



# South Orange County Bridge Center

Newsletter Volume VIII: No. 1 - January 2022

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Richard Picheny*

**Y**OU ARE NOT EXPERIENCING DÉJÀ VU. As Jack Nicholson said in *The Shining*, "I'm back." Although I previously served for five years as President of SOCBC's Board of Directors, I am returning to that position now with a new sense of purpose. Additionally, the 2022 Board consists of:

- Frank Grossman – Vice President
- Maggie Briskie – Secretary
- Trisha Silverberg – Treasurer
- Gale Senter – Education, Facility Lease and Insurance
- Susan Bristol – Membership
- John Jonas – Special Projects

I want to take this opportunity to thank Gail Schneider and the 2021 Board for their service: Frank Grossman, Gale Senter, Susan Bristol, Joop Doorn, Dianna Hoffman, Dan Thorlakson, Marshall Pearlman. The number of very tough decisions that these individuals made in the past year has been unprecedented. Keeping bridge alive online, figuring out when and how to reopen, would people return? Then the rigors of instituting new health and safety measures, riding the waves of the pandemic, keeping us healthy, dealing with the end of our lease, and so much more.

Frank deserves special acknowledgement for the many programs and events he single-handedly implemented. When none of our afternoon directors were willing to direct BBO's virtual SOCBC afternoon games, Frank stepped up. If he was not familiar with the steps involved in the implementation of running the games or the nuances of their functioning, he learned them. Once the programs were running, he taught Marshall Pearlman, Susan Bristol, and me. When we resumed live face-to-face, Frank again took the initiative and began directing. Bob Levine, John Jonas and me, all-certified game directors, none of whom had directed, volunteered to direct so that Frank would not have

to do it every day. Again, Frank developed instruction sets and taught us how to run the ACBL Score Program and Bridgemate software, with help from Gail Schneider. Many clubs have not survived, and our 2021 Board, and Frank in particular, has been a big part of our survival this past year. When the 2021 Board decided to reinstate classes for beginners, many thought we would not get sign-ups. To the contrary, we now have a great group of new players working their way through introductory lessons.

When they decided to go ahead and hold a Holiday Party, it was touch and go – would the pandemic interfere? They took a chance and made the right call. Our Holiday Party began with the General Meeting and introduction of the New Board. We took a few moments to remember the members who died in 2020 and 2021: George Brody, Ginnie Johnson, Kitty Viele, Arvin Kulkarni, Elaine Bezar, Carolyn Sandore, Emily Ospenson, Mark Leventhal. Treasurer Dianna Hoffman presented an overview of our finances. SOCBC's awards for Sportsmanship and Citizenship were presented by Gale Senter and Frank Grossman. I was honored to receive the Jim Senter Award, and Maggie Briskie was the well-deserved recipient of the Sally Pelmeear Award.

Maggie Briskie and Frances Krause co-chaired the Holiday festivities and, in true pandemic style, it was all about flexibility. Initially planned as an off-site event, they opted instead to do the full day at our club. Frances, Loli, Trisha, Al, Wanda and I decorated SOCBC with holiday spirit. Loli supplied much of the muscle. The brunch was fabulous thanks to our many volunteer club chefs who outdid themselves. It was a thrill to see the room full for the first time in what seems like forever. We had six ta-

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## SALLY PELMEAR AWARD

This year's winner of the Sally Pelmeare Award truly exemplifies Sally's camaraderie, energetic spirit, and passion



for the game. Maggie is not one many would think of as an NLM player because she chose to move up to the Open game very early in her bridge career. Long before she became the solid player that she is today, she jumped right into the mix and started learning from intense competition. Never timid, she asked more experienced

players to pair with her, and put in the effort to keep up. She is still a tournament or two away from securing the requisite gold for Life Master ranking.

Inquiring minds want to know, and Maggie has an inquiring mind when it comes to getting to know people. Nobody is a newcomer for very long once they meet her. She is always eager to ask, listen and make others feel appreciated and welcomed.

Maggie volunteers in so many capacities at the club. She served on the Board and is returning now as Secretary. She spent years on the Education Committee, co-chairs the Mentoring Program as well as the holiday party. Maggie pitches in wherever needed and does not wait around to be asked – if she sees a need she takes the initiative to fill it.

It is a pleasure to honor Maggie Briskie with the 2021 Sally Pelmeare Sportsmanship and Citizenship Award.

## JIM SENTER AWARD

Richard was our longest serving Board member including a year as Treasurer and five consecutive years as President. Being on the Board precluded his being recognized for the Jim Senter Award at that time, so he is long overdue as the 2021 honoree.



After his time on the Board, Richard continued serving as Treasurer on the District 22 Board. He kept actively involved in all aspects of running our club, and is committed

to doing whatever he can to maintain our strength and success.

His unparalleled volunteerism is not what earns him the award, but is certainly an inspiration to us all. In his soft-spoken manner, Richard brings out the best in others, making us want not just to show up, but to join in and be part of the team. Like the great Jim Senter for whom the award is named, Richard's enthusiasm for bridge and SOCBC is contagious.

Prior to the pandemic his monthly President's Message frequently reiterated the need to stay home if you had any signs of a cold or flu. Month after month we would reread that message, maybe roll our eyes and think, OK, we get it! We did not realize that his words were prophetic. He now has every right to say, "I told you so!" Instead, he is moving on, working to rebuild for the future of SOCBC.

We are fortunate to have Richard Picheny among us, and congratulate him as the Jim Senter Sportsmanship and Citizenship honoree for 2021.



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bles in the limited game, won by Anna Kreucher and Kathy Rocheleau. On the Open side, our Laguna Woods visitors Cathy Bauer and Gertrud McLachlan were the big winners among 21.5 tables. Following the game, Marilyn and Bob Cavanaugh catered a wonderful multi-course meal and pasta bar. The *piece de resistance* was our grand finale member-made dessert bar. The totality of the brunch, the Annual Meeting, bridge, and dinner resulted in a phenomenal experience, enjoyed by all.

We have exercised our option to renew our lease for an additional five-year term, while reducing the total square footage we are occupying by approximately a third and reducing our rent expense accordingly. Gale Senter and Joop Doorn with valuable input from Gary Waldron negotiated the new terms of the lease agreement.

The biggest known challenges we will face during the coming years are all related to increasing our table count in the face of the continuing Covid endemic. Education classes at all levels, but particularly those geared to attracting new players will be a cornerstone of our growth. We will develop a Membership Marketing Plan to help publicize our classes and games. Vaccination and mask requirements are safety factors that some see as an impediment to playing. We need to provide as safe an environment as possible while getting beyond the inconveniences related thereto. Bringing former players who have not been playing at the club back to SOCBC and increasing the frequency of play of those who have returned, are critical to our growth and survival.

Happy New Year! ❏



## FAREWELL TO FAUSTA VITALE



*We learned of the recent death of Fausta Vitale, one of the original Grandes Dames of the Bridge Club. Though she has not played in recent years, many of us remember her fondly as a fun and energetic friend who was a mainstay at our club for decades. Please [click here](#) for details of the planned Celebration of Life.*

### JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

- January 1  
CLOSED - HAPPY NEW YEAR
- January 10 - 15  
Club Championship  
Extra points include Friday Morning
- January 16  
Sunday Unit Game 12:30 PM
- January 19  
Mentoring 9:00 AM
- January 28  
Barometer Game 9:00 AM

### MANAGER'S CORNER

Gail Schneider

The New Year has started. Let's hope that everyone stays well and comes to play bridge at the club.

Please remember to register online to play. But just as important is to cancel if you are not coming. If it is a last-minute issue, please call the club and let the director know. The game is pre-set based on the online registrations. Please help our great directors to run a smooth and competent game for everyone's fun.

If the boards arrive at your table in the first round out of order, please call the director so that he can verify that the hands are correct and not mixed up.

Let's have a great and fun-filled year of face-to-face bridge.

### YOU CAN HELP

Last month we mentioned that we were starting some housekeeping projects at the club.

We did an inventory of the kitchen and found many items that we are no longer using. We have placed these items in the back corner next to the bulletin boards. If you see something you can use, please feel free to take it home.

As a reminder, please also take home your excess mugs, thermoses, jackets, sweaters, etc. If you have an item on the coatrack that you want to keep, please put your name on it or take it home. By the end of January, items left there will be given to charity. Thanks for your help!

### CLASS SCHEDULES

Cynthia Gallaway is our Education Chairperson. Contact her at [ccgallaway@gmail.com](mailto:ccgallaway@gmail.com) for all questions relating to courses and schedules. Refer to the website for our course timetables.

### MONDAY EVENINGS: 0-1500 MPs BRIDGE WITH SUSAN on BBO

Join us on Monday evenings on BBO for a fun and light-hearted game of bridge for players with 0-1500 MPs. The evening game starts at 6:25 PM, and we are done by 9:00 PM. If you need a partner let Susan or Joyce Potter know and she'll try to arrange one for you.

Need **SILVER** points? Then play in our Monday night BBO game on January 17th. Earn 2x the regular club points, and all points will be silver. The table fee for this STaC game will be \$7 per person. For more information, contact Susan Bristol at 949-300-4454 or [bristolsg949@gmail.com](mailto:bristolsg949@gmail.com)

## **TUESDAY MORNINGS: 0-20 MP SUPERVISED PLAY & LESSON - SHARON RIPPY**

**Tuesday Mornings 9:00 - 11:30 AM**

We welcome our newer students and players with fewer than 20 masterpoints to come join us in a super relaxed atmosphere. You will have the opportunity to ask all your questions about the bidding, the play, the defense. We are a friendly no stress group, and are here to help you wherever you want help. Earn masterpoints while you learn. Come with or without a partner, or we can give you one.

Contact Sharon Rippy [fleurpdlur@cox.net](mailto:fleurpdlur@cox.net) with any questions or for more details.



## **WEDNESDAY MORNINGS, January 19: MENTORING, WITH GARY WALDRON**

**SOCBC** will kick-off its mentoring program for 2022 on Wednesday, January 19 with a presentation by Gary Waldron on Negative Doubles.

After Gary's presentation, we will have hands to play that will give every participant a chance to practice what they have learned. Every table will have an experienced player to serve as mentor to help guide you through the hands and to answer all of the questions that you submit. This is hands down the best learning opportunity the Club presents and this is an important topic - Don't miss it.

To sign up for Mentoring, email [maggiebrisk@cox.net](mailto:maggiebrisk@cox.net).

**Fee: \$10.**

Let her know your approximate number of masterpoints, and the same for your partner if you plan to attend together. If not, let her know and she will arrange a partner for you.



## **WEDNESDAY MORNINGS, JANUARY 26 THRU FEBRUARY 16. DOUBLES, W/GARY WALDRON**

**Gary** will continue to help you develop your competitive bidding with further classes exploring other uses of the double and balancing bids.

The double is the most flexible bid in bridge. When used wisely, it presents surprising opportunities to describe your hand to partner without raising the level too high.

So you know about penalty doubles and take-out doubles and - after the Mentoring session - something about negative doubles.

What about support doubles? Power doubles? Maximal doubles? Balancing doubles? And more!

Learn about each of them and when to use them in these classes.

Every week Gary will present the material and will provide a handout and practice hands.

If you are interested in attending one, or all, of the classes, contact Gary at [lagunajhawk@icloud.com](mailto:lagunajhawk@icloud.com).

The fee is \$60 for the series of 4 classes, or \$15 individually.

Reserve your spot in advance by check payable to South Orange County Unit 538

Give to Director indicating for Wednesday series with Gary

Or mail to: SOCBC, 31461 Rancho Viejo Road Suite 205, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

### **THURSDAY MORNINGS, BEGINNING BRIDGE, STARTING JANUARY 13**

Beginners who are not already attending may still join us. We are working on the basics, getting a good solid understanding of the fundamentals.

The Winter Series restarts January 13th with the topic Hand Evaluation, Opening and Responding.

In this 5-week series we will learn about play of the hand, defense, and No Trump bidding

Cost: \$15 per class, or \$60 if prepaid for 5 weeks

If you wish to reserve your spot in advance, make check payable to South Orange County Unit 538, and give to the Director at the club, or mail to us indicating the **Thursday morning class** at:

SOCBC, 31461 Rancho Viejo Road Suite 205, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675



### **FRIDAY MORNINGS: FOR NEW PLAYERS (0-200 MPs)**

Come back to the club - meet wonderful new people, find new partnerships, and enhance your bridge skills, find out what you've been missing!

The Friday morning lessons and games are intended for players who have completed beginning bridge lessons, are coming back to the game, or for those players that would like a refresher. Half-hour review lessons are given before each game. We start at 9:00 AM sharp!

No partner needed. We guarantee you will play. This is a very fun and friendly group. The more you play, the more comfortable you will become with the bidding and the play of the hand.

Contact Susan Bristol at [bristolsg949@gmail.com](mailto:bristolsg949@gmail.com) or Trudi Hanscom at [t.hanscom@live.com](mailto:t.hanscom@live.com) for more information.

January teaching topics include:

- 1/7/2022 – Balancing. Are you in the balancing seat? Learn about balancing and when to bid and when to do a balancing double.
- 1/14/22 – How to read the results page. We get lots of questions about the results page and what it all means. Come and find out!
- 1/21/22 – Bridge Etiquette – Learn proper conduct at the table and in the game.
- 1/28/22 – **BAROMETER GAME!** Our popular teaching game returns this month. Come find out why it's one of our most popular events!

# THE VOLUNTEERS WHO MAKE IT ALL HAPPEN!

<b>OFFICERS</b> President Vice President Secretary Treasurer Membership Education, Lease, Insurance Special Projects	Richard Picheny Frank Grossman Maggie Briskie Trish Silverberg Susan Bristol Gale Senter John Jonas	<a href="mailto:rpicheny@gmail.com">rpicheny@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:fbgrossman@cox.net">fbgrossman@cox.net</a> <a href="mailto:maggiebrisk@cox.net">maggiebrisk@cox.net</a> <a href="mailto:trisha333@cox.net">trisha333@cox.net</a> <a href="mailto:bristolsg949@gmail.com">bristolsg949@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:galesenter@cox.net">galesenter@cox.net</a> <a href="mailto:jjlapher@gmail.com">jjlapher@gmail.com</a>
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