

The Hawkeyer

Bridge at the Hanoi Hilton

A letter to Joan Anderson from Leo Thorsness

*Editor's Note: **Leo Keith Thorsness** (born February 14, 1932) is a retired colonel in the United States Air Force who received the Medal of Honor for his actions in the Vietnam War. He was awarded the medal for an air engagement on April 19, 1967. He was shot down two weeks later and spent six years in captivity in North Vietnam as a prisoner of war.*

Dear Joan,

I thought you and Sharon might enjoy reading how we played Bridge in Hanoi. You were not able to attend my first presentation so below is the tap code we developed.

POW TAP CODE ROW, HESITATE, COLUMN: L=xxx x

	1	2	3	4	5
1	A	B	C	D	E
2	F	G	H	I	J
3	L	M	N	O	P
4	Q	R	S	T	U
5	V	W	X	Y	Z

POW BRIDGE IN HANOI

About the only decent thing our captors did during the really tough first three years was give us playing cards for several months. They were Chinese made and much thicker than what we get today. Their texture was similar to thin card-

board. During the very hot summer we would sweat just sitting in our cooped up cells. If you held the cards very long, they absorbed the sweat and became even thicker and floppy. But they were playing cards and helped pass a lot of time.

I know everyone here has played some cards—many of you are bridge players—some may even be addicted bridge players. When we received the playing cards there happened to be two POWs in two adjacent cells that knew the basics of bridge. We decided to play bridge by using the tap code, trying hard not to let the guard hear our taps.

The first problem to solve was how to randomly deal two decks of cards and have the deals come out identical. Jim Bell, a fun bright POW, developed the system. Here is how it's done.

Set up the deck like when brand new: Ace thru 2 in each suit. Put the spades on the bottom, hearts next, then diamonds and clubs on top. Lay 7 cards down in a row left to right. Start

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over and put a 2nd card on top of each of the first 7 cards down in a row—left to right. Continue doing that—you will end up with seven stacks of seven cards—49 total + 3 more cards. Start at the beginning stack so the first three stacks will have 8 cards each. On the cell wall, tap the stack number you want on the bottom—say 3 taps for number 3 stack (do it quietly because if the guards hear you—it's a for sure beating); next tap 7, then 2—whatever sequence

(Hanoi Bridge cont. on page 14)

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Unit 216 Club Directory

DES MOINES

Bridge Center
10190 Hickman Court
Clive, IA 270-0868

Sun. 2-4:30 pm *New players*
Lesson/Chat Bridge
Nancy 285-9916

Monday

12 pm (1000/2000/open)
12 pm (100/300/500)
Nancy Wilson 285-9916
6 pm *Free lesson by Nancy*
285-9916
6:30 pm (0-20) *Newcomer*
Game

Tuesday

12:00 pm (600/900/2000)
12:00 pm (100/300/500)
Nancy Wilson 285-9916

Wednesday

12 pm *Free lesson*
12:30 pm (0-20) *new play-*
ers
12:30 pm (20/50/199)
Bonni Newton 225-6907,
778-0899
7 pm (500/1000/1500 or
any non-LM partnership)
Gregg Walsh 771-4802

Thursday

10:30 am *Lesson by Brian*
Kelly or Jessie Chance
12 pm (1500/2500/open)
12 pm (300/750/1000)
Gregg Walsh 771-4802

Friday

9:30-11:30 *Supervised Play*
Bonnie Newton 778-0899

Saturday

12 pm (300/500/750 or
non-LM (partnership)
12:30 pm (Open))
Gregg Walsh 771-4802

AMES

Heartland Senior Services
205 South Walnut
Sun. 6pm *Free Lesson by*
Andy Terry
Sun. 6:30 pm (0-299)
Andy Terry 451-9168
Sun. 6:30 pm (open)
Tue. 7:00 pm (open)
Ray Schoenrock 232-4717
Thur. 7:00 pm (open)
Ira White 292-5616

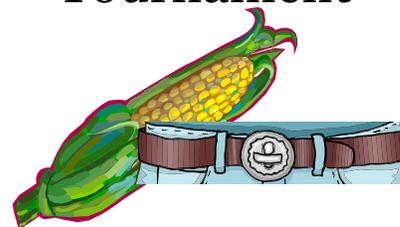
MARSHALLTOWN

Wed. 6:30 p.m.
Senior Center; 20 E State St.
Larry Park 641-752-6121

PELLA

Thur. 7:00 p.m.
(open/non-smoking)
611 Franklin St.
Bill White 847-977-2380

See you at the Cornbelt Sectional Tournament



Sept. 11-14, 2014

Strata for pairs events

A 1500+

B 500-1500

C 0-500

Great Thoughts— And Some of My Stuff, Too

By Herb Strentz

So, my partner — whom I shall call “Rick” to protect his anonymity — my partner and I are about to defend a three-diamond contract when the declarer says something like, “I’m going to have to play my butt off to make this one!”

“This’ll take awhile,” Rick observes. And three of us laugh; declarer gasps and then smiles at Rick, a baseball bat not being handy.

But, contrary to ACBL protocols, no one calls the director to enforce Law 74A.2.

I learned about Law 74A.2 in the June issue of the Bridge Bulletin, the Gospel, if not the Bible of the ACBL.

The gist of Commandment 74A.2 is Thou shalt “carefully avoid any remark or action that might cause annoyance or embarrassment to another player...”

Holy Writ!, Batman, we’d have to add four or five directors to each game to adequately enforce 74A.2. We’d need one director for the likes of “Rick” and another several for the rest of us who might cause annoyance or embarrassment to another player. Some of us are annoyed just by whomever it is that opposes us in the next round.

Folks with a First Amendment orientation and a knee-jerk defense of free expression respond with consternation to the likes of 74A.2, which sets the lowest possible standard for freedom of expression in duplicate bridge. Also it is questionable why something as ambiguous and as subjective as table etiquette should be a written-in-stone law of the ACBL, right next to, say, the straightforwardness of revoking or leading out of turn.

Get this: The *Ruling the Game* column in the Bridge Bulletin alerted everyone to rule 74A.2 because a declarer made an innocuous comment about a decent trump split and an opponent was upset with such gloating! Another violation was offered as an illustration of what not to say under 74A.2: A congratulatory “Well, played pard” outraged and annoyed one of the opposing players. He pointed out to his partner and to everyone within hearing distance that the compliment was absurd and unwarranted. Why, if his partner was as good a player as he, the partner would have defeated the contract! “Well played?”



Harrumph!”

The column cited 74A.2 and meekly sided with the outraged party, cautioning that it’s best to remember who the sensitive people/jerks are and avoid annoying, embarrassing or disturbing them next time you visit their table.

But here’s the moral of the story: What on earth makes you think that there would ever be a “next time” for a newcomer, who visits the Bridge Center, and violates Law 74A.2 by complimenting his or her partner?

Fact is all of us should work our butts off to invite new players and not drive them away by our knowledge of how hands should be played and our acquaintance with the likes of Law 74A.2.

As Rick observed, “This’ll take a while.”

But it’s worth it.

Today I bent the truth to be kind, and I have no regret, for I am far surer of what is kind than I am of what is true. ~Robert Brault

The Steppingstone

By Pete Wityk

I am playing in a local match pointed pairs with a regular partner against an up and coming B player playing with a C player. I pick up a good hand, all vulnerable in fourth chair:

♠A8 ♥AK1043 ♦AQ7 ♣J107

the C player, on my left, **passes** as dealer. Partner **passes** and third chair opens **one club**. I have an easy **double**. West bids **one diamond** and partner bids **one no trump**. My, how many points there are in this deck. That doesn't reduce the value of my 18 HCP and good five-card suit. I have the straightforward value bid of **two hearts**. Three **passes** close the auction, which has been

N	E	S	W
			P
P	1♣	X	1♦
1N	P	2♥	P
P	P		

The eight of clubs is led and the following dummy appears

♠J94 ♥97 ♦10943 ♣KQ42

Two clubs, three hearts assuming a 4-2 break and two aces is only 7 tricks. Plus, I have the issues of not getting one of my club winners ruffed and entries to dummy to take the diamond finesse. I have the advantages of lots of tenace positions, the diamond finesse and the opponents do have to do something each time they take a trick. It would appear that

can be to my advantage.

Well, it is time to do something. I call for dummy's King because I want to be in dummy if the ace is ducked. East doesn't cooperate by winning the Ace and I play the seven. East now shifts to the eight of diamonds. I suspect both the king and jack are behind me. I play the Queen because I'd rather be confident about the king than the jack. As expected, this loses to the King. Back comes the five of clubs to dummy's deuce, East's nine and my Jack. I lay down the Ace of hearts, which draws the deuce, the seven from dummy and the eight. I follow with the King, which draws the five, the nine and the Jack. The Trey of hearts draws the six, the four of spades and the Queen. The King of spaces is led to my Ace, West's deuce and dummy's nine.

My ten of hearts gets the five of spades from West, dummy's four of diamonds and the deuce of spades from East. The Ace of diamonds draws the deuce from West; the nine from dummy and East's six. The four of hearts draws the five of diamonds; dummy's ten of diamonds and the seven of spades. Now, the ten of clubs draws the six of spades, the four from dummy and the Trey from East. The eight of spades delivers the coup de grace to East as he must win West's ten and



dummy's Jack with the Queen and lead the six of clubs to the Queen in dummy. The complete hand was:

	♠J94	
	♥97	
	♦10943	
	♣KQ42	
♠10652		♠KQ72
♥652		♥QJ8
♦KJ52		♦86
♣85		♣A963
	♠A8	
	♥AK1043	
	♦AQ7	
	♣J107	

Post Mortem

Taking 9 tricks in 3H for +140 was 5+ match points out of eight. Apart from the other 140, we lost to 3N making three and 2N making three. Since no-trump cannot take more than 8 tricks without help from the defense, there is nothing that can be done about those two results. Besides, a steady diet of 5+ out of 8 will result in a 148+, which will win most games! The auction and the play to the early tricks placed most of the cards for me and clarified the distribu-

(Steppingstone cont. on page 13)

Rectifying the Count

by Rich Newell

How would you play this hand in 6NT with a neutral club lead?

<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>
S A64	S K7
H 72	H AK64
D AKQ7	D 865
C KJT8	C AQ73

In no trump, **rectifying the count** is losing tricks safely early in play of the hand in the hope of gaining a trick on a squeeze (or more likely, via misdefense by the opponents). In this example you have 11 sure tricks. Subtract that number from 12 (12-11=1) and that tells you how many tricks you must first lose if this play is to have any chance.

Let's first watch how this hand would play out without this technique. Suppose RHO holds four hearts and four diamonds, something like:

S T9 H QJT9 D JT93 C 652

On the run of the clubs, RHO discards a spade. The next suit declarer is going to test is diamonds. RHO is happy to see this play out, because when they fail to break he has the high diamond which no longer needs to be guarded. Declarer cashes the two top spades, so RHO comes down to the jack of diamonds and QJ9 of hearts, and when he gets in

with a heart he scores the jack of diamonds for down one.

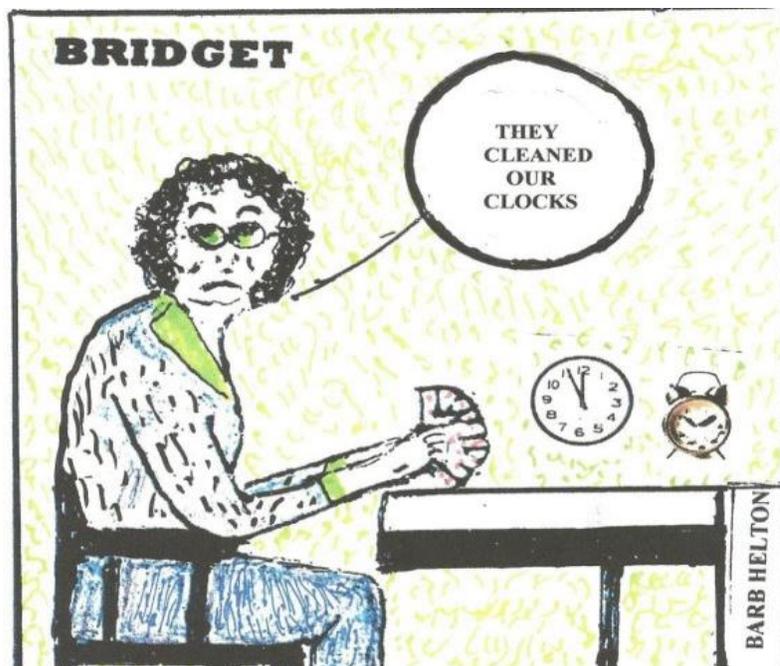
So instead, let's win the club and lead a low heart from both hands at trick 2. Now everything changes for RHO. Suppose the defense continues with a passive club and you clear the suit. RHO pitches a spade on the fourth club. He's holding S T H QJT D JT93 C -

Now play your two top spades. What is RHO going to play on the second spade? If he parts with a diamond, the 7 of diamonds becomes good. If instead he parts with a heart, when the diamonds don't break declarer will try the hearts and watch the QJ come down, making the 6 in declarer's



hand the twelfth trick. (RHO is legitimately squeezed)

This is an example where a squeeze actually came into play. But opportunities to use this strategy come up frequently and yield scores of matchpoints against competition that, with one less card in their hands, find themselves under pressure to guard multiple suits and keep the right cards.



A New Approach to Classes and Programs

By Herb Strentz

Bridge classes and other educational programs at the Bridge Center will be a bit more structured with the creation of a joint education committee of Unit 216 and the Bridge Center Corporation. The committee, which will oversee bridge education and promotion, is chaired by Kathi Kellen and also comprises Jessie Chance, Charlene Hendryx, Marilyn Jones, Joyce Judas, Bonni Newton, Nancy Wilson and Herb Strentz as co-chair.

The committee, which also serves bridge players in Ames and Marshalltown, which are part of Unit 216, has scheduled three classes for the fall — along with other classes that teachers might propose.

The core classes, with days and times to be arranged,

will be one for beginners, taught by Bonni, one on the play of the hand, taught by Nancy, and one on defense, taught by Jessie. Nancy will also conduct the fall mentoring program.

Apart from the core programs, other classes and instruction will be offered as determined by teacher and player interests and tie-ins with regularly scheduled games.

Kathi has sent some of the Unit 216 books from the Des Moines Bridge Center to Ames and has contacted Larry Park in Marshalltown about sending books there. Anyone in Unit 216 who does not play in the Des Moines area can contact Kathi Kellen regarding checking out a book from the Unit library and she will see that you get the book.

Also the Corporation board has paid for a subscription to “Audrey Grant’s Better Bridge” magazine. The magazine is in the brown magazine holder next to the clock in the library. The magazine has such articles as “Should you always open 12 point hands?” in the March/April issue and “Look-Alikes” in the July/August issue, which shows how to play trumps with a 6-2 fit rather than a 5-3 fit. Drop into the library and read an article before a game or check out a copy for a week.

Classes for early 2015 will be scheduled this fall as the committee continues to shape the new approach to bridge education and promotion. Please watch for posting about educational programs at the Bridge Center and online.

Up the ACBL Ladder (Apr. May, June, July)

New Members: Paul Calkins, Larry Cupp, Elizabeth McDonald, Peggy Warner, Colleen Reinhardt, Venkatesh Seshappa, Mary Stark, Marcia Thompson, Sara Volker, Austin Wilbanks, Eric Hill, Nathan Fennelly, Rhonda McCoy, Conner Halloran, Diana Anderson, Bonnie Conover
Jr. Master: Colleen Ditolla, Michael Hayes, Arlene Sweet, Carson Ode, Larry Cupp, Di-

ane Sweet, Norma Mishoe, Kathryn Mum
Club Master: Vicky Daniel, Melvin Dostal, Maggie Nelson, Barbara Maas, Carlotta Paul, Marcia Thompson, Jim Hughes
Sectional Master: Clifton Rubicam, Daniel Walker, Mary Atherly, Jane Burger, William Hobson, John Melberg, Becky Webb
Regional Master: William Heng, Ida Johnson, Betty

Torgerson, Eileen Bowerman
NABC Master:
Adv NABC Master:
Life Master: Jan Carr
Bronze LM: Tracey Ball
Silver LM: William Austin, Jean Lane, Bonni Newton, Mike Harvey
Platinum LM:
Diamond LM: Richard Freedman
No new, Gold LM, Emerald LM, Grand LM

Smoking??

By Mike Harvey D. O.

The emphasis of these articles has been leading a healthy lifestyle. Proper eating habits, exercise, and weight management have been encouraged. The most effective longevity improvement for smokers is smoking cessation.

Using the ATP/NIH Risk Calculator, smoking cessation alone can reduce 10 year relative risks of heart attacks 25- 50%. Reduction in risks for cancer of the lung, pancreas and colon are dramatic, and progression of chronic lung disease can be halted. Blood pressure will drop, medication use will drop and an improvement in feelings of wellbeing will occur. Improved health begins almost immediately. Need one mention the cost savings to both the smoker and the general community?

If you smoke, please read on. If you have loved ones that smoke, read on and pass along this article or at least some of the information.

Smoking cessation ideas have been around as long as smoking itself. No one program is best, but rather the best program is one designed by and for the smoker. No magic here.

Understanding some

basic information is necessary for a successful program. Nicotine is highly addictive and inhalation of an addictive product makes it even more addictive. It is a stimulant with immediate, consistent and predictable effects. Significant withdrawal effects begin as promptly, including fatigue, loss of concentration, irritability and cravings.

Smoking is strongly associated with social queues. Situational queues include completing a meal, driving, lower activity sports (golf, bowling, and softball), drinking alcohol and stress. Relational queues include smoke “zones” and “buddies”. Physical queues include the actual handling of the cigarette, lighter and packaging.

A successful quitter will analyze and address these queues as an important part of the cessation program. Keeping a log for a few days of “why do I smoke” will provide valuable info that may not be obvious at first thought.

Tapering smoking to one-half pack per day for a week is instrumental in reducing the acute withdrawal symptoms. Once



achieved, a specific “STOP” date should be selected carefully.

Utilization of smoking cessation aids can be beneficial. Numerous products are available as prescription and OTC’s.

Prescriptions include Chantix, Zyban, and bupropion. These medications have strong effects on the central nervous system to reduce cravings, withdrawal symptoms and frequently reduce the “satisfaction” derived from smoking. A product this strong will have side effects and should be used under the guidance of a caring provider. Many people refuse to try these products based on hearsay or a friend’s story, but refusing to consider these is a mistake. Chantix has been shown to have a three to fourfold suc-

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(Smoking cont. from page 7)

cess rate over the “cold turkey” results. Zyban and bupropion rates are about twofold. (Generally “cold turkey” has a 5% success rate, so these products can have initial success rates of 10-20%)

Nicotine patches provide a steady state nicotine level, reducing withdrawal symptoms. The patch strength can be reduced over weeks or months, and eventually stopped. Nicotine gum serves as a similar approach for nicotine replacement, but does allow for “as needed” use and a slow taper. These approaches generally result in a twofold improvement over cold turkey.

Nicotine inhalation devices, commonly known as E-cigarettes, provide nicotine through a “smokeless” device. The process is very similar to smoking but seems more socially acceptable. A slow taper is used to minimize withdrawal. No reliable studies have shown improved success over cold turkey. This product is being used as a cigarette substitute without a plan to stop by many.

Prescription and OTC anxiety products can help on occasion. Exercise, stress management and other relaxation techniques can help some individuals. Hypnosis and acupuncture has been

promoted. No reliable studies are available on these approaches.

Numerous “Stop Smoking” programs are available through employer, insurance, government and other organizations. These can provide additional education and support.

A critical issue in long term success is avoidance of high risk situation and alcohol. Most relapses occur when an over confident quitter gets in an environment that should be avoided. Similar to auto accidents, alcohol is frequently involved.

Another important part of cessation includes knowledgeable and understanding support persons. Tolerating the withdrawal emotions, understanding and supporting the process can facilitate success.

An observing reader will notice the low success rate quoted with these approaches. This means that the first attempt may not be successful. Don’t give up hope, simply reload and try again. Confidence will build with each attempt and success will occur.

For those who have quit, then relapsed months or years later, nothing is different. You are actually going to show a higher success

rate. Remember your satisfaction in quitting? You’re feeling of better wellbeing? Utilize your experience to capitalize on what worked best before. Start at the beginning.

A few resources:

- www.cdc.gov/tobacco
- ([http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/cessation/quitting/index.htm?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+CdcSmokingAndTobaccoUseFactSheets+\(CDC+-+Smoking+and+Tobacco+Use+-+Fact+Sheets\)](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/cessation/quitting/index.htm?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+CdcSmokingAndTobaccoUseFactSheets+(CDC+-+Smoking+and+Tobacco+Use+-+Fact+Sheets)))
- <http://smokefree.gov/>
- <http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/diseases-conditions/tobacco-addiction/treatment/why-do-i-smoke-quiz.html>
- <http://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/>

If you’re on lead without a hint about what partner might want, consider the following:

When leading, play into weakness and play through strength.

However, the following is easier to remember:

**When the dummy’s on the right,
lead the weakest thing in sight.**

**When dummy’s on the left side,
playing through power is the rule to abide.**

The Longest Day Report

By Nancy Wilson

This is the first year for Unit 216 to sponsor The Longest Day fundraiser event. We had a great team of workers and planners for this event and it has been an enjoyable work process. We have learned so much for our first year and we hope to use this knowledge to improve the program in the future. Unit 216 extends special thanks to the planning team and everyone working and pulling together to make this program so successful and we hope to plan this event again next year.

We are still in awe of how our members donated and contributed in so many ways. It is very difficult to single out individuals because so many people helped in different ways. As our first year of sponsoring this event, we were not sure

what to expect in attendance and in contributions.

- There were 100 tables in play for the day
- 185 participants
- Approximately \$11,002 in contributions (\$285.00 of this amount will be forwarded from ACBL)
- 186.56 total master points were awarded for the day.
- Total value of \$500.00 in door prizes was contributed by local merchants.
- At least 30 people in the Bridge Center volunteered to help with this event. Out of 154 teams participating nationwide, our team was number 8 or 9 in donations.

Most of the planning committee recommends that we do this program again. We are giving to a wonderful



cause and at the same time, this is an excellent opportunity to promote bridge in the community.

Thanks again to the Unit 216 and The Bridge House Corporation for sponsoring this event.

The Hawkeye Bridge Alzstars Team: Nancy Wilson, Kathi Kellen, Rae Gene Burger, Marianne Gideon, Joyce Knock, Craig Nelsen, Vicky Daniel, Tom Olsson and Rod Burnett.



Good Crew ←



Good Food →

An Interesting Hand

By Evie Mintzer

An interesting hand came up on Thursday, May 15th, when my partner was Jessie Chance. Our opponents at the table were Barb Helton and Bob Yeates.

Here is the hand with North - South vulnerable.

Jessie
 ♠K
 ♥A3
 ♦AKQ1042
 ♣K975

Barb
 ♠ —
 ♥KQJ108542
 ♦9
 ♣8632

Bob
 ♠QJ54
 ♥976
 ♦J65
 ♣QJ10

Evie
 ♠A10987632
 ♥---
 ♦873
 ♣A4

The bidding went:

W	N	E	S
3H	5D	P	6D
P	P	6H	x

Minus 500.

But my bad result is not what was interesting. According to the hand analysis, I could have bid 6 spades and made it. Looking at the East hand, it appears Yeates would get 2 spade tricks. But the hand analysis is correct, 6 spades can be made.

After the lead of the K of hearts, I need to play low and trump it. A spade to the K reveals the 4 - 0 split.

What is necessary now is that I have to manage to trump 3 more cards from dummy, reducing the number of trumps in my hand to the same amount that Yeats has.

That means I would have to trump a club and also the A of hearts, ending in this position:



♠—
 ♥—
 ♦A1042
 ♣9

♠—
 ♥XXXX
 ♦—
 ♣X

♠QJ5
 ♥9
 ♦J
 ♣---

♠A1098
 ♥---
 ♦8
 ♣---

A diamond to the A, a club or diamond back - trumping. And the coup de grâce, playing the 8 of spades, executing an end play.

Recognizing the need to reduce your trumps to the same length as your opponent can give an excellent result.



Filosofy a la The Simpsons

Bart decides to learn Bridge. He convinces his dad Homer to buy him some cards and a beginner's book and starts to learn. A week later, the cards are scattered and the book is buried in a closet. Homer asks "Bart, why aren't you learning Bridge?" "It's too hard, Dad," Bart replies. "Son," the elder Simpson mused philosophically, "anything that hard can't be worth doing. Let's go watch TV!"

-- from "The Simpsons" (modified)

Suggestions for ...

By Toby White

For my last article of 2014, I decided to write a 'quasi-editorial,' which offers a few brief, friendly suggestions for five particular constituencies within our Iowa bridge community.

#1 – Beginners:

The best and quickest way to improve your game is to play more club events on the 'A' side of the room. Consider it an investment in your future. For example, although you may not score as many masterpoints at the club level for a couple years (vs. playing in limited point games), you will do much better at tournaments if you get 'in shape,' which can lead to even larger MP rewards (and of the colored variety you might need).

As I have mentioned in past articles, it is better to learn the basics about bridge (bidding, declaring, and defending) before trying to play dozens of fancy conventions. On a related point, there are not huge differences between Standard American and 2-over-1; I played S/A for nearly 5 years before even attempting 2/1, and many top players still prefer S/A.

Once you learn the basic rules, resist the temptation to intentionally break these rules. Over time, your results will be higher if you simply 'follow the herd' and wait for your opponents to make mistakes, rather than

trying to be brilliant and do something unique. Also, it is better to communicate (through bidding and carding while defending) transparently with your partner, rather than trying to fool everyone at the table.

#2 – Experts:

If you are among the top 20 players at our club, I suggest that you play more often with promising individuals outside the top 20, especially those who will listen to your advice, and want to improve. The majority of our club's top players seem only to play with others of similar level, but could likely do quite well (and perhaps have at least as much fun) playing with intermediate players. Remember that on Wednesday night, anyone with over 1,500 MPs can still play as long as their partner is a non-life master.

Not being an expert myself, I don't have too much bridge-specific advice to offer here, so I will instead address one's general style. Once you achieve a certain level in bridge, your goal will change from just 'scratching' to finishing 1st in your direction (or overall). To be at the very top, one typically needs to take a few carefully, calculated additional risks to go for some 'top boards.' My personal style is to not take such



risks, and settle for a score in the mid-50% range more often than not. However, as is the case with many experts, if your goal is to gain masterpoints more expediently, you will do better by having a 65% game & a 45% game (vs. two 55% games).

#3 – Our Club:

For whatever reason, Des Moines area bridge players do not travel well to out-of-town Sectional and Regional bridge tournaments, even those less than 2 hours from home. I have been to Sectional tournaments in Iowa City and Cedar Rapids, where there was not one single player from Des Moines the entire weekend (besides me and my partner). Still, at our Sectionals, we do seem to draw many players from E. Iowa, and also a few players from Minn., Mo., Neb., and S. Dakota. It's fun to play against different competition every now and then, so I encourage you all to travel a bit more! It can be even more rewarding to team with

(Suggestions cont. on page 12)

Fun ♥ Food ♠ Games
Open House
♥ ♠ 1-4 ♥ ♠
September 28
Bridge Center

Tell all your Friends and join us for
a fun afternoon Your Education Committee



Contact Bonnie Newton
bjnbridge@live.com
778-0899

(Suggestions cont. from page 11)
players from other parts of
the state and region.

I'm not in charge, but if I were, I would be an advocate for scheduling twice as many 'team' games at our club. Right now, such games typically occur only on the 5th week of the month. However, almost everyone seems to enjoy the 'team game format,' and at tournaments, the majority of players are now choosing knockout and Swiss teams events. Thus, we could benefit from extra practice at our club to prepare for these events. I'd also like to see some 'individual movement games,' where one doesn't just rotate opponents each round, but also partners – these tend to be lighter, and a great way to pair with players of differing skill levels.

#4 – Directors:

Let me preface this section by giving props to both the Wilsons and Gregg Walsh,

who I feel do a wonderful job promoting bridge at our club and executing their directorial duties. Still, I have a couple suggestions nevertheless. First, as relates to the initial point from the beginners section, I'd recommend way fewer games where there are two separate sections (i.e., Beginner and Advanced). When I learned duplicate bridge in both Chicago and Seattle, there were none of these 'split' games at the club level (and only a few at tournaments), and this was a good thing for my bridge education, despite it taking me 7 years to become a life master. Right now, this 'split game' format exists almost every Monday, Thursday, Saturday (and even Tuesday in the limited game) – I'd recommend converting at least 1 of these days to 'open/combined' on a weekly basis.

I also feel that our club sometimes suffers from an imbalance in aggregate ability between the N/S and

E/W pairs. Typically, and I risk coming across as insensitive here, there will be about 8-10 standing arrangements for certain pairs to sit N/S (or these slots are filled early on based on first-come, first serve). I understand that a small number of pairs must sit N/S for personal reasons. In the end, though, the E/W direction is often considerably stronger. In a recent weekday 14-table game, if I were to have estimated where the top 12 pairs were seated, I'd say that 10 of them were sitting East/West.

#5 – Myself:

At this point, it seems only fair to also do a self-examination, although I'm quite sure that this advice I'm writing to myself will also apply to many others at our club! First, I can do a much better job at treating my partner with respect, especially after they make mistakes. Most of the time, when my

(Suggestions cont. on page 13)

(Steppingstone cont. from page 4)
 tion. West has the KJ of diamonds and not much else. East has to have 12 HCP. It's not safe to open light even in third chair when a weaker partner is going to hang you given half a chance. The opponent's spades are 4-4 given the 1^s opening and the failure to bid 1^a over my double. Hearts were 3-3. Diamonds and clubs were 4-2 and 2-4 respectively.

The play as it developed was a stepping stone squeeze. That is, cash winners stripping exit cards from the opponents and forcing an opponent to discard so as to give you an entry to one hand's winners by either discarding a winner to give you an entry, discarding a card that gives you an extra winner or discarding a card that allows him to be thrown in and resurrect a blocked winner. The last case is the one that actually occurred. The 'Great Master', Terrence Reese wrote about them in "Master Play". East's final comment was, "Wow, I don't believe that anyone has ever done that to me before."

It isn't really clear from giving the sequence of plays how inevitable the ending is after trick two. Declarer has a counter to anything that the defense can

do. The actual ending with 5 cards to play is

♠J9	
♥--	
♦10	
♣Q4	
	♠Q7
	♥--
	♦6
	♣96
	♠8
	♥4
	♦A7
	♣10

Irrelevant

((Suggestions cont. page 12)
 partner makes a decision or play that ends badly, they already realize what happened, and don't need a lecture or snide comment from me; even if they don't realize the error, why would I want to point it out in the middle of the game (or round), and have them be thinking about that for the next few hands?

Of course, I also make my fair share of errors, which I usually review at the game's conclusion to help minimize the chance of making the same mistake again the next time. Still, I find that a good chunk of my mistakes are not from failing to know what to do, but due to a

Once I cash the Ace of diamonds to strip East of his idle, exit card, the four of hearts, discarding the 9 of spades, gives East his choice of poisons. Discarding a club allows me to overtake the 10 with the Queen and cash the good 4 before conceding a spade at trick 13. Discarding a spade allows me to cash the club 10 before leading a spade. That forces East to resurrect the entry-less dummy's Queen of clubs.

simple lack of concentration or from playing too fast. This is especially painful when we finish the round 5-10 minutes early (...if I had just stopped to think about the auction, or count the opponents' points, or take more inference from the opening lead...).

Finally, another character flaw I could seek to improve is to verbally apologize to my partner when I know I've done something wrong, rather than deflecting blame or saying nothing (leaving partner to wonder what I'm thinking about his/her play). Such an admission tends to ease tensions going forward, especially if partner accepts the apology.

- **If you have a choice of reasonable bids and one of them is 3NT, then bid it.** Known as "Hamman's Law"; devised by [Bob Hamman](#) and published among other places in *English Bridge*, June 2006, page 19.
- **Prefer majors to minors.** Bid a major suit before a minor suit. They can overbid opponents at the same level, and score higher.
- **Prefer length to strength.** A long suit, even if weaker, is often ultimately more powerful and desirable as a contract, than a short suit, however good, because long trumps will usually make tricks in the end, and they allow a greater level of control during the game.

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Mark Your Calendar

Unit 216 Sectionals

Cornbelt

Clive, IA
Sep. 11-14, 2014

Hawkeye Holiday

Clive, IA
Jan. 8-11, 2015

Spring Festival

Clive, IA
Apr. 9-12, 2015

District 14 Regionals

Sioux City Regional

Sioux City, IA
Sept 29-Oct4, 2014

Bloomington Regional

Bloomington, MN
May 18-24, 2015

Des Moines Regional

West Des Moines, IA
June 29-Jul 5, 2015

ACBL Nationals

Providence RI

Nov. 27-Dec. 7, 2014

New Orleans, LA

Mar 12-22, 2015

Chicago, IL

Aug 6-16, 2015