

Nevada County Newcomers Club

November 2020

"Thanksgiving is a time to give, a time to love, and a time to reflect on the things that matter most in life."

~ Danielle Duckery

President's Message

For many of us, Thanksgiving will be a very different celebration this year as the pandemic continues to disrupt our lives. Families and friends who would normally be joining you at your home may decide that it is not wise to travel at this time, even though it was a difficult decision to make. On the other hand, your traditional Thanksgiving may have included a journey in order to be with your family at this special time of the year. Whatever the decisions you make, I hope you will have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

I am very disappointed to report that we will not be able to enjoy our usual Christmas luncheon this year. I had hoped by the time December came along things would have improved as far as the spread of the virus is concerned. However, we have been informed by the Alta Sierra Country Club that they will not consider opening for events until the new year. Even then, it cannot be guaranteed that we will be able to meet. In January, our Program Chairs have arranged for a great program. An area surgeon will be speaking on "How to Grow Old Gracefully." I, for one, would like to hear what she has to say.

As always, my wish for you is to stay safe and well. Life as we once knew it will return, and I am sure then we will appreciate the little things that, at the moment, we are not able to enjoy.

Vice President's Report

Progress on our Non-profit Application

Once the vote was taken and unanimously approved by our Newcomers members to amend our Bylaws and restate our Articles of Incorporation to support the acknowledgement of our Christmas Families Project focus, the application was submitted to the California Secretary of State. The process was slowed down considerably due to the pandemic, but it was received in September and approved. The next step is the long, arduous application to the IRS. We will keep you informed of its journey and progress.

Once we have submitted an application for non-profit status with the IRS, we can begin using that category for donations, and we will inform you of the official issuance of the designation when it arrives.

December Luncheon and Program - Canceled

As Alta Sierra Country Club is not scheduling events for the remainder of this year and perhaps beyond, the tentatively scheduled December holiday luncheon has been canceled. However, the restaurant is open for lunch from Wednesdays through Sundays from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm and we encourage members to think about supporting the country club by enjoying lunch there during this time.

January Program

With the hope that COVID restrictions will have changed by the new year, we have tentatively scheduled a program for January 27, 2021, "How to Grow Old Gracefully." Dr. Holly Leeds, MD and General Practitioner, will entertain us with a humorous program where she drops helpful hints to "accommodate" the aging process. A program not to miss!

Christmas Families Project Report

The CFP team recently met and decided to move forward with the program while implementing the following duties and guidelines.

If you are interested in shopping or wrapping (either at home or at our wrapping center), please contact the CFP team.

Our wrapping center location (near downtown Grass Valley) will be given to you once you are scheduled to wrap. We will begin on Wednesday, December 2 and close on Friday, December 18. There will be only one 3-hour shift per day and COVID guidelines will be followed, i.e., wearing a mask, using hand sanitizer, etc. Once your shift has been completed, we will completely disinfect all touched surfaces and implements. We will also be available to pick up from your home any wrapped or unwrapped gifts that you have purchased if that is the option you chose.

One other important piece of information is about the per child reimbursements. We have adopted a sliding scale, as follows:

Children 0-2 years of age - \$40 per child
Children 3-6 years of age - \$50 per child
Children 7-10 years of age - \$60 per child
Children 11-18 years of age - \$80 per child

This information will be repeated in the instructions for the shoppers.

Although we are not able to have our usual Christmas luncheon and program this year where we hear from recipients of the CFP, we want to share some stories from past recipients.

From Helping Hands Nurturing Center

When Phoebe (fictional name) first came to us through Child Protective Services she was homeless, off her medications, angry and self-medicating with drugs. With special needs and no real coping or parenting skills, her children were not being cared for and were at risk of

maltreatment and neglect. Phoebe trusted no one, and was isolated and afraid. Her only connection was with her boyfriend who used drugs and was very volatile. Over the course of months Phoebe began to allow us into her life, gained confidence and was able to see a doctor and receive proper medication. Once this was in place she began to engage in her care at a higher level, asking questions about parenting and wanting to learn as much as possible. She also gained an understanding of how important she is to her children and realized that maintaining her own health would be essential if she was to stay in their lives. With a loving bond with her children she was able to get out of the dysfunctional relationship and no longer uses marijuana to cope. Due to her special needs she was able to access disability funds and now has an apartment of her own. She has become more independent but continues to actively engage in the Nurturing Parent Program where she has gained confidence and continues learning to be a better parent. Phoebe and her family were recipients of our Christmas Families Project last year. The CFP Christmas Angels came to Phoebe and her children during a time she really had no other help. That she was able to provide Christmas when she was truly struggling gave her small family a moment of joy and hope. Her children woke up Christmas morning with excitement and smiles on their faces as they found the gifts left by Santa. Phoebe said that even though she was suffering through hard times this was the best Christmas ever.

Women of Worth (WOW)

WOW was the second agency the Christmas Families Project adopted. Early in the project we received a call about a woman who had arrived in their office with two children in the middle of winter. With snow on the ground, her children were walking in sandals and only sweaters for warmth. She had escaped a domestic violence situation with the children and a dog, driving from Southern California after hearing there might be some help in Nevada County. The girls received Christmas boots, shoes, coats and other donated fun gifts. The dog received a special bone. The mother went on to earn a degree and is now a counselor specializing in victims of domestic violence.

These are just a couple of stories of the help and hope our CFP has brought to challenged families. Since we will not be able to "pass the hat" in December and if you are moved to do so, please consider sending a donation check made out to Newcomers Club with an indication that it's for CFP. Send it to our treasurer.

We want to thank you in advance for your participation in this year's project. As always, if you have any other questions, please contact the CFP team.

Activities

Good news for groups that currently utilize Zoom or would like to in the future!

Newcomers is working towards providing an account which could be utilized by all members who would like unlimited time for group activities. Watch for updates on when this will be available.

Please note: Flyers for each group will be available at the monthly luncheons once they resume. These provide more detailed information about the groups, including when they meet and all contact information.

If you have any questions, ideas or are interested in forming a new group, please contact the Activities Chair.

Online Bridge Tutorial

One way to keep your mind agile is by playing bridge online. Our Bridge Chair has prepared a comprehensive step-by-step tutorial, which appears at the end of this newsletter. Learning to play bridge can seem a bit complicated. If you are a first-timer, it may be easier to be guided through online playing. For assistance in online playing please call the Bridge Chair.

Lessons are also available from a local Bridge Teacher. The cost is \$50 per hour, which may be divided by the number of people in the group.

Sunshine

If you know of anyone needing some support, comfort or encouragement from our club, please contact our Sunshine Chair.

Membership

E-Mail Changes, Membership Questions: If you know someone who would be interested in joining Newcomers, contact our Membership chair, or direct her to our website, NewcomersNC.org, where she can find and print a Membership application.

Online Bridge Tutorial

While there are many different bridge websites, this article pertains only to how to play bridge using Bridgebase.com. On Bridgebase, you can play

- 1) individual against a robot,
- 2) with an ACBL group (American Contract Bridge League) but you must become a member,
- 3) with a partner against other players,
- 4) as an individual against other players,
- 5) as a group.

To play:

Go to Bridgebase.com. In the right hand corner (red) Register. You must make up an online Bridgebase name. Complete the registration and passcode.

Except for ACBL games, you may play on Bridgebase.com for free. Four ACBL groups have joined into one and sponsor almost daily online bridge games. These games average \$3 with a credit card online to play.

1. Individual against Robot – Access Bridgebase.com. Left hand corner, select "Just Play Bridge." Hit the middle of the page, and on the next sheet a robot dealt hand will appear.
2. Play ACBL bridge – Log in/Register and hit the red bar. Go to Virtual Games, then go to North America. You will see the game that you want to play. I play Lake Wildwood ACBL. Register, and agree to pay. If you have a partner, a blue line will come up where you will enter her Bridgebase name, and send an invitation. She will have logged into Bridgebase, gone to Virtual and then to North America. An invitation will come in yellow and she must accept.
3. Have a friend and want to play – Access Bridgebase.com and hit Log in/Register. Your online name and dots (your hidden passcode) should come up. Hit the red bar. Next will be Options. Go to Casual and several options will appear. Choose "I have a partner." A blue line will appear for you to enter your partner's Bridgebase name. Your partner (who has logged in and gone to Casual) will receive an invitation and the two of you will then be placed at a table as partners. There will be two other players from somewhere in the world. (We have played with people from Turkey, Chile and Russia but mostly the USA and Canada).
4. Individual and want to play – Access Bridgebase.com. Hit Log in/Register, and then hit red bar. Go to Casual. Several options appear. Choose "Take Me to a Table." You will be placed at a table with three other people (from anywhere).
5. Have four for a bridge table – Access Bridgebase.com. Hit Log in/Register and hit the red bar. Go to Casual. Hit Start A Table. Then add the other three Bridgebase names and send an invitation. The other three players will receive an invitation and you will all be placed at a table. If you want voice (with your own table only), use conference call.com. Someone will need to set up an account (I have one and a passcode). Give the number 978-990-5420 to the other players along with the code you will receive when signing up. When you call in as the host, follow the prompts. While free, I periodically send them money for use as they support children's online free learning.

PLAY - The layout is like a bridge table. The robot deals the cards. As your bid comes up, you will see on the screen options to bid. Use the cursor to make your bid. Whoever wins the contract then plays. The bid is on the left hand side of the screen and the bid is noted as you play. Playing a hand is time sensitive. If you delay too long the robot will take over and you will be removed as a player.