

As Sharon Biederman started to organize the club and expand Bridge Brigade classes, Carol was impressed with her vision and her “sacrificing, giving nature.” In addition, “Sharon had a book!” Carol elaborated, “I’m an educator so I fell in love with her vision and wanted to help her realize it. I wrote a ‘college catalog’ describing all the bridge classes offered and the sequence in which to take them. It was accompanied with a ‘schedule of classes’ listing when and where the various classes are offered, along with a list of card playing opportunities suitable for beginners.” The catalog provides a roadmap for learning bridge from newcomer to Open player. Polished and professional, it is a valuable tool for recruiting and educating new bridge players.

Carol also coordinates each session’s schedule of Bridge Brigade classes with OLLI and worked with Ann Sianez to make the course descriptions from the catalog available online during OLLI registration. A student can click on the course title to read a synopsis, see the course outline,

Who is this little darling?

Our darling is second from the right. Go to our Facebook page - Long Beach Bridge for the answer.

Were you a cute kid? Of course you were! Be the next little darling. Send photos to: ardeaux1@gmail.com.



Last month’s little darling:
Lillian Slater



and read instructor comments. She explained, “It took lots of interaction with three different people at OLLI to get this done, but now it is easy to maintain.”

Life throws us new challenges, however, and Carol received one in 2020. Honey Pacifica, the family beekeeping business, which bottles and sells honey and other

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Unit 557 Masterpoint Races

As of November 6, 2020

Mini-McKenney

Overall	Jackie Hess	197.52
	Lillian Slater	161.01
	John Melis	134.71
0-5	Darrel Manson	30.02
	Jane Manson	29.11
	Yvonne Kroneberger	23.45
5-20	Linda Lane	85.67
	Rita Van Lierop	31.05
	Jan Van Lierop	31.04
20-50	Melanie Smothers	114.57
	Rick Gonser	15.31
	Charlotte Roush	12.49
50-100	Ted Dowe	94.99
	Carolyn Byrnes	58.18
	Judith Cook	52.21
100-200	Ardis Laine	105.68
	Sandra Schlosser	82.78
	Barbara Wallace	66.83
200-300	Lillian Slater	161.01
	Kathleen Pecarovich	31.79
	Ruth Roe	19.22
300-500	Linda Dillon	33.10
	Joyce Roberts	28.14
	Timothy Cole	27.00
500-1000	Robert Bakovic	101.94
	John Galligher	101.94
	Colleen Gardner	72.66
1000-1500	Thomas Felice	77.70
	Dalia Hernandez	66.22
	Sharon Biederman	63.13
1500-2500	Paul Pettler	81.49
	Judith Jones	57.82
	John Hand	49.75
2500-3500	Cliff Goodrich	131.69
	Kay Tseng	104.06
	Jo Melis	80.08
2500-5000	Jackie Hess	197.52
	John Petrie	47.08
	Bill McClean	42.92
5000-7500	John Melis	134.71
	Mark Leonard	89.95
	Mark Tang	75.74

Ace of Clubs

Overall	Jackie Hess	190.05
	Lillian Slater	143.20
	John Melis	122.85
0-5	Darrel Manson	30.02
	Jane Manson	29.11
	Yvonne Kroneberger	23.45
5-20	Linda Lane	73.36
	Rita Van Lierop	31.05
	Jan Van Lierop	31.04
20-50	Melanie Smothers	97.93
	Rick Gonser	15.31
	Charlotte Roush	12.49
50-100	Ted Dowe	92.24
	Judith Cook	48.42
	Carolyn Byrnes	47.26
100-200	Ardis Laine	90.95
	Barbara Wallace	66.30
	Sandra Schlosser	58.26
200-300	Lillian Slater	143.20
	Kathleen Pecarovich	31.79
	Ruth Roe	18.16
300-500	Linda Dillon	32.04
	Joyce Roberts	21.03
	Timothy Cole	18.91
500-1000	Robert Bakovic	86.42
	John Galligher	86.03
	Lynn Danielson	66.18
1000-1500	Sharon Biederman	62.27
	Thomas Felice	60.74
	Dalia Hernandez	51.61
1500-2500	Paul Pettler	64.56
	John Hand	49.03
	Judith Jones	46.82
2500-3500	Cliff Goodrich	109.13
	Kay Tseng	92.63
	Jo Melis	73.71
2500-5000	Jackie Hess	190.05
	John Petrie	32.58
	Bill McClean	28.80
5000-7500	John Melis	122.85
	Mark Leonard	77.37
	Mark Tang	25.98



Covid Creations featuring Jerry Smith

Jerry Smith has always enjoyed cooking! Dubbed “the Muffin Man” by his kids due to the delicious apple, oat bran, and chocolate chip muffins he made for them, Jerry has used this safer-at-home quarantine to develop a new skill—baking homemade sourdough bread!

He explained, “After Melanie’s heart diagnosis in March, she had to reduce her salt intake but we love sourdough bread. Unfortunately, store-bought bread contains a lot of salt, so I decided to learn how to make it.” However, Jerry undertook this project at the same time others were baking to fill up the time while safer at home. When he went to the store, there were only empty shelves—no flour! Searching the Internet, he found an online flour mill in Florida and ordered a 50-pound bag. He recalled, “Then, I had to lug it upstairs. I repackaged it in 10-pound seal-a-meal portions and started baking.” This initial order lasted through early December when he ordered his second 50

pounds of flour!

Jerry noted, “My first effort tasted good but didn’t look good. It was a little hard. I actually served it with cheese instead of crackers and received good feedback.” His result was better the second time and perfect the third.

Making sourdough bread is a combination of art and science—using the right ingredients in the right ratios, artfully adjusted to the conditions. All ingredients are added by weight so a scale is an essential tool. Flour has to be unbleached: white, whole wheat, rye, etc. Jerry only recently found unbleached rye flour at an affordable price so he’s excited to try it! A baker changes the bread by blending flours. For example, Jerry’s bread has been 500 grams of unbleached white flour blended with 100 grams of unbleached whole wheat flour. His next bread will replace the whole wheat with rye. He also periodically adds sesame or poppy seeds to his bread for variety.

The soul of sourdough bread is its starter—an essential component as sourdough bread has no yeast so the starter is what makes it rise. Famous bakeries are still using the starter they made years ago. Jerry’s starter just celebrated its eight-month anniversary last month. Creating the starter requires days, combining a ratio of flour and water then discarding half of it. For seven days thereafter, the baker “feeds” the starter, adding the correct ratio of flour/water and again discarding half. At the end of this period, the starter is ready to use but must now be kept in the refrigerator until it’s needed to bake a loaf.

Baking a loaf of sourdough bread is a 24-hour process. Since

it is time sensitive, Jerry had to experiment to find the schedule that worked best for him. He has it mastered now and bakes a loaf a week. In summary:



1. The day before, Jerry takes the starter out of the refrigerator, feeds it, and leaves it out overnight.
2. The morning of the bread making day, he feeds the starter the correct ratio of flour/water, again discarding half, and leaves it out to bubble.
3. At noon he mixes a portion of the starter with the flour/water needed for the bread recipe, and the bread starts to rise. Throughout the afternoon, he stretches and folds it three times. (Stretching-and-folding is another art form in bread making. It involves taking the dough out of the bowl and reshaping it. The consistency and ease of removing it from the bowl varies with the water/flour ratio that is used, a highly debated subject among bakers. Jerry recommends viewing a variety of videos and experimenting to find what works best for you. He personally favors a 70% hydration, 70 grams of water to 100 grams of flour because it’s less difficult to work with.)
4. After dinner, Jerry shapes his loaf of bread and “baskets” it in the refrigerator overnight. (There are a variety of baskets available that shape the look of the finished loaf. Jerry has four different ones:

two small rounds, one rectangle, and a large round one.)

5. The next day he bakes it in a six-quart cast iron pan at 500 degrees. Jerry noted, “It’s important to heat the pot first, then add the bread for baking in order to get the needed ‘oven spring.’”

Jerry added, “It’s easy to screw it up such as letting the bread rise too long. It is also temperature sensitive to heat and weather, and different flour changes the bread. I have to be flexible and learn to adjust accordingly. Another challenge is get the right texture so, when stretching and folding the dough, my hands don’t get too sticky.”

Jerry watched and rewatched Foodgeek YouTube videos, often adopting its techniques and recipes. He has also made challah bread and plans on experimenting with other types of bread and rolls, again using foodgeek.com and other Internet recipes.

Both Jerry and Melanie enjoy and excel at cooking. Married over 43 years, they have developed a dinner routine. “Melanie usually makes the salad and vegetables while my specialty is our meat.” Despite all the bread-making challenges, Jerry enjoys the process and likes to solve the problems encountered. His background as a mathematics teacher turned computer programmer at McDonnell Douglas equipped him to undertake the science part of this process with its required ratios, percentages, and problem solving. In addition to his newest talent of baking sourdough bread, Jerry likes to experiment and makes a variety of yummy soups. He has also participated in chili cook-off competitions among friends.

with me and a second time with Having taught himself bread



Why Do You Want to Learn...?

Life Master, hmm, such a lofty title. I feel I’ve barely scratched the surface of bridge mastery, let alone let alone *life*. However, our beloved American Contract Bridge League has now bestowed this noble title on me so I’ll tell my tale.

I was dating this guy and I noticed he read the bridge column in the LA Times. I asked a few questions and soon began reading the column as well. I come from a long line of card players. Cribbage, Euchre, Spades, Hearts, and 500 were entertainment staples during the cold Iowa winters. My dad stuck cards in my hands probably before I could walk. My parents played in and occasionally hosted a monthly bridge tournament with the Rural Letter Carriers’ Association. I was intrigued by bridge and thought it would a great activity to share with my new boyfriend.

I saw a tiny ad in Grunion Gazette. Since no one returned my voicemails (!!), I wandered over to Long Beach Bridge Club. The afternoon session had started and a room full of card players were quietly concentrating on their game. I whispered to the small woman with a short white bob haircut, “Hello, I’m interested

in learning how to play bridge.”

“**What!**” The entire room turned to look and, in my mind, scowl at me. In a normal voice I repeated, “Hello, I’m interested in learning how to play bridge.” “**WHAT! I can’t hear you.**” Presumably her inability to hear me was entirely my fault. I tried a third time to convey my message to Irma. The result was the same, she couldn’t hear me, entirely my fault. I pivoted on my foot and was about to leave the club when Bob Mault ambled from the back room.

He introduced himself and asked me why I wanted to learn bridge. I explained the new boyfriend. He then said, with a twinkle in his eye, “Well, if you love him, I wouldn’t advise it [learning to play bridge.]” So, for the first and the last time, I ignored Bob’s advice and took lessons. I played in “back room” games for a while but gave it up as my work schedule was too taxing.

I came back to the club in 2017 and played in one of Bob’s supervised play games. He shooed me out of those games and into the “front room.” I played with a variety of partners and sought out partners that I could “grow up with.” I am so grateful for all the wonderful instructors at Long Beach Bridge and that Bob Mault caught me before I turned tail. I earned all my necessary gold points at Palm Springs Regional during the week that Bob passed away. I had hoped to become a Life Master in his life time but fell short of that goal.

And that boyfriend...yup, I fell in love and married that guy. Thanks Bob and Chuck for introducing me to the greatest game.

by Ardie Laine



January Bridge Classes

Bridge 2: Through Bridge Brigade.
Starts Monday, 5 January.
See longbeachbridge.com for details



Bridge 1: Through OLLI.
Starts Tuesday, 5 January

See <https://www.csulb.edu/college-of-health-human-services/osher-lifelong-learning-institute-home> for details

We want your stories!



Tell us the tale of your path to Life Master. What are you doing to survive the pandemic? Send an email to Ardie at ardeaux1@gmail.com or call/text at 562-254-0099

Carol Poto, Continued from page 2

bee products, was now being asked to demonstrate compliance with federal food safety regulations as part of a nationwide effort to improve food safety. Coincidentally, the sport of lawn bowling was shut down completely for the duration of 2020, and the bridge club closed due to COVID restrictions. Newly available, Carol was hired to carry out the new food safety protocols at the Downey bottling plant. Accordingly, the time she can devote to playing bridge, volunteering, or interacting with friends at the club is now limited.

Carol ended by saying, “playing cards brought me to the club but the people keep me coming back. My fellow bridge players are so interesting, and the Bridge Brigade teachers are always so supportive!”

Carol, thank you for all you have done to create Bridge Brigade’s catalog. We hope your job slows down so you have some time with us when the club reopens!

by Lillian Slater



November Status Changes

Junior Master

Joey Duree

Life Master

Ardie Laine



Jerry Smith, Continued from page 5

making via YouTube, Jerry is now using videos to improve his chess game and play online. He commented, “Learning to play serious chess is like moving from social bridge to duplicate.” Initially introduced to chess during his time in the Peace Corps in Fiji in 1971, Jerry added, “I really enjoyed watching The Queen’s Gambit series which reignited my interest in chess. Playing online is intense with timed matches that last two hours. But I enjoy the challenge!”

Jerry, we all look forward to sampling your sourdough bread when we return to face-to-face games at the club and hearing about your latest chess accomplishments!

by Lillian Slater



Table Talk

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Article Submissions

We welcome articles, ideas, and photos pertaining to our club. We reserve the right to revise submissions. Contact Ardie at ardeaux1@gmail.com