

On the Job

In last November's Table Talk, Nancy Toussaint wrote an article entitled "Getting to Know You." To quote her, "We miss out on many fun stories when we see our fellow bridge players as one-dimensional people."

In that light, we decided to ask fellow bridge players about their best and/or worst job(s) ever. If you shared a story and don't see it here, expect to see it next month. There were too many good stories for one issue. Here are some of them:



Marty Shobar: Worst job ever at 14: I worked for my grandmother and her wife (Elvis and Olive Oyl look-alikes ... quite a pair) My job was washing dogs which I did for six months until a collie bit me. That was my last day.



Sue Reininger: Best job ever: I worked at a free drug clinic in Venice Beach in the late 60's and early 70's. I dressed in current "styles" which was liberating. I was responsible for giving 125 heroin addicts their daily dose of methadone, and I had phone numbers of famous people and called Rock Hudson on a

weekly basis.



Lynda Montgomery: Worst and first: Babysitting. I decided never to have kids. Best job: In the military when I did search and rescue: That was the only time I looked for a man.

Gwen Kos: Best job ever: I harvested organs from a healthy baseball player who was brain dead after a game skirmish. The sights, the tension, the sounds of helicopters overhead to take organs away...I'll never forget it. The emotions: a sense of sadness but of doing something truly amazing. I got letters from organ

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Status Changes

Club Master

Mary Ohalloran

Sectional Master

Deke Thomas

Bronze Life Master

Diana Parmeter

Silver Life Master

Shirley Knopf

Ted Teweles



Shirley Knopf
Bronze Life Master



January Birthdays

Left to right: Rita Van Lierop, Melinda Wilson, Alan Olschwang, Kim Wang, Chie Wickham



Ted Teweles
Silver Life Master





Tuba Notes from the Bored

At the Long Beach Bridge Center, the cards may change every deal, but one thing never does: the spirit of patience and kindness that defines our community. It's the quiet force that keeps our games enjoyable, our partnerships strong, and our club a place where everyone—from brand-new learners to seasoned Life Masters—feels welcome.

Bridge rewards clear thinking, but it also asks us to slow down, breathe, and give each other space to learn. At our tables, patience shows up in small but meaningful ways:

- Partner offering a moment to think through a tough hand
- Gentle explanation of a ruling or convention
- Willingness to help a newer player navigate unfamiliar territory

- Allowing other tables to play while we wait for our next hand

These moments build confidence, reduce stress, and remind us that bridge is a journey, not a race.

Kindness is woven into the culture of the LBBC. You see it in the warm greetings at the door, the volunteers who arrive early to set up, the teachers who give their time generously, and the members who check in on friends who haven't been around for a while. It's the reason new players stay, and longtime members feel like they're part of something bigger than a card game.

Our club thrives because we choose encouragement over criticism and understanding over frustration. When someone makes a mistake, we treat it as part of the learning process. When someone succeeds, we celebrate it. This shared grace strengthens not only our partnerships but our friendships.

In a competitive game, it's easy to forget the human side of the experience. But at the Long Beach Bridge Center, we show that you can play hard and still treat each other with warmth and respect. Patience and kindness aren't just ideals—they're habits we practice every day, and they're the reason our club continues to

grow in both skill and spirit.

Thanks to John Kilmer and Casey Stiers for making the tables match the new chairs. Everyone now has a choice on what kind of chair suits them best. We have the new red (burgundy) chairs that are lower and provide back support. The black chairs are higher and straighter even some with arms. Some people have even brought in their own chairs to meet their specific needs. We are working to make modifications to the tables to better support board movements and reduce clutter. Use the ones that you like best when sitting north and south. But please put the chairs back to be ready for the next game.

See you soon at the Long Beach Bridge Center!

by Leo Dittemore
Unit President

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



Piken's Pointers

The new year is upon us and, as bridge players, we can receive no greater resolution than opening our hands and seeing a plethora of aces, kings and queens. How we love to hold these cards, yet while these can be a blessing as we bid our way to games and the nirvana of the holy grails, small and grand slams, these cards can also be our undoing in defense if not used properly. Let us explore their use so, when we have them on defense, they can also be gifts to us.

Consider the following auction: one \heartsuit by you, double on your left, two \heartsuit s by partner, four \spades s on your right, you PASS and left hand opponent and partner pass. You hold:

\spades Kx
 \heartsuit AKxxxx
 \diamond Q10x
 \clubsuit xx

Obviously we attack \heartsuit s on opening lead fearful

that these tricks could go away. But how many \heartsuit s can we cash? Do we want count by partner or attitude? Consider for a moment, partner has either three four or five \heartsuit s but not preempting makes it likely that it is either three or four. If dummy comes down with two hearts what do we do? Do we waste our \heartsuit A,K fruitlessly attempting to cash a second heart or do we find a shift while we may still have control of the hand with the King of trumps.

Hooray for Long Beach bridge players: they want count! It is imperative before you start your bridge games to determine which card, ace or king, asks for attitude or count. We were taught when we first started bridge that A stands for Ace and attitude. So easy to remember. We've also learned Queen means count or unblock. But alas that leaves our poor King the head of royalty touching one card next to it meaning attitude i.e. the Ace and his poor Queen demanding count. This makes no sense! The king is the king of royalty and deserves attitude so that the card next to it will always mean count. Getting back to this hand, as we want to know how many \heartsuit s partner has, we lead the Ace. Now dummy

comes down:

\spades Axxx
 \heartsuit xx
 \diamond Axx
 \clubsuit KQJx

Well, perfect lead. On the Ace partner shows three using either upside down or standard count. We cash our second \heartsuit and move on to a \diamond shift as declarers only vulnerability might be \diamond s.

Now consider another possibility: partner throws \heartsuit Q on your Ace. What does this mean? Does he have four and warns you not to cash? No, partner should always show count with highest non honor. In this case he is asking you to underlead your King to his Jack so he can switch to \diamond s. Partner holds:

\spades x
 \heartsuit QJx
 \diamond Kxxx
 \clubsuit xxxx

They recognize that it's best to lead \diamond s from their side. So the card gods have blessed us on this hand as proper use of our royalty has led to the best defense.

Now consider One No Trump on your right, 2 \clubsuit on your left followed by 2 \diamond (no four card major) and 3NT on your left. How many times have we seen this auction?

On this hand, you hold:

\spades AKJx
 \heartsuit xxx
 \diamond JTxx
 \clubsuit xx

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Our Deepest Sympathies to the Family and Friends of



Larry Slutsky
1934 - 2026



J. Baum Harris
1934 - 2026

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What do we do now? What card or holding is most important to us? The answer, our King is searching for his milady, the Queen. The royal King demands attitude and the answer to our problem.

In recap, if the new year brings you presents in the form of royalty, cherish them and get their full value on defense. I recommend, what almost every top player uses, Ace for count from touching AK; King for attitude with touching AK or KQ and Queen for count with KQ, or AKQ or QJT or QJ9.

by Ed Piken

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recipients later in the year.
Eric Kaplan: Worst job was teaching chemistry to narcissists.

Larry Wisinski: Worst job: I signed up to volunteer at a workshop. I was assigned to paint chain link fences with a big roller and dark green paint. I lasted two days.



Libby Tigner: Worst job was as an ice cream truck driver.



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I worked for one month, and five decades later, I still can't get that tune out of my head.

Mine: Worst job was when five high school friends and I volunteered as candy strippers at University of Washington Medical Center. They inventoried Q-tips and bandages. I was sent to the information desk with no phone and no help. I remember looking over several times during the day at a small package left on the desk and marked RUSH!

by Lyn Kraatz
February 2026

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	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	CLOSED	2 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 Bridge 3 Hank 9:30 Set Topics Rob Dir: Alan	3 12:30 OPEN 9:30 Bridge 1 Hank 9:30 199r Game Dir: Chuck Rob/Fern	4 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 199r Game Dir: Alan	5 12:30 OPEN 9:30 199r Game Dir: Leo	6 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 199r Game Dir: Nancy	7 ACBL Wide Int'l Fund \$2 Int'l Fund 12:30 OPEN \$5 SATURDAY Dir: Steve
8	CLOSED	9 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 Bridge 3 Hank 9:30 Set Topics Rob Dir: Alan	10 UNIT Championship 12:00 OPEN 9:30 Bridge 1 Hank 9:30 199r Game Dir: Chuck Rob/Fern	11 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 199r Game Dir: Leo	12 12:30 OPEN 9:30 199r Game Dir: Alan	13 12:00 OPEN/NLM 9:30 LUNCH INCLUDED Dir: Nancy	14 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 LUNCH INCLUDED Dir: Cherene
15	CLUB Championship Team Game 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 Bridge 3 Hank 9:30 Set Topics Rob Dir: Alan	16 CLUB Championship 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 Bridge 3 Hank 9:30 Set Topics Rob Dir: Alan	17 CLUB Championship 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 Bridge 1 Hank 9:30 199r Game Dir: Chuck Rob/Fern	18 CLUB Championship 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 Bridge 1 Hank 9:30 199r Game Dir: Leo	19 CLUB Championship 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 Bridge 1 Hank 9:30 199r Game Dir: Alan	20 CLUB Championship 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 Bridge 1 Hank 9:30 199r Game Dir: Nancy	21 CLUB Championship 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 GO SATURDAY Dir: Steve
22	Unit Game 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 Bridge 3 Hank (8) 9:30 Set Topics Rob Dir: Sean	23 12:30 OPEN 9:30 Bridge 1 Hank (8) 9:30 199r Game Dir: Chuck Rob/Fern	24 12:30 OPEN 9:30 Bridge 1 Hank (8) 9:30 199r Game Dir: Leo	25 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 199r Game Dir: Alan	26 12:30 OPEN 9:30 199r Game Dir: Alan	27 12:30 OPEN/NLM 9:30 199r Game Dir: Nancy	28 March Madness 33% Red 12:30 OPEN \$5 GO SATURDAY Dir: Cherene