

TABLE TALK

Unit 361
January 2026



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Happy New Year Bridge Aficionados, we have a great slate of tournaments lined up for you! However, a combination of events has resulted in moving toward larger and more expensive venues and that results in a projected net income loss for 2026 (see more on the next page). We will use residual cash assets to mitigate this budget shortfall, and we will keep our player entry fees to \$14/session (\$16/session for the Rocky Mountain Regional). Our slate of tournaments is:

- ❖ Jan Sectional – Jan 9-11 @ Jeffco Fairgrounds
- ❖ Mar Sectional – Mar 13-15 @ Z Summit
- ❖ Apr I/N Sectional – Apr 9-11 @ Denver Metro Bridge Studio
- ❖ May Sectional – May 19-25 @ Renaissance Hotel
- ❖ Jul I/N Regional – Jul 24-26 @ Iliff School (1st Floor)
- ❖ Jul Sectional – Jul 24-26 @ Iliff School (2nd Floor)
- ❖ Sep I/N Sectional – Sep 19-20 @ Denver Metro Bridge Studio
- ❖ Nov Sectional – Nov 6-8 @ Z Summit

We hope to see many of our Bridge enthusiasts at the above tournaments. A nice thing about our new Tournament sites, is the abundance of FREE PARKING. So, SAVE-the-DATES are in order—and plan on attending our full array of Tournament Bridge events in 2026!



BRIDGE TEACHING LIBRARY: Many players are discovering how fun and helpful the Bridge Teaching Library can be! Elly Larson, owner of the Denver Metro Bridge Club, has loaned us a space in her smaller room at her club. It's become a popular stop for those who want to sharpen their skills between games. All Unit 361 players can check out a set of boards, practice with their partners, and then return every couple of weeks to swap them for a new challenge. Whether you're working on defense, bidding, or declarer play, the Bridge Teaching Library is a relaxed, supportive way to keep learning--at your own pace and on your own time. On Wednesday mornings there is a librarian there to assist you and answer questions. It doesn't matter where the player normally plays, whether at the Denver Tech Center Club, Arvada Club or other clubs in the Denver area, so please let your players know they can review the learning hands available for check out if they visit Denver Metro location.



MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENT: The 5/5/5 Program supports member retention by rewarding units that successfully renew lapsed memberships with a share of collected membership fees. It's been very successful, as seen by our increase of 15% in our membership. The received money is modest, but we use it to offset tournament costs. The membership chair assigns a list of lapsed members for each board member to contact, ensuring full board participation in this effort.



SAM'S GAME IS BACK: We encourage our local clubs to offer a SAM's Game at their club. The Sam's Game is a tribute to Sam Stoxen, a long-term Denver Tournament Director, and it's an opportunity for our seasoned players (1,000 or more points) to play with and mentor our junior players to share their team game knowledge and strategies; think of it as a Pro Am Team Game! Check with your local club for details.



TOURNAMENT & LOCATION DETAILS: You may be wondering what's going on with our Sectionals. Why are they not at the Iliff School of Theology? Why sometimes at Summit, sometimes at Jeffco? Where will they be after January 2026? Why are some of them not on our usual weekends. And even if you're not wondering, here's the story.

- ❖ Well, we have been growing our Sectional tournament table counts and were beginning to reach the limit of what Iliff could accommodate. Then they leased part of the smaller room upstairs and are building out an office, which definitely meant they could no longer hold us all, at least not in January, March and November. So, starting in late June 2025 we scrambled to find new and familiar locations, looking all over the Denver Metro area. Basically, what we could find (and afford without losing too much money) boiled down to Jefferson County Fairgrounds and Z New Summit Event Center. With Iliff as an option for July because we hold the NLM Regional downstairs.
- ❖ We now have our 2026 tournaments scheduled and their locations are indicated in the beginning of this Table Talk. We are still working on locations for 2027.
- ❖ If you've been looking online for our 2026 tournaments, you may have noticed a couple of unusual dates. We decided to move two of them to avoid conflict with NABCs. We moved March 2026 to the 13th – 15th, one week later than usual, and July 2026 to the 24th – 26th, two weeks later than usual. As future NABC dates get finalized, we will continue to ensure our Sectionals don't conflict with them. So far, our dates look good through July 2028 – yes, we have sanctions for our tournaments through 2028!
- ❖ Please feel free to contact me with any questions. *Jay Silberberg, Sectional Tournament Chair*

Thanks to everyone who attended the November Sectional—we had the highest turnout since COVID!



BUDGET CUTS: Tough budget cuts were made to mitigate the size of our net income loss. **Fri/Sat Lunch Options:** Starting with our March Sectional our optional lunch prices will go from \$5 to \$10, and we will keep our Sunday Lunch price to \$10. The **Unit Appreciation Game** has been moved this to a biennial event with a Pot Luck option. **General Trimming:** Small trims everywhere to keep the shortfall < \$10,000.



ACBL GUEST MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM: Offers free membership for new players to earn master points, access online games and bridge resources, and track their progress. Players now remain guest members until they reach 20 master points and may qualify for a discounted first-year membership when they join. The newly implemented Sapphire Program rewards players with digital sapphires for **learning, participating and connecting** milestones—even as guest members—and provides a fun way to recognize progress and engagement.

LEARN

- Take a bridge class at an NABC
- Complete an ACBL intro to bridge class
- Participate in a better bridge class
- Attend a learn bridge in a day® at an NABC

PLAY

- Play in your first club game
- Play your first online game
- Win your first battle in BridgeWar™
- Bid and make your first slam

CONNECT

- Join as an ACBL Guest Member
- Convert to Full Membership
- Refer a friend to the Sapphire Program
- Attend a tournament

For more information: go to <https://www.acbl.org/sapphires/>.



2026 BOARD NEWS: We had the Unit Board of Directors election on November 1. We'd like to thank **Greg Kempf** and **Kevin Stansbury** for their service and welcome duly-elected **Jennifer O'Neill**. At the November Board Meeting, **Gary Weiss** was appointed to complete the last year of Greg Kempf's term. Each board member takes on area chairmanships and executive roles.

-----UNIT 361 BOARD OF DIRECTORS-----

-----2026-----

Rita Simas	President	720-296-5303	u361.rita@gmail.com
Don Boyarsky	Vice President, Regional Co-Chair	303-406-1280	don@devere.net
Judith Repp	Treasurer	610-659-1899	repparch@mac.com
Susan Marshall	Secretary, Communications Chair	970-819-0901	susankmarshall51@gmail.com
Kathy McMahan	IN Tournaments Chair, Education Chair	303-895-9426	kathybridgesmcmahan@gmail.com
Wally Erbes	Hospitality Chair	303-748-5553	wapare@yahoo.com
Jay Silberberg	Sectional Tournaments Chair, Events Committee Chair	303-746-2484	JAY071652@msn.com
Gale Kahn	Membership Chair, Marketing Chair	303 915-6463	gsk715@gmail.com
Jennifer O'Neill	Mentoring Chair, Liaison to D17 and Volunteer Coordinators, Special Projects Lead	303-741-0369	jjo4501@gmail.com
Gary Weiss	Supplies Chair, Caddy Master	402 880-9559	Garyweiss1955@gmail.com

-----APPOINTIVE COMMITTEES 2026-----

Partnerships and Legal Advisor	Susan Grauer	303-807-8688	susangrauer@gmail.com
Webmaster	Margaret Devere	303-758-3939	margaret@devere.net

-----DISTRICT 17 BOARD REPRESENTATIVES 2026-----

District 17 Representative	Jennifer O'Neill	303-741-0369	jjo4501@gmail.com
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-----WEBSITES-----

Denver Unit 361	www.denverbridge.org
District 17	www.d17acbl.org
ACBL	www.acbl.org

Visit our website and find out useful facts & figures.

When in doubt, you can find your answer on the UNIT 361 WEBSITE: www.denverbridge.org