

Welcome to Unit 559, Pasadena-San Gabriel Day at the D23 July 24 Regional. All 360 of our members hope this will be an enjoyable day of bridge and friendship for you and your partners. The D23 Board and the Hilton have joined up to serve your needs for the week. Unit 559 will add a little to this day in the way of a slice of history.

The earliest record we have of a Pasadena bridge "Unit" was back in 1941. In those days on the West Coast there was no ACBL. What existed from 1936 till 1956 was the Pacific Bridge League, organized and managed by Tom Stoddard. The folks in New York who organized the eastern half of the country into 9 Districts did recognize that there were bridge players west of the Mississippi, but only reluctantly. When groups of 100 or more players got together and wanted to be recognized by the MasterPoint controllers in New York, they were called a "committee" and were authorized to run masterpoint games – once a month at first. As a group, we were called the "Western Division". Most Units today originated as Committees before the merger mentioned below.

In 1941, the "Chair" of the Pasadena Committee was a lady named Minna Hertell. We don't know the rest of her group, but thank her for that initial organization of bridge in our area.

The next lady to be recognized by our group was Mrs Carolyn Whitehead, who became our first "Life Master" in December 1948. Our 2nd was Barry Crane in 1951. Please see their pictures on the wall display for Unit 559 today.

In 1956, the PBL was incorporated into the ABL to form ACBL. Pasadena is proud to have been one of the original 15 Units in Los Angeles to have been given charters at that time and we have operated ever since. Our sister Units in 1956 were Eagle Rock, Unit 573, and the San Gabriel Valley, Unit 562. By 1975, all 3 had been merged into the present Unit 559, Pasadena-San Gabriel.

Our first official Unit President in 1956 was Diana Peterson. In 2024, that office is filled by Lisa Walker. We thank all those folks who have served in between as members of our Board of Directors.

The 1st bridge club in our area was opened in 1928 by Belle Bonner on Yosemite Dr in Eagle Rock. It operated for 50 years until closing in 1979. Their last Director was Jeanne Trefzger. See Dec 79 on our wall display! We have had 76 different clubs in our area over the years. 2nd longest in operation was the recently closed Arcadia Bridge Club, opened by Art & Diane Gulbrandson in 1973. Today, the Pasadena Bridge Club, operated by Morris Jones and Zach Vedro, has open games M-Sa, several novice games, with further expansion possible. Stay tuned.

Our very popular Sectional at LaSalle High School will resume our end-of-July time slot in 2025. This year's venue will be the Pasadena Bridge Club and we hope you pick up a flyer fast since it is coming up in a couple of weeks.

Since Carolyn and Barry started our LM list, fast forward to 2024 and we have added another 694 LMs to our list. More than 500 are shown on our wall display and we are still working to find those other 190 pictures of our players!

Again, please enjoy the day. We have fireworks tonite!!..... Unit 559.