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geriatric psychiatry

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Mr. Jay Baum, CEO

**American Contract Bridge League
Memphis, TN 38116-3847**

Dear Mr. Baum

Allow me to introduce myself: I am Dr. G. W. Cosma, a geriatric psychiatrist working in Clearwater, Florida.

A former patient of mine credits his ability to maintain his intellectual and cognitive abilities to his playing bridge. He has shared with me your article in the Bridge Bulletin in which you discussed what will happen when the baby boomers retire. He was very enthusiastic and asked me to share my opinions with you.

For years we geriatric psychiatrists have stressed the fact that in order to maintain the youth of our brains, it is important to do several things in a routine manner — among them, exercise, socialize, and think, think, think. That means using your brain, because the more you use it the better it will work.

Playing bridge is considered by many of us as being a very important activity to help us maintain our cognitive abilities at a high level. I might add that bridge also offers the opportunity to socialize, as spending time with other people gives the brain a boost. So it seems to me that if we are able to encourage the "baby boomers" to play bridge we are doing two of the three things that we need to do every day: exercise, think, and socialize. With bridge, we socialize and utilize our brain in a unique and special way.

I think that it is important that we stress this fact and that we promote playing bridge and other activities as a way of maintaining and improving our cognitive abilities. It would be wonderful if every mobile home park and every retirement center offered the opportunity to join a bridge group. This certainly would be of great help in maintaining the cognitive abilities of this unique generation.

I hope that my comments will be helpful to you and your organization in promoting bridge as a way of improving the lot of thousands of "boomers" who will need activities that promote thinking and cognitive abilities.

Sincerely,

Guillermo W. Cosma,