



THE CONSUMER

WITH ALL THE MBU NEWS FIT TO PRINT

www.mbuinc.org

Metropolitan Bridge Unit, Inc.

January 2021



President's Message

By Lynda J. Straker

Once again, this message finds us playing bridge virtually and incorporating every safe measure possible into our daily lives. Vaccines have arrived in our communities and, over time, the hope is we will be able to return to our beloved club games and tournaments. But for now, as we have throughout 2020, we continue to "tread water" and focus on staying healthy and improving our bridge game.

With that thought in mind, your Executive Board and Club Presidents met recently to consider whether to hold our 2021 "AAA" tournament from November 29 to December 2, 2021. A financially successful "AAA" is dependent upon (1) aggressive fundraising activities during the months preceding the "AAA" and (2) the enthusiastic attendance of MBU members and guests who make hotel reservations for the duration of the tournament. Since the pandemic will continue to be our primary concern for an uncertain number of months into the future, we will be unable to pursue fundraising activities or rely on high attendance at our event. Therefore, most members of our Executive Board voted to cancel our 2021 "AAA." We look forward to providing more information in the future about scheduling our 2022 "AAA" tournament tentatively from November 28, 2022 to December 1, 2022.

This holiday season was different for many of us who are accustomed to family gatherings and attending a string of holiday "C" games. Let's be comforted by remembering how meaningful our MBU relationships have been over the years and how satisfying it will be to enjoy "social closeness" one day. While still months away, let's focus on how good it will feel to meet with one another again, face to face, even mask to mask.

Watch for our very first virtual Annual Membership Meeting being scheduled for January 23, 2021 at 2 pm. The meeting will be held via Zoom and sign on information will be forwarded via email and through local Club Presidents.

Thank you to all who play in the BBO Benefit Game for the Community Bridge Home on Wednesdays at 11 am. Your participation in this game is essential to maintaining the Bridge Home.

Wishing all a healthy and safe new year!

2021 Forward

By Dolores Watson

As 2021 arrives and 2020 departs, life will go on with or without certainty. Staying connected with other bridge members is a serious priority as we continue to play online or do Zoom video conferences or telephone conferences and lastly, to read and enjoy publications provided by the organization.

Our 65th annual "AAA" tournament was not undertaken due to the pandemic, and regretfully, a Memorial Service for our Final Grand Slammers who passed in 2020 will not be conducted as social distancing has prohibited gatherings.

Please take time to remember our "bridge family" with a moment of silence, prayer, or song. Our Final Grand Slammers are featured (with photo, when available) in this edition. A memorial song recommended for this occasion is "You Know My Name," recorded and soulfully performed by Tasha Cobbs Leonard featuring Jimi Cravity. Click [here](#) to watch on YouTube. Lyrics for song provided on page 3.



COMING SOON

MBU ON BBO

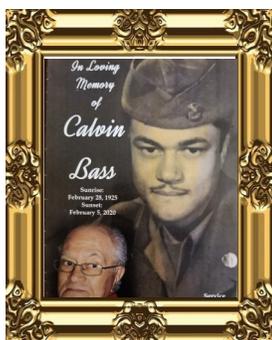
**AN OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY ON BBO
EXCLUSIVELY WITH MBU MEMBERS**

STAY TUNED FOR DETAILS



Final Grand Slammers

“Forever in Our Hearts”



Calvin Bass
Triangle DBC



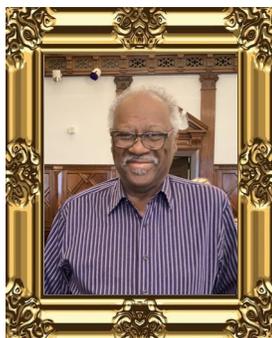
Enric Boxill
Twilight DBC



Sylvia Butler
Co-op City DBC



Deloris Crosse
Twilight DBC



Jerry Cunningham
Springfield DBC



Eva DeLeon
Bayview DBC



Harold Edwards
Bayview DBC



Marcus Francis
Cosmopolitan DBC



Dorothy Haime
Triangle DBC



Anderson Jones
DBC of Mount Vernon



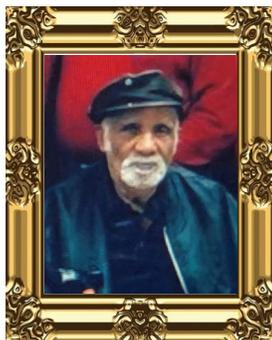
I. Calvin Morris
Jet Setter DBC



Jimmy Pelham
Westbury DBC



June Robinson
Springfield DBC



William Russell
Cosmopolitan DBC



Louise Shaw
DBC of Mount Vernon



Shirley Stokeley
Jet Setter DBC



Harvey Stone
Cosmopolitan DBC



Viola Waterman
Jet Setter DBC



Sylvia Yearwood
Jet Setter DBC



You Know My Name

He knows my name. He knows my name.
He knows my name. Yes He knows my name
And oh how He walks with me.
Yes oh how He talks with me.
And oh how He tells me. That I am His own

You know my name. You know my name.
You know my name. You know my name.
And oh how You comfort me.
And oh how You console me.
Yet it still amazes me. That I am Your friend.

So now, I pour out My heart to You.
Here in Your presence, I am made new.
So now, I pour out My heart to You.
Here in Your presence, I am made new.

And You know my name. And You know my name.
You know my name. You know my name.
And oh how You walk with me. Oh how You talk with me.
Oh how You tell me That I am Your own.

God, You know me. So I trust You in my life, yeah.
No fire can burn me. No battle can turn me.
No mountain can stop me. 'Cause You hold my hand
Now I'm walking in Your victory.
'Cause Your power is within me.
No giant can defeat me. 'Cause You hold my hand.
No fire can burn me. No battle can turn me.
No mountain can stop me. 'Cause You hold my hand.
Now I'm walking in Your victory.
'Cause Your power is within me.
No giant can defeat me. 'Cause You hold my hand.
No fire can burn me. No battle can turn me.
No mountain can stop me. 'Cause You hold my hand.
Now I'm walking in Your victory.
'Cause Your power is within me.
No giant can defeat me. 'Cause You hold my hand...

You hold my hand (You hold my hand)
I don't have to be afraid, no (You hold my hand)
I don't have to be afraid, no (You hold my hand)
I don't have to be afraid (You hold my hand)
You hold my hand (You hold my hand)
You hold my hand (You hold my hand)
I'm so in love with You (You hold my hand)
I'm so in love with You (You hold my hand)
You hold my hand (You hold my hand)
Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh oh-oh-oh (You hold my hand)
You hold my hand (You hold my hand)
You hold my hand (You hold my hand)

You know my name. You know my name.
You know my name. You know my name.
And oh how You walk with me.
And oh how You talk with me.
Oh how You tell me. That I am Your own.

Songwriters: Natasha Tameika Cobbs Leonard, Brenton Brown
Publisher: Lyrics © CAPITOL CHRISTIAN MUSIC GROUP



Bayview DBC

By Valerie Brooks

Happy new year, everyone!

We have been through a very tough year and still have a way to go. But we are positive thinkers because we are rooted in God, so we believe him when he says:

"Stay strong. I am your strength. I see what you are dealing with and I will bring you through. Trust me through each storm. I have never left you and I won't leave you now. Better days are coming. Trust me."

Wishing our MBU family continued health, happiness, peace, and prosperity in 2021.

Co-op City DBC

By Lorelei Blackman

Greetings to one and all. The members of the Co-op City Duplicate Bridge Club wish you and your families the very best this holiday season and for the new year.

We are happy to report that Georgianna Rodriguez and Clarence Polite are home safe and sound after their surgeries.

We send our condolences to Genesis Washington, death of his wife; Susie Polite, death of her mother; and Lori Blackman, death of her brother. We sadly are reminded that we will no longer share moments at the bridge table with our own Sylvia Butler who also recently passed away.

Cheers and congratulations to our new director, Valerie Smith, on completing her director training classes.

Brooklynites DBC

By Jane Atlas

We are eagerly awaiting our return to the bridge tables and the opportunity to renew friendships. Belated happy birthday to Connie Freeman who celebrated her special day in November.

A healthy and happy new year to all. Stay safe and be well.

Cosmopolitan DBC

By Steven Bond

As the year draws to a close, we want to wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year, even if they are celebrated in an abbreviated manner. I know we all look forward to a better 2021.

We want to congratulate all those who are earning "big" points playing bridge online. Looking forward, we congratulate those celebrating birthdays in January, Bob Diskin; February, Barbara Wingate; and March, Therese Hamilton.

Hopefully, we will see each other again at the tables sometime in 2021. We hope everyone will continue to stay safe and healthy.

Welcome New Members!

Brooklyn is in the house! Lois Francis, president of Brooklynites Duplicate Bridge Club, is pleased to officially introduce four new players to the ABA/MBU bridge family.



Monique Fontaine



Connie Freeman



Cheri Lightfoot



Sheree Moore

Ms. Francis taught beginner bridge online via Zoom this summer and for all who completed the six-week program a certificate was awarded. We hope our new members will study and play regularly (online for now) and share in the fascinating world of duplicate bridge which has many rewarding experiences awaiting them. Welcome and good luck to all.

Jet Setter DBC

By Beverly Sessions-Kelly

Jet Setters hope you all had a great Christmas and a happy new year. Many of us may not have spent the holiday season as we wished, but we were at least safe. As we enter 2021, we anticipate and hope that we will see each other face to face at the bridge tables.

We hope that everyone is doing okay. Stay safe, wear your mask, wash your hands, and keep your distance.

Miss you all.



DBC of Mount Vernon

By Rita Thompson

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic shutdown, President Charles Guest and others strived to keep members connected. Many play bridge daily on BBO and say the online games have been a welcome diversion during the isolation of the past months.

Although school was shut down due to the pandemic and funds were limited, scholarship chair Dr. Gloria Hobbs recommended, and club president Charles Guest approved, a budget of \$400 for scholarships. After reviewing grade transcripts, the scholarship committee awarded \$100 each to four students from the prior year.

The club had a membership meeting via Zoom in November where 23 members logged in. It was apparent many were pleased to see faces they had not seen in many months and Charles reported a few called him after the meeting to tell him so.

Dr. Hobbs commended Charles on the superb job he is doing keeping the club engaged during this devastating pandemic, and commended the club's secretary, Rita Thompson, on the attractive and professional email presentations.

We are exploring returning to the Doles Center when club games resume. Doing so will enable us to begin playing earlier. The Doles has ample parking and is accessible by Access-a-Ride.

While our members have adapted to the challenges presented by the pandemic, all look forward to resuming bridge games the "old fashioned" way later this year.

Springfield DBC

By Eliza Brann

We wish our bridge family a blessed Christmas and look forward to seeing everyone face to face during 2021. May we all enjoy a healthy and prosperous new year.

Happy birthday to Daisy Carew on January 10 and Marcia Demos on January 28. May you both have many more.

Please remember Sandra Surita with a phone call or card as she continues her recovery from knee surgery.

Triangle DBC

By Bernice Williams

Greetings fellow bridge lovers. We are trying and coping in these horrific times.

Good news: Wendy Hillard, daughter of Gwen Hillard, was inducted in November as one of the power women of New York as an olympian/founder of Hillard Gymnastics Foundation.

St. Nicholas Senior Center, which is Triangle's home base, made arrangements for members to receive turkey and masks in time for Thanksgiving. The gesture was welcomed and appreciated by all.

Gwen Leverett is keeping her members as informed as can be via Zoom and telephone conferences.

Following is a list of congratulations for birthdays: On December 23, Lorraine Cleaton; new year's baby Ellie Wright on December 31. In January on the 15th we have Dorothy Hamilton, and before her on the 7th we have Alice Butler; Mayme Frazier is on the 20th and ending with Minnie Goka on the 27th. In February we have a champion with John Washington on the 25th; and last, but not least, our point coordinator Greg Morrison on the 3rd of March.

Hope all the holidays were wonderful and we continue to enjoy health and wealth in the coming year.

Twilight DBC

By Jesse Palmer

Happy new year! I am sure everyone is glad that 2020 is over and hoping 2021 will be a better year. COVID-19 should soon be under control and we should be playing in our regular spot during 2021.

Twilight members have been playing online and our regular meetings were held on Zoom. Our annual Christmas party was held on December 17.

Happy birthday to Chris Blount and Betty Ball (January), Eleanor Waymer, E. Frances Reid and Robert Patterson (February). Belated happy birthday to Clara Kearse, who celebrated her day in November.

Hope to play with you soon!



Westbury DBC

By Patricia Binyard

Westbury sends out warm greetings and love to our MBU community.

When looking back over the past year, we must be thankful for all our good fortunes. Thankful to have food and shelter; thankful to have our bridge family and friends; thankful to see another year; and thankful that this crippling Covid-19 virus will soon be under control. Cheers to the end of 2020 and wishing us all good things in 2021.

Continue to stay safe, and please continue to keep Wilma Alexander and Mayer Wiesen in your prayers.

**PLAY BRIDGE
WITH THE MBU ON BBO**

GETTING STARTED

We miss you at the bridge table and hope you and your family are staying safe.

The MBU is offering you the opportunity to play in the comfort of your own home exclusively with your friends in the MBU. Don't miss this opportunity to play in a nurturing and friendly environment with people you have been playing with for years.

New to BBO? Visit www.acbl.org/bbotutorials/ for instructional videos. The first video is very useful in helping players set up a free BBO membership account.

If you require assistance with BBO set up, you may contact:

Valerie Brooks 718-219-2512
Janice McBean 516-610-7602
Lynda Straker 516-610-7601
Beverly Sessions-Kelly 718-949-1810



The Director's Corner

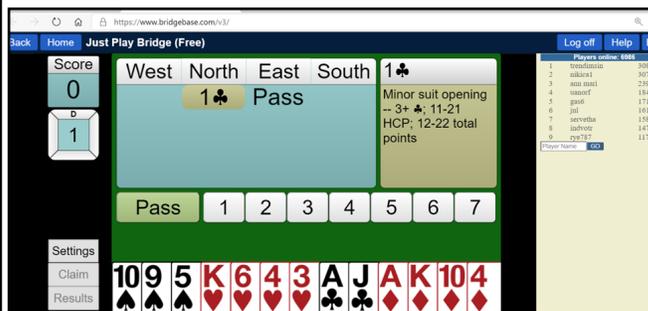
By Annetta Wallace

PLAYING WITH THE ROBOTS ON BBO

To really enjoy your game and do well, you and your robot partner must "speak" the same language. The robots on BBO use a basic 2/1 bidding system. (We will discuss that in future articles.)

Here is a quick tip to help you get started:

You can find out the meaning of any bid by clicking on that bid in the bidding diagram.



Also, when it is your turn to bid, moving your mouse over the buttons for the various possible bids will display an explanation (as your robot partner will understand it) of the bid you are considering.



Reading these explanations carefully before you bid will help you to avoid misunderstandings and disasters with your robot partner.



Bridge in Black and White

A look across the bridge world's racial divide

By Chip Dombrowski

Bridge originated at a time when racial segregation was widespread in the United States. The early bridge organizations that would later merge to form the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) excluded African Americans from their tournaments, and at least five southern states banned interracial card play.

In 1932, a group of 20 Black bridge players founded their own organization, the American Bridge Association. When the ACBL began in 1937, it maintained the racist policies of its predecessors. It wasn't until the Civil Rights Act passed in 1964 that North American Bridge Championships (NABC) were opened to all players, and three years later, the ACBL finally adopted a nondiscrimination policy.

By that time, though, the two organizations had developed infrastructure over their 35-year history of separation that would continue propelling them along separate paths. Players remained loyal to their local club and the organization to which it belonged. In the mostly segregated bridge world, little has changed in 53 years.

Unice Patton of Bloomington, Illinois is the ABA's liaison to the ACBL, chairing a committee that facilitates relations and promotes activities between the two organizations. Unlike most ABA members, Patton began her bridge career in the ACBL where she befriended Georgia Heth, one of the top players in the area and currently the ACBL president, and asked her to be her mentor.

Heth said they had much in common as professional women about the same age. It was Heth who took Patton to an ABA tournament for the first time inviting her to play in the women's pairs at ABA's 2004 Summer National in Indianapolis. "I had never heard of the ABA," Patton said. Though Heth found the atmosphere very friendly ("better on average than the ACBL"), Patton didn't feel warmly welcomed and continued playing exclusively in the ACBL for another 11 years.

At the 2015 Summer NABC in Chicago, Patton was encouraged to take another look at the ABA and decided to attend their tournament that fall in Atlantic City. This time, she found the welcome warm and joined immediately. "In the ABA, I have developed special relationships that I treasure," Patton said. "The tournaments tend to be more relaxed and less structured. We look forward to seeing each other and interacting socially and at the bridge table. Because we share many of the same experiences and backgrounds, I feel at home and comfortable."

Russ Jones, Heth's predecessor as ACBL president, is Patton's counterpart as the ACBL's liaison to the ABA. Jones, too, appreciates the ABA's homey atmosphere. "It just seemed a much more friendly environment than ours. I took some people from my club and they said, 'Those are the friendliest people I ever met!'"

Patton identified four reasons the racial divide persists in bridge: the lack of incentive for the two organizations to come together; the disparity between the two systems of masterpoints; the lingering effects of racism; and the loyalty members feel to the organization they are familiar with.

Jones believes those issues aren't insurmountable. Shrinking membership is changing the game and will continue to provide greater incentive to cooperate, he says. As for masterpoints, conversion is not a mystery. ABA games are scored using ACBLscore, which already applies the ACBL masterpoint formula. ABA directors then apply a conversion factor to determine the number of ABA points to award, approximately triple the ACBL number.

Since meeting with ABA officials at their 2019 national, Jones has been working on plans for a closer relationship between the two organizations. The coronavirus sidelined those plans, but when it's over, he hopes to pick up where they left off. Jones' vision for the future includes: joint nationals held consecutively at the same venue, with a crossover flighted teams competition like the GNT; publishing the ABA's quarterly newsletter as an insert in the Bridge Bulletin, with masterpoint listings for both organizations available on the back cover; and, ultimately, joint membership. He notes it would require no rule changes to designate the ABA as an ACBL club and allow it to award ACBL black points in all its events. It would be important to ABA members to keep their own masterpoint races and system of rankings, Jones said. "We need to be respectful of their identity and integrate the best way possible." For now, the only dual memberships belong to players like Patton, willing to pay two sets of dues.

Excerpt from ACBL *Bridge Bulletin*, November 2020



By Ruth M. Shuler

"HAPPY NEW YEAR BRIDGE FAMILY"

The Officers and Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to say "thank you" to the many who have sent donations during these challenging times. Your donations have helped keep the Community Bridge Home afloat.

Due to the unprecedented impact of the current global pandemic, the Community Bridge Home is facing unexpected new challenges and has had to adapt to keep the Bridge Home up and running. These extraordinary times have called for extraordinary measures.

As we begin 2021, we find the pandemic is still impacting our everyday life. So, for the foreseeable future, we must focus on how to juggle all facets of this "new reality" making the process of re-opening less straight forward than previously anticipated. As we adapt to these circumstances, we genuinely appreciate your continued financial support.

Thank you to all who are participating in the weekly ABA/BBO online game benefiting the Community Bridge Home. Just a reminder, this benefit game is held every Wednesday at 11 am.



Get Well Wishes

Bayview
Rudy Cummings
Phyllis Jones

Mount Vernon
Dr. Gloria Hobbs



Springfield
Sandra Surita

Westbury
Wilma Alexander
Mayer Wiesen



Condolences

Co-op City

Genesis Washington, on the loss of his wife

Jet Setter

*Lemuel Copeland, on the loss of his brother
Millicent Jamison on the loss of her son
Family of I. Calvin Morris
Family of Shirley Stokely
Family of Sylvia Yearwood*

Triangle

Family of Dorothy Haime

Twilight

*Betty Ball, on the loss of her brother
Family of Enric Boxill
Jesse Palmer, on the loss of his son*



JANUARY

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|---|---|
| BAYVIEW
Mattie McCollum
Sylvia Simmons
Louise Wilson | MOUNT VERNON
LaChonne DeVeaux |
| BROOKLYNITES
Inez Beaty
Terence Drayton
Vanessa Muhammad-Khan
Elijah Seabrook
Denise Whethers | SPRINGFIELD
Daisy Carew
Marcia Demos |
| CO-OP CITY
Lorelei Blackman | TRIANGLE
Alice Butler
Mayme Frazier
Minnie Goka
Dorothy Hamilton |
| COSMO
Bob Diskin | TWILIGHT
Chris Blount
Betty Ball |
| | WESTBURY
Wilma Alexander |

FEBRUARY

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|---|--|
| BAYVIEW
Henry Dennis | MOUNT VERNON
Beryl Battle
Georgina Correa
Dr. Parvez Mehta
Clarence Schmidt |
| BROOKLYNITES
John Clark
Monique Fountaine
Barry Jamison
Selina McNeil | TRIANGLE
John Washington |
| CO-OP CITY
Valerie Smith | TWILIGHT
Robert Patterson
E. Frances Reid
Eleanor Waymer |
| COSMO
Barbara Wingate | WESTBURY
Kevin Downtin
Thomas Holloway |
| JET SETTER
Harry Gaines
Geraldine Granger
Beverly Sessions-Kelly
Fannie Smiths | |

MARCH

- | | |
|---|---|
| BAYVIEW
Willie Fuchs | JET SETTER
Lemuel Copeland
Minnie Hagans
Traci Stukes |
| BROOKLYNITES
John Hopkins
Mary A. Lewis
Cheri Lightfoot
Sheree Moore | MOUNT VERNON
Dr. Ann Brandwein
Dolores Thompson |
| COSMO
Therese Hamilton | TRIANGLE
Greg Morrison |
| | WESTBURY
Joan Murray |



2021 HERMAN HUFF SCHOLARSHIP

Each year, the Metropolitan Bridge Unit awards \$500 grants to two undergraduate students. The minimum eligibility requirement is having completed at least three semesters of their continuing education towards a four-year degree by June 2021. Students who meet this requirement can request an application from Valerie Brooks at 718.219.2512 or mbuscholar@gmail.com.

Completed applications are due by July 15, 2021. Award recipients will be notified by August 1, 2021.



**PLAY TO SUPPORT THE
COMMUNITY BRIDGE HOME
EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 11 AM**



WWW.BRIDGEBASE.COM



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**Submissions for the
April 2021 issue
are due March 15**

Thank you to our reporters.

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