

HBC President's Newsletter

Our Mission: The Club with a Heart

January 2026



Hello, Hartford Bridge Club Members! I am David Brandwein, your president for the coming year. A little about me... I first learned how to play bridge while in my high school chess club in Norwalk, CT, where I grew up. Our teacher/advisor offered to teach us bridge and we even joined a small Fairfield County high school duplicate bridge Swiss tournament! I played a little – yes, only a little – in college and before kids but then gave it up for almost 40 years while working and raising a family.

When I retired, I was looking for some things to do. (I was an environmental engineer and attorney, first for USEPA in Washington, DC, then for a Hartford-based consulting firm before my partners and I started our own environmental management consulting company, headquartered in Bloomfield, which we ran for 20+ years before selling it). Friends Bernie and Lea Selig told me about HBC. I started playing with Bernie every Friday afternoon, and then added Monday afternoons, and now the occasional weekday mornings and Sunday Swiss or Hi/Low with other partners. I'm a few gold points short of Life Master, which I hope to achieve in the coming year.

My wife – who does not play bridge (or any other card game!) – and I have lived in West Hartford since 1979, where we raised two children, both of whom now live in Brooklyn, NY. We have one grandson, and this year we celebrate our 50th anniversary.

Health and Welfare

Just a few reminders:

- **Do not come to play if you're feeling ill or showing any signs of illness.**
- If a player requests that masks be worn at his or her table, then everyone will be required to wear a mask while at that table. Masks will not be required at other times. Everyone should be respectful of other players' decisions to wear a mask or to ask others to wear a mask at their table. Masks will be available at the club for those who forget theirs.
- If you are coughing, please wear a mask even if the underlying reason is not illness but asthma or a chronic cough.

Member News

Milestones

The following members have achieved advanced Life Master rank since our Annual Meeting. Congratulations on another milestone!

- Bronze Life Master: Riva Lewinter
- Silver Life Master: Joe Peled, Nancy Calderbank, Renee Janow



And we were delighted that Ida Cohen celebrated her 100th birthday party at HBC in November!

Generous Donations (as of 1/15/2026)

Since the Annual Meeting, the following members made donations to the Club.

Marianne Hope	Barry Zitser
Pariser Photography	Hal & Jan Moskowitz
Emily Lessner	Peter Katz
Peter Marcus	Diane Tracy

Buz Kohn	Rob Stillman
Roberta Avery	Elizabeth Wingfield and Betty Doran
Deborah Walsh	David and Ann Brandwein
Monica Fay	Rachel Brown
Muriel Lessner	David Goldberg and Deborah Prince
Sue Ann Collins	Gene and JoSue Coppa
Joanne Lloyd	

In addition, more than \$1000 was donated to the Club in memory of Joel Krug.

In Memoriam

- **Betty Kerber:** Betty's family is planning a memorial lunch in the spring and they would love to have HBC members attend. Betty's niece will be sure to provide us with specific information once something more definitive is scheduled.
- **Robert Gruskay**

Club News

New Furnishings Fund

As announced at the Annual Meeting, the Club is looking to replace most of its chairs and some tables in the coming year. (Our current chairs have served us incredibly well, but the light grey ones are now about 35 years old with the black ones somewhat newer.) We have started a **New Furnishings Fund** and hope to raise \$18-\$20,000. We have had some very generous early donations and have already raised \$12,000. Please help us reach our goal this year by making a donation and designating it specifically to the New Furnishings Fund. We appreciate every contribution!

New Game and Lessons

- The new Wednesday afternoon 0-1500 game, effective January 14, has started out very well with seven tables each in its first two sessions. We are happy to welcome the many new or returning players from the West Hartford Bridge Club.

- Check the bulletin board or the website for information on lessons, etc. We are fortunate to have several people offering a variety of instruction.

New Appliances -- and a Price Change

- Since the fall, we have a new refrigerator (with automatic ice maker!) and a new microwave.
- We raised the cost of soda cans to \$1 because they cost us more than the 50 cents previously charged.

New I/N Tournament

We will hold our now semi-annual I/N Sectional again on Sunday, May 3. These have been very successful, drawing players from throughout CT, as well as some from MA, RI and NY.

Stat of the Month

HBC has more than 300 dues-paying members, is ranked 25th in the United States by the ACBL (based on the number of tables played per year) *and* is the oldest continuously operating bridge club in North America (the club, not the members).

The breakdown of members by MP totals as of 1/15/2026 is

0-100 MPs	88
101-500 MPs	85
501-1000 MPs	51
1001-1500 MPs	21
1501 and above	<u>60</u>
Total	305

Board News

- The Board increased the non-member table fee from \$14 to \$15.

- We voted to begin individual Life Master parties again, leaving it to each new Life Master to pick his or her party date. We're hoping to begin them shortly, probably in the spring.
- The Club received its first ever donation of stock – a very generous anonymous donation – and has therefore opened a Fidelity brokerage account. We can now accept donations of stocks, mutual funds, and related securities.

Bridge Etiquette

Please do not discuss boards just played while at the table! It's tough for neighboring tables to ignore table talk about slams made or missed, point counts and distributions, etc.

A common director pet peeve is when players who are on lead or about to be the dummy take time to enter the contract into the Bridgemate or into their convention card before they lead or lay down dummy. It's bad table manners and it slows down the game. The standard response directors get when they mention it is "if I don't enter the contract right away, I'll forget it." Really? Someone at the table (the declarer maybe??) will remember the contract! And you can always ask. Please remember to lead face down and ask if there are any questions before entering the contract. Dummy also should lay down their cards before entering the contract into the Bridgemate or their convention card. If everyone followed this etiquette rule, it would speed games along.

Call for Volunteers

As we all know, we are a member-owned and operated club. We have many members who volunteer their time and skills to keep us running. We always can use more volunteers. We currently have several committees looking for members. If you are interested, let Donna or me know.

- **Publicity Committee:** to promote the club via word of mouth, social media, flyers and other means. Members are needed for specific towns to put up flyers, etc.

- **Policy Committee:** to review all aspects of club governance, including the by-laws and club policies, to identify opportunities for improvement.
- **Facilities Committee:** to evaluate and act on suggestions to improve the appearance or utility of the club facility, including vendor oversight and long-term planning.
- **Technology Committee:** While we do not have an information technology committee per se, we do need help updating our database and looking at a new proposed database. *Any database or CS folks out there?*

We Want Your Feedback

Members are always invited to offer comments, questions or suggestions for the board as well as suggestions for future newsletter topics. Are there topics you would like lessons on? Send your ideas to Donna Feir at hartfordclub@sbcglobal.net or to me at dbrandwein@gmail.com. Help keep our club a great place to play bridge with your friends and the greater bridge community.

Club Officers

President



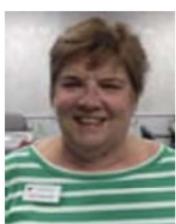
David Brandwein

Vice-President



Lori Leopold

Secretary



Ann Lohrand

Treasurer



Rick Thibodeau

Club Manager



Donna Feir

[email Donna](#)

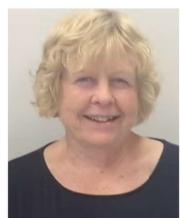
Trustees



Annmarie Hughes



Ben Levine



Linda Starr



John Lloyd



Ausra Geaski



Deborah Prince