

Diamond in the Ruff: East Bay Unit 502, June 2018

By Larry Bowerman (lmjtbow@pacbell.net)

First and foremost, the **Unit 502 Spring Sectional will take place on June 23rd & 24th** at the Oakland Masonic Center (third floor), 3903 Broadway, Oakland, CA. This is always a great event, so please plan to attend. The games begin at 10:00 am each day and the table fees will be \$12.00. Lunch will be available for \$5.00 per person on both days, along with lots of good (and healthy) snacks throughout the day. There is some parking available behind the building off of Manila Ave, otherwise street parking is your best bet, especially on Sunday when the parking meters don't require feeding.

Unfortunately, I have sad news to report – **Susan Wiebe passed away on April 15th and Esther Larsen passed away on March 24th.**

Susan Wiebe was a regular player on the East Bay bridge scene for more than 40 years. Susan was a Diamond Life Master (having earned more than 5250 masterpoints), served on the Unit 502 Board (mostly as the Unit Secretary) off and on for at least 25 years, was the Unit 502 Representative to District 21 and received the Unit 502 Goodwill Award. In talking with several of Susan's friends, what stands-out were her personal qualities. Although a recognized expert player, Susan was always willing to play with newer, less experienced players. She was a person of few words, but all who had the good fortune to play with her, loved and respected her as a player and mentor. However, you had to pay attention and listen carefully to get the full benefit of her advice. As Betty Kael described her style – “no drama, no trauma.” Joyce Hart emphasized that Susan had the rare ability to make all of her bridge partners better players. On a more personal note from Sandi Davis, Susan loved to knit sweaters and scarves, and she loved her cats. She will be missed. Our thoughts and sympathies go out to her husband, Nick Wiebe.

Esther Larsen was also a regular player on the East Bay bridge scene for more than 60 years. She was 96 when she passed and was able to continue playing bridge until a couple of years ago. Although they never

joined the ACBL, Esther and her husband, Carl "Chile" Larsen were regular duplicate bridge players at clubs throughout the East Bay, including Mosswood, the Dimond Library, Redwood Road, Bay Farm Island, the East Bay Community Bridge Center (EBCBC) and Doug Handler's Piedmont games. Carl passed away in 2015 at age 98. As all who knew them will attest, both were accomplished players and ambassadors for the game of bridge. Her daughter Sherry said, Esther was a happy person who loved playing bridge (and did so for close to 70 years). In tribute to her mother, Sherry will have a plaque placed on a table at the EBCBC, next to the plaque honoring her father. Esther will also be missed. Our thoughts and sympathies go out to Sherry and her family.

As usual, there are a few important calendar events to note. First, there will be regularly scheduled **Unit 502 Games on Sunday, June 3rd and June 17th beginning at 1:00 pm; the free lunch will be served in the East Bay Community Bridge Center (EBCBC) kitchen at about 12:30 pm.**

EBCBC Club Championship games will take place during the week of June 4th to June 9th.

The upcoming **Saturday games** at the EBCBC at 12:00 noon will be on June 9th, July 7th, July 21st and July 28th. If you want to play, please contact Betty Kael to sign-up for these games.

In addition, there are several **NAP Qualifier Games** at the EBCBC on June 11th, June 26th, July 11th, July 26th and August 10th.

Congratulations to **Gail Oraftik and Pam Sawyer** who had an incredible 87.5% game in the 299er section on April 10th!

Congratulations to **Grant Vance and Jessica Lai**, who were unbeatable in the April Marin Sectional. On Saturday they won the two session Open Pairs game and on Sunday they teamed with Cris Barrere and Bob Thompson to win Bracket 1 of the Swiss Teams event! Nice job!

In the **April 15th Unit Game**, Pat Leary and William Rudman Jr took first place, Neal Mazaroff and Stuart Schneck second place, Sandi Davis

and Barry Kael third and Lynne Bromley and Darlene Mayhew fourth. The top three pairs all had games above 61%.

In the **May 6th Unit Game**, Michael Schneider and Grant Vance took first place, Pat Leary and William Rudman Jr second place, Bonnie Macbride and Sidney Mar third place and Neal Mazaroff and Stuart Schneck fourth. All four pairs had games above 62.5%.

Welcome to new members Adrienne and Gene Kuehneman, and Margaret Tam! When you see them, please take the time to welcome them to our unit.

Congratulations to the following players on their recent rank advancements: Madelaine Georgette, Eric Lindquist and Jennie Schacht, **Junior Master**; and Robert Sieben, **Club Master**. Kudos to each of you, and keep on playing! There is always another goal in front of you! When you see them, please take the time to congratulate them on their advancements.

Tom Pajak is writing next month's column, so please contact him if you have interesting results or other items to report: Tom Pajak <tompajak999@gmail.com>.