



Bag of Tricks

Unit 132

Jan.-Feb. 2025

President's Message

Happy New Year! And, what a frigid beginning 2025 has had. I'm hoping this arctic blast will soon be a thing of the past and we'll be safely back in our meeting places for nice, warm bridge games!

Congratulations to new Life Masters Pat Dooley (Wichita) and Georgia Reynolds (Abilene).

My most heartfelt thanks go out to Mary Beck and David Kopper for the time and tireless energy they've given to welcoming new players to the Wichita Bridge Center. Their efforts have resulted in 15 to 18-table weekly "Happy Hearts" games where players have gotten pre-game lessons and time to play in a supportive atmosphere. After many years, Mary and David are taking a well-deserved "retirement" from running this game. The efforts of Warren Smith, Linus Weimer, Wanda Lonnon, Merlin Suderman, Susan Eagle and Teresa Scoles will ensure the game continues to thrive. We are delighted that Mary and David will now have more time to PLAY bridge. **THANK YOU!!**

This year, Unit 132 will elect three members to serve two-year terms on its board. Our thanks to Cindy Lott, Karen Humphreys and David Kopper, who finish their terms in June. The nominating committee, chaired by Linus Weimer, has recommended three individuals who have agreed to run for these positions: Cindy Lott (second term), Wanda Lonnon and Julie Phares. Should you wish to nominate additional names for the slate, please contact Gloria Smith by the end of February.

Look inside this issue of *Bags of Tricks* for Susan Eagle's detailed report from the Education Committee. I'm particularly proud of the fact that more than 45 students took our first set of ACBL Intro to Bridge lessons, and that more than 30 are coming back for more in Part 2.

Reminder: ACBL no longer sends out written membership renewal notices by snail mail. You're expected to renew your membership online at ACBL.org. Each month, ACBL sends the unit a list of members who've received first (and often, second) renewal notices (via-email only). We'll try to send reminders if you've had two notices, but ultimately, it's YOUR responsibility to stay up to date.

Thanks for being active, engaged members of Unit 132. As always, let me know if there are ways we can make your playing experiences more enjoyable.

--Julie Scherz

The Dish

Pat Dooley



Recent tournaments in Kansas City and Hutchinson drew lots of Wichita players, and reports on their success are noteworthy.



Kansas City Regional

Kansas City's annual holiday season regional was a great place to unwind between Dec. 26 and the start of the new year. It attracted enough players to fill 717 tables over its six-day schedule. Players came from across the region, as well from as far away as California, Minnesota and Illinois.

Wichita players who won big over the tournament include partners Hal George and Dan Chocron (37.90 points); Roger Sites and Frank Boyce (23.06); and Bob Ellison and Gina Austin Fresh (16.75).

Hutchinson Sectional

Our Hutchinson friends deserve kudos for hosting their annual January sectional tournament at the Kansas State Fair grounds on the 17th and 18th. Players from across the area, and as far away as Nebraska, filled 63 tables over the two days, and a total of 256.68 master points were won by 56 players. The following Wichita players won top honors at the event's four sessions: Friday AM: 63.15 percent – Rob Fraser and Hal George; Friday PM: 64.87 percent – Frank Boyce and Roger Sites; Saturday AM: 61.54 percent – Frank Boyce and Rob Fraser; Saturday PM: 64.26 percent – Dan Chocron and Hal George.



Dave Moore, Hutchinson's Carmel Corn Extraordinaire (who BTW won nearly 4 master points with his partner Diane O'Neal)

Another Thing

Anyone who has ever attended a Hutchinson sectional knows its hosts deserve praise for much more than their expert coordination of bridge sessions. In a nutshell, if there were a national "Best Snack Table at a Bridge Sectional" contest, Hutchinson would undoubtedly win. One of lots of players' favorite treats was the big bowl of carmel puffs (or whatever they're called). It was never empty, since Dave Moore, who makes the stuff by the bushel basket, brought more than enough to replenish its supply time and time again.

Bag of Tricks

Bi-Monthly Newsletter

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PLAYER PROFILES

Grazina Grace Darlington

Grace is a relatively new club player who enrolled in one of Mary Beck's bridge classes a year or so ago. She regularly competes in Tuesday's 199 sessions, where she and her partner often scratch. A native of Lithuania, Grace graduated from the University of Vilnius, where she earned a master's degree in mathematics. She has an extensive background in the field of database programming.



Partnerships: Dick Williams & Dr. Phil Rindt

Just hang around Dick Williams (on the left) and Dr. Phil Rindt if you want an enjoyable round of bridge. They often play in Tuesday's 749 sessions, and are a lot of fun even when their hands aren't. Dr. Phil is a retired physician from Maize. Dick is from Wichita, where he ran a home repair service. His wife—player Kathy Williams—says he's an expert woodworker who makes backyard art, including pianos.



One of Dick's backyard art pianos





Education Committee Report

Susan Eagle, Liaison

There is so much to share. Since the fall of 2024, the Wichita Duplicate Bridge Club's education programs have been bustling with activity. The Education Committee strives to integrate new players into our bridge community by creating a fun and supportive environment with educational opportunities and mentors to assist new

players. We offer a diverse schedule of friendly games and lessons to retain existing members. If you'd like to join our committee, contribute financially to our efforts, offer comments, or become a certified ACBL instructor, please contact me at 785-393-3614 or susan_eagle@msn.com.

Bridge Class Success It was a pleasant surprise when 45 students signed up for the Intro to Bridge Class (Series 1) through Wichita State's Community Education program. We took a new approach with ACBL's curriculum via team teaching; offered each class twice per week to accommodate more schedules; and changed the venue from the Hughes Metroplex Complex to the Wichita Duplicate Bridge Center. Thanks to all who helped make this a huge success whether you served as a mentor, teacher or participant.

A second successful effort was our launching of a bridge club at Robinson Middle School with eight students attending weekly 35-minute sessions as part of their school curriculum. Look for more on this in a future report.

Bridge Class Part 2 Part 2 of our ACBL Intro to Bridge Class starts Wednesday, January 22 and/or Saturday, January 25. Thirty-five students have signed up for the 10-week program, and were're excited so many players are committed to learning this fun and challenging game.

Saturday Newcomer Games Newcomer games were held on Saturdays in December and January to support graduates of the ACBL Intro to Bridge class (Series 1) and additional players with less than 30 points. Merlin Suderman offered a mini-lesson at the start of each session and mentors were on hand to offer guidance. Overall, it was a big success, although inclement weather reduced attendance in January. Be on the lookout for Saturday morning Newcomer games (0-50 Masterpoints) to resume in April after Series 2 classes end.

Practice and Play January marked the return of the FREE Practice and Play sessions on Monday mornings at 9:30 a.m. We bid, defend and play hands as we laugh and learn throughout the process. Everyone is welcome!

New! The Play's the Thing It's a pleasure to announce an exciting new educational opportunity starting February 12 for advancing players with 200+ masterpoints. David Kopper will teach the 10-week "play of the hand" series at \$10 per class. You may sign-up for each class individually (max six students per session) or take them all. The classes are geared toward players with less than 750 MP but, if space permits, players with higher points may participate. Following the lesson, students with less than 750 MP who choose to play in the open game that day will receive a \$5 rebate toward the game fee. The remaining class fees will be donated to the Education Fund. Contact David Kopper for more information by phone at 316-992-0478 or by email at david.kopper@cox.net.

Wanted: Certified ACBL Instructors Our immediate goal is to convince as many seasoned players as possible to become certified ACBL instructors. By educating players, our bridge community will grow stronger. ACBL offers three-day workshops throughout the country but alternatively, we are considering hosting a workshop in Wichita. The cost is \$2,500 and if you're interested in donating to the Education Fund to get our interested players certified, we would be so grateful.



Susan Eagle, Mike Gromesh and Ken Howell at an Education Committee-sponsored event.

Food for Thought

Pat Dooley

Bridge. Winter. Put the two together and you'll likely want a beverage that will help you keep warm. The bottle of brandy and half-cup of rum included in this recipe for Bridge Punch might do the trick.

This recipe was published in a 1943 issue of *Gourmet* magazine, which I found online. Aside from its title, its only reference to bridge is the phrase "to hell with the points." That said, this might have more to do with 1943's World War II's food rationing than the game.



BRIDGE PUNCH

JUNE 1943

It's a little more difficult to find block ice now than it was in [Charles H. Baker Jr.'s](#) day. If you don't have a nearby source, you can freeze your own in silicone loaf pans, well-washed milk or juice cartons, or Tupperware containers. Give yourself at least 24 hours for the large volume of water to freeze.

To make 50 or more cups, put the tips from 1 bunch fresh mint in the punch bowl, add 4 cups sugar, and muddle *lightly* with a wooden muddler—a small potato masher works mighty well, *mon brave*. Turn in 1 quart strong black tea, 1 bottle brandy, 3/4 cups each of fresh orange juice, grapefruit, and lemon or lime. Now toss in 1 medium sized can of crushed pineapple (to hell with the points, and anyway they were just cut in half today on canned fruit!). March all this with 1 bottle minced scarlet maraschino cherries and 1/2 cup medium or dark rum. Chill for at least 2 hours please. Pour over ice, ladle thoughtfully, sampling now and then (for this is the Punch-Master's privilege and gives him a head start on the mob), and when things are good and cold, add 1 quart bottle chilled soda. *Voila!*



“Lions and tigers and bears, oh my!”

You’d think bridge has something to do with animals in light of all the critter-related metaphors players use. Take a look at these excerpts from the writings of Marilyn Lee Hemenway and Joshua Donn.



To “Duck”

is to refuse to take a trick for whatever reason...a “quack” is a hand with lots of queens and jacks and therefore probably not as good as point count may tend to indicate...an “ugly duckling” ...[has] 5-3-3-2 distribution...a “swan”... [has] 7-4-1-1 distribution. A “moose” has lots of high cards in all the suits, but a “dog” is just the opposite....thus few points.....Then there’s the “striped-tail ape double” whereby you double the opponents in a contract below slam in the hopes of getting a better score than the slam would have been... A “beaver” is a redouble... A “hog” is someone who bids a lot... A “pig’s eye” is the Ace of diamonds... To “fish” means to try to get certain cards out.... To “salmon” is to refer to a seven spot card and “crab” refers to a three spot card. A “cat” is another term for the dummy and a “rattlesnake” is a 4-4-4-1 problem hand. A “hippopotamus” is everyone’s favorite contract....5NT.

--Marilyn Lee Hemenway
*Cornhusker Bridge
Omahabridge.org*

“Walkin’ the Dog” means bidding less than you think you can make with the intention of bidding more on later rounds of the auction. The idea is to be allowed to play at the level you want, preferably doubled. Of all bidding strategies in bridge, WTD perhaps ranks only behind blatant psyching as the riskiest. The most obvious risk of WTD is that your initial underbid is followed by three passes, which can lead to some amusing results. There is a well-known story of a player who passed in first seat with 10 solid spades and three singletons only to see the auction be passed out! The player asked his partner what he held, to which he received the reply “nothing really, just a couple of aces.”

--Joshua Donn, “Breakin’ the Rules—
Walking the Dog”
BridgeWinners.org





What is BRIDGE?

There are endless definitions of the game of bridge, but here's one that seems apropos: "Bridge is a card game that's the perfect balance of fun and logic," wrote Kaitlyn Yarborough in a 2024 magazine article published online in *Southern Living*.

Why do some people love BRIDGE, while others don't?

Yarborough continued, "It's great for your brain, as you have to memorize cards, make quick decisions, analyze odds, learn visual cues, and work with a teammate all at the same time to win."

In contrast, a Reddit contributor explained, "I love bridge. But I find it so hard to convince people to start....[when] I either get hit with 'it's too complicated' or 'it's an old ladies game.'" To find the articles these quotes are taken from, use the following search term in Google searches: "Bridge Yarborough 2024 Southern," and "Reddit Why people don't like bridge."

What is the personality of a BRIDGE player?

Research published in 2024 in the online medical journal PLOS ONE offers an answer: "Using a multidimensional analysis of a new 66-item Bridge Inventory survey completed by 1,300 players, we identified five factors (Aggressiveness, Discipline, Creativity, Emotionality, and Experience) that were meaningfully correlated with broad traits of the Five Factor Model (FFM), supporting their validity." To read the entire article, go to Google and type "bridge inventory plos one" in the search field.

How can quantum physics give you a 2 percent advantage over traditional BRIDGE bidding techniques?

A group of physicists who combined bridge and quantum physics discovered a way to do so that doesn't break the the game's stringent communication rules. To learn more, go to the *Science* magazine article that explains the process by typing "Win at bridge using quantum physics" into Google's search field.



Is BRIDGE a democratic pursuit?

Not really, since strict rules must be followed with penalties imposed on those who fail to do so. Although a bit of luck enters into the mix, bridge is like a battle between those who have the right combination of knowledge, skill and power, and those who don't. Note: Speaking of democracy, the acronym "BRIDGE"

stands for Building Resources in Democracy, Governmance and Elections, an organization that doesn't have anything to do with the game, but perhaps should.