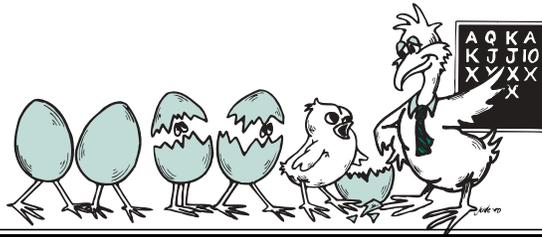


# THE BRIDGE TEACHER



April  
2003

VOL. 16 • ISSUE 1

## Be the Best You Can Be

by Julie Greenberg

Continuing education has long been a theme of the ACBL Education Department. We have encouraged teachers to “Take all of the courses you can take, learn all that you can learn,” work with a partner so you can critique each other. We’ve urged you to join the ABTA (American Bridge Teachers’ Association) and to participate each summer in their annual convention — the best opportunity for professional advancement around.

A book of teacher tips (now available online) has been created to help you learn from the experiences of other teachers, and we have continued to offer a variety of seminars and workshops at each NABC to assist teachers in perfecting their skills.

This summer at the Long Beach NABC, the ACBL is offering a power weekend of continuing education activities to complement your experiences at the ABTA convention.

First, the ACBL is offering three teacher training courses back to back. The TAP (offering ACBL teacher accreditation), Easybridge! (offering EB Presenter Accreditation) and a new training opportunity — Audrey Grant’s Better Bridge Certified Teacher Training Course (offering ACBL certification). You can take one course or all three starting on Thursday, July 17.

Second, there are a myriad of interesting seminars being offered at the Long Beach NABC. These programs cover teaching online, teaching in schools, teaching on cruise ships and teaching in country clubs.

Details on all of these activities can be found on page 2 of the newsletter and at ACBL’s web site, [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org). We hope you are as excited about the summer opportunities as we are. See you — we hope — in Long Beach.

## Finding Students

by Julie Greenberg

During the recent Philadelphia NABC, I met with Carol Mathews of Unit 242 in Coram NY. Carol wears a lot of hats. She is currently unit president, a TAP presenter, a unit liaison and a three-star teacher. As you might expect, she is a very high energy person and her enthusiasm engulfs you as you talk.

The most fascinating part of our conversation revolved around her statement that her unit was recruiting 1,000 new students a year through the continuing education programs in her area. It seems that the school districts in New York each

*continued on page 2*

The Official  
Newsletter  
of The  
American  
Contract  
Bridge  
League  
Accredited  
Teachers

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### *Bridge Teachers and Easybridge! Presenters*

*You are invited to attend  
a special reception  
hosted by  
the ACBL staff  
between sessions on  
Friday, July 18  
from 5 pm to 7 pm*

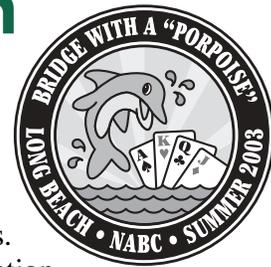
**The ACBL would like to say “Thank You!” to all of its bridge teachers and bridge presenters for all they do for bridge and our organization.**

*Join us for a social interlude and some fun!*

**SPRING  
2003**

# Get in the Swim in Long Beach

## Continuing Education Opportunities Galore



*Have you taken all three of ACBL's teacher training courses?*

**The TAP** — Thursday, July 17 and Friday, July 18. ACBL's popular 10-hour seminar for people interested in learning how to teach bridge successfully. This course features teaching techniques and course material developed by Audrey Grant but the basic principles can be used with any material. Earn your accreditation this summer. (Betty Starzec) \$125. Free to ABTA teachers who have been ABTA members for more than 10 years.

**Better Bridge Certified Teacher Training Course** — Friday afternoon and evening, July 18, with one session to follow on Saturday, July 19. Audrey Grant offers teachers a continuing education opportunity to learn how to make students comfortable at duplicate and on the Internet. This ten-hour course introduces modern methods for teaching Bridge Brushup and for introducing the absolute beginner to bridge. Earn your ACBL certification this summer. (Audrey Grant) \$25 for Accredited Teachers; \$75 if you haven't taken the TAP.

**Easybridge! Presenter Course** — Sunday, July 20 (Part A from 9 a.m. to noon and Part B from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.) or Monday, July 21 (Part B from 9 a.m. to noon and Part A from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.). This continuing education course is for club managers and teachers working with a bridge club. You will learn some outstanding promotional ploys and a new way of getting

players into the game. Easybridge! is especially designed to grow newcomer duplicate games. Earn your Easybridge! accreditation this summer. (Marti Ronemus) \$25 for the course, \$15 for optional materials.

*Have you attended all of ACBL's latest NABC seminars?*

- Friday, July 18 — ACBL's Funded School Bridge Program
- Saturday, July 19 — Bridge Teachers and Bridge Cruises  
Easybridge! Presenters Meeting with Marti Ronemus
- Sunday, July 20 — New Opportunities for the Bridge Professional with Audrey Grant
- Monday, July 21 — Teaching Online Demo with Betty Starzec
- Tuesday, July 22 — Bridge Base Online with Fred Gitelman.

The ACBL hopes you will agree that the Long Beach program is swimming with benefits for teachers. We hope to see you at as many of these seminars and activities as you can fit in. Full details are available at the ACBL's web site, [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org).

### *Finding Students — continued from front page*

sponsor adult education. There are more than 120 school districts on Long Island (just two of the counties) and each one sends out a new continuing education catalog every Spring and Fall to all of the households in its district. That's a lot of free advertising.

Carol went to the two school districts closest to her and offered to teach bridge. The district collects the fees and pays the teacher a percentage. She gives an eight-week course and uses the eighth lesson as a field trip to the local club. This is a win-win situation for everyone.

Other teachers in the unit have a similar situation in other school districts.

Because of the success of the program — you can't sneeze at 1,000 new students a year — Carol will be making a presentation to the New York State Department of Parks and Recreation seminar to try to get bridge into their afterschool programs.

Not every city has this type of situation. Memphis has continuing education locally through its university and colleges but not through its high schools. It would be worth your while to find out how continuing education is offered in your town. If your school districts work the way they do in New York, you might find a treasure trove of new customers.

# The Bridge Teachers' Bookshelf

The American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) Convention will be held in Long Beach from July 15 through 18. All bridge teachers are welcome to attend. You'll enjoy the chance to exchange ideas with your fellow teachers as well as the array of interesting speakers. Information on the convention appears elsewhere in this newsletter. If you have questions, contact me at [abta@juno.com](mailto:abta@juno.com). A highlight of the convention is the presentation of the ABTA book-of-the-year award. The committee this year will have a very difficult decision as there are several excellent new books, all of which are available from bridge supply houses. Don't forget to check the ACBL catalog for your member discount.

Masterpoint Press has two strong contenders in their '25' Series of books for improving players. Many bridge maxims governing play and defense originated in the early days of whist. David Bird examines 25 of these sayings in *25 Bridge Myths Exposed*. Each chapter in the first half of the book examines when to and when not to follow a particular guideline for declarer play (such as draw trumps, hold up an ace, "eight ever, nine never," or lead toward your high cards). Maxims for the defenders are covered in the second half. The author has omitted some misconceptions that are popular with my students like "when in doubt, lead trump" and "never underlead a king," but many of the old standbys are covered, including "second hand low," "cover an honor with an honor," and "return partner's lead." Teachers can have fun using this material in lessons for students who have already heard and used the basic sayings.

The newest book on my bookshelf is *25 Ways to Take More Tricks As Declarer* by Barbara Seagram and David Bird. Labelled for intermediates and newcomers, this is not an introductory play book but a way for your students (and maybe you) to do better as declarer. The very basic plays are assumed and the book starts out by taking a look at finesses and moves through various topics, including: holdup plays, planning the play, the crossruff, avoiding a ruff, keeping trump control, elimination plays and throw-ins, dummy reversals, and safety plays. Both Masterpoint Press books provide a big plus for teachers — complete

hands in each chapter to illustrate the topic. No lesson really makes the point unless the students can put it to use in hands and this means you won't have to search for as many hands in order to use this material in your courses (a good reason for you to add both books to your collection). There is also a quiz at the end of each chapter to allow your students to see how well they understood the lesson. Every book in this series is highly readable. I frequently recommend them to my students and suggest you do the same. Both '25' books list at \$15.95 U.S.



by Pat Harrington

*Marty Sez, Volume 2* (list price \$17.95) is one of three books published by Marty Bergen in the past year. As with its predecessors in the Points Schmoits Series, the book presents practical tips on useful yet seldom-discussed topics on bidding, play, and defense. Each tip is short — one to two pages — and comes with several examples to make the point. Students will find *Marty Sez* fun and easy to read (however some knowledge of conventions such as transfers and Stayman is assumed). Teachers will find tips galore that can be used as mini-lessons or expanded with the addition of hands into a complete class.

Marty also offers two shorter soft-cover books presenting very specific information. *Understanding INT Forcing* (list price \$5.95) gives the reader a complete look at the popular 1NT forcing convention. It's a must-purchase for those who teach 1NT forcing and a valuable guide for all who use the convention. How often have you heard the lament "but I had only 13 points" when a game or slam is missed? Lament no more — read *Hand Evaluation: Points, Schmoits!* (list price 7.95). Hand evaluation involves much more than counting high-card points. You have to consider: location of honors, the size of your trump fit, how your hand fits with partner's, suit quality, and on and on. After reading this book, you'll find yourself reaching more good games and slams as well as avoiding contracts that don't make. You'll find ideas you can use to improve your own game as well as tips to pass on to your advancing students. The author offers all three books at half price to teachers (shipping on orders over \$20 is free; \$3 otherwise). For more information contact Marty at [mbergen@adelphia.net](mailto:mbergen@adelphia.net) or 1-800-386-7432.



# ACBL'S FUNDED

Get involved in keeping younger players in the game of bridge! The ACBL School Bridge Program can help make it happen. Call the ACBL Education Department with any questions or visit the ACBL School Bridge web site at [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org). ACBL can provide a packet of materials to help you sell the program when you contact a local school. Send requests for packets to [Charlotte.Blaiss@acbl.org](mailto:Charlotte.Blaiss@acbl.org).

## Are you aware of the comprehensive bridge program that ACBL offers for teachers of School Bridge classes?

The ACBL offers the School Bridge Lesson Series as a way of promoting bridge for Junior players in schools, community centers, and other locations. The best part about the program is that it is completely subsidized by the ACBL Educational Foundation, so it is essentially free for all students and there is no cost to the teachers! ACBL *Bidding* and *Play Series* textbooks, cards, t-shirts, trophies, and more are offered to all classes with at least eight students and at least 16 total hours of class time. In addition a stipend of \$270 U.S. is offered to all teachers of the school bridge classes who are not already getting paid to teach the class by their respective schools. Any school that has at least eight interested students under the age of 26 may take part in this program. It is simply a great way to get more young people involved in the game!

## How long has this been going on?

The ACBL has been actively promoting bridge lessons in elementary, middle, high schools and colleges for more than 15 years. The program has consistently introduced between 3,000 and 5,000 young people to the game of bridge each year. There are usually 100-150 school bridge classes taking place every spring and autumn all across North America with our target audience being 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students.

## Are you interested in teaching a summer class?

Summer programs have been severely depressed with usually fewer than 10 each year. This should not be the case! Bridge can be part of the curriculum at community centers, camps, summer schools, libraries, Y's and just about any other location you can think of where

young people gather!

A bridge program is considerably less expensive than other summer programs since there is no out-of-pocket expenses for the players, and teachers are reimbursed for their time. Many summer programs would jump at such an offer! Why don't you try to bring ACBL's school bridge lesson program to your area this year? If you start planning now, there's lots of time to get a program started.

## Do you know about the special ACBL memberships available to students under the age of 19?

Since the beginning of 2003, the ACBL has started to offer special \$5 memberships to all students who have participated in a school bridge program. The memberships confer all the same benefits as regular paid memberships with the exception that the students will not receive *The Bridge Bulletin*. Student members can, however, participate in all ACBL events, get reduced entry prices to all NABC events and many events at regional and sectional tournaments. They receive *The Grapevine*, an ACBL newsletter oriented towards younger players, three times a year. In addition, they get recognition for their levels of achievement, the ability to participate in benefit programs designed especially for ACBL members and access to an exclusive member section of the ACBL website, the most comprehensive bridge website on the Internet.

## What's being taught in school bridge programs?

The School Bridge Program no longer is exclusively an ACBL *Bridge Series* course. To participate in the program, teachers may use a variety of different materials — the *Bidding Series* or the *Play of the Hand Series* or a combination of these courses with a teacher's own material.

Minibridge, a more user-friendly method of teaching bridge to elementary and possibly middle school students is also popular. It teaches bridge without getting into bidding for the first eight to ten weeks of the course. A Minibridge packet is available through the ACBL Education Department for a cost of \$25. Teachers will need only one packet for an entire class and may reuse it with each new class.

The Ed Department is currently recommending the use of special lesson plans developed for school classes by Kitty Cooper. These plans combine Minibridge with the *Pre-Club Series* and are very

# SCHOOL PROGRAM



suitable for younger players. Free hard copies of the lesson plans may be obtained from the ACBL Education Department or may be downloaded from the ACBL School Bridge website (click on the pencil, then click on the link “Word” or “HTML”). Easybridge! is still an option — especially for an after-school class.

## What happens to school bridge students after their course has been completed?

After the School Bridge Program has been completed, the story is not over. Here are some of the next steps in developing Junior bridge players.

Higher level classes may be offered now for students who have completed the first course. ACBL will provide the ACBL *Play of the Hand Series* textbooks.

Current and former participants may take part in the School Bridge Instant Matchpoint Game which is held every year near the end of April, beginning of May. (In 2003, the game will be held on May 2.) The Instant Matchpoint Game offers a \$500 scholarship through the ACBL Educational Foundation to the overall winners in the East/West and North/South positions. The game is simultaneously held across North America. For more information and conditions of contest, please see the “Events” subheading under “Juniors” on the ACBL website.

Teachers like Brenda Simpson of Spokane WA take their students on field trips to a local sectional tournament during the summer.

Ed O’Reilly of Kingston ON holds a “Bridge Day” each spring for the students in his area.

Student-Mentor games may be offered at the local duplicate club. After almost a year of lessons, Fran Lister of St. Catharines ON took her students to the bridge club for some real competition. Each student was paired with a regular member of the club. When the dust cleared, all ages of players enjoyed the session of bridge.

Student-Parent or Grandparent games may be held at the local club.

Students may be introduced to competition through the organization of a local tournament. Stan Marshall of Winchester ON is having a

tournament for students in his area in June. He expects about 40 tables. Ron Sawiak of Winnipeg MB runs a student tournament each spring. He holds the game in the school gymnasium. Approximately 150 students participate in the tournament.

Many teachers work with the schools to set up lunchtime or after-school clubs so the students can practice and improve. Others work with the schools “Club Day” programs.

Teachers like Ora Lourie of Hypoluxo FL run summer bridge camps. Ora runs the “Deal Me In” Bridge Camp at Palm Beach Community College each summer for kids ages 9 to 14. She teaches bridge lessons to the kids and, at the end of the summer, she runs a bridge tournament for the group.

Teachers like Claudette Rousch have aligned themselves with parents who are home schooling their children in order to offer bridge.

Some teachers introduce their students to free online bridge sites to keep them interested and playing. Sites like [www.games.yahoo.com](http://www.games.yahoo.com), [www.zone.msn.com](http://www.zone.msn.com) and [www.pogo.com](http://www.pogo.com) offer free bridge games. [www.BridgeBase.com](http://www.BridgeBase.com) offers free bridge and is a great venue for teachers who want to continue with their students online.

Students might further their skills with the use of the Learn-To-Play-Bridge program, which can be downloaded for free from the ACBL website. LTPB2 is also available and LTPB3 is expected to be ready in 2004.

## What are some of the reasons schools decide to adopt bridge programs for their students?

The game of bridge is invading classrooms across the country. School teachers whose students are taking bridge lessons report that they have seen their students’ thinking skills improve as they learn to look ahead and to plan and predict. In math classes, teachers believe that bridge helps students with the areas of probability, ratios, percentages, fractions and number sense. Playing bridge has even been shown to improve students’ reading, comprehension and communication skills.

*continued on page 7*

# AMERICAN BRIDGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONVENTION AND SEMINAR WESTIN LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA • JULY 15-18, 2003

Open to all teachers, the ABTA Seminar and Convention is a wonderful way to revitalize your teaching. Most bridge teachers do not have a strong local support group. ABTA provides interaction with fellow teachers and advice from the experts. Register now!

### SEMINAR SCHEDULE JULY 15-16

The focus of the Seminar is completely on teaching and the business of teaching. Registration fee of \$40 includes Wednesday continental breakfast.

Tuesday, July 15 from 1 to 6 pm: Speakers include Mike Nistler discussing "Teaching on the Internet", and author Norma Sands with a two-hour session on "Tried and True Techniques." The session ends with a panel of experienced teachers to answer your questions.

Wednesday, July 16, from 9 to noon (continental breakfast at 8:30): Audrey Grant will showcase her latest material as she discusses "Wide Range Teaching" — how to successfully handle a wide range of skill levels in one group.

### CONVENTION SCHEDULE JULY 16-18

The Convention program combines advice from the experts to help you improve your own game with presentations from expert teachers. And just as valuable is the time spent in shop talk with your fellow teachers. Convention program begins Wednesday, July 16, at 1 pm and runs all day and evening on Thursday, ending at noon on Friday, July 18. Registration fee is \$125 before June 15 and \$150 after June 15. Your fee includes two continental breakfasts and our gala Thursday evening banquet complete with an entertaining panel of experts.

The complete schedule of speakers is not finished but is expected to include: Larry Cohen, Mike Passell, Jill Meyers, Jerry Helms, Alan LeBendig, Grant Baze, David Lindop, our own Julie Greenberg and ACBL's Linda Granell on marketing.

#### USE FORM BELOW TO REGISTER FOR SEMINAR AND CONVENTION

Send a check made out to ABTA for the Convention and/or Seminar registration fees to:

**Pat Harrington, Business Secretary-Treasurer**  
14840 Crystal Cove Court #503  
Fort Myers, Florida 33919-7417  
Phone: (239) 437-4106      E-mail: [abta@juno.com](mailto:abta@juno.com)

Payment must be either in US funds drawn on a US bank or in a Canadian check in Canadian funds.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please register me for (check all that apply and **include payment**):

	<b>Convention (Wed-Fri)</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Seminar (Tue-Wed)</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Check here</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
US funds fee:	\$125 fee (\$150 after 6/15)	\$40 fee in US funds	<b>If this is your first</b>
In Canadian funds:	\$206 (\$247 after 6/15)	\$66 in Canadian funds	<b>Convention</b>

If you would like to join ABTA, include an additional \$35 (\$58 Canadian) for one year or \$90 (\$148 Canadian) for 3 years and check one of the two boxes below.

I have 100 hours or more of professional bridge teaching experience.

I have under 100 hours of professional bridge teaching experience.

# Using the '25' Series to Teach

At the DeLand Bridge Club, we offer a brief free lesson before any limited game. Even though we plan to have the same director each week in any limited game, since the players seem to prefer this, there are times when it is necessary to use a substitute, and then continuity in the lessons and other elements of the session is important. We are always looking for good material for these on-going series of lessons—we need material for at least 100 sessions a year in each of three limited games.

Currently, we are using the marvelous *25 Bridge Myths Exposed* by David Bird.

Each week's handout states the "myth" at the top and then follows with the exceptions which Bird so cogently points out in his chapters. Although he has organized his book, quite reasonably, into declarer and defender play, we are not presenting it in his order. Instead, we go back and forth between play and defense issues. Bird's hands are interesting and easy to use, and there is more than enough information for a 30-minute presentation.

When we started the series, we put out a stack of

inexpensive report folders — bright colored cardboard with "pockets" inside. Players were encouraged to take a folder in which to collect the series of handouts. Since we know what next week's subject will be, we can also give a little teaser to encourage players to come early and take advantage of the lesson.

Some of our excellent directors are still not comfortable teaching, and this process has made it much easier for them to prepare. When this series is completed, we plan to use others in the excellent "25" series from Masterpoint Press — especially the volumes by Barbara Seagram and Marc Smith on conventions and competitive bidding.

While all of these books are excellent for self-teaching — the material is well-presented and graphically interesting and helpful — they would also be wonderful tools for an on going series for Intermediate students, as would Paul Thurston's *25 Steps to Learning 2/1*. While the spelling may be British and the publishers Canadian, they are useful for anyone playing modern bridge in the U.S. as well.



by Lynn Berg



*School Program* — continued from page 5

## How does teaching bridge to young people differ from teaching adults?

There's a lot you might want to know about handling discipline in the classroom before you try to teach young people the game of bridge. Audrey Grant spent many years teaching in schools in Toronto. She has written some important words of wisdom that every teacher should read. Go to the ACBL website [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org), click on Quick Links, Juniors, enter the school page, click on the pencil and read "Discipline in the Classroom."

## Are there any tips for teaching young people?

Kathie MacNab of Halifax NS sent in these ideas. Give them a try the next time you are in a classroom:

1. On the first day of class, take a bag of old cards which have been solicited from clubs and the unit (left over from replacing the cards in their boards). Give each student a deck of cards and

tell them their "homework" is to learn to shuffle, deal, sort and hold their hands. This is probably the only homework some of them will ever do voluntarily.

2. At a lunch-time class, give a mini-lesson while the children eat and then let them play. Some weeks they can shuffle and deal, other weeks they can have pre-dealt hands.
3. Let the class play a deal from a regular duplicate game (perhaps from the night before) and test themselves against the adults.
4. Children have an easier time solving "play puzzles" than do adults. When teaching finessing, let the children lay out the cards and place the opponents' cards where they want them to be. This helps them get it right.
5. Play whist for about three or four weeks to start. Let the children play in notrump and randomly selected suit contracts.

# Senior Conventions Offer a Great Recruitment Opportunity

by Betty Starzec

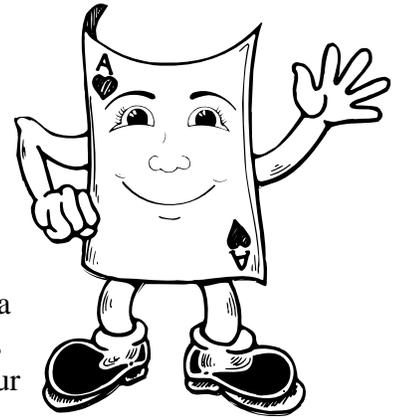
As part of the Houston Senior Olympics, the title sponsor, Memorial Hermann Healthcare System, ran a Health Fair in coordination with the opening ceremonies. The ACBL sponsored a booth at this fair and greeted an amazing 850 to 900 current, former, and potential bridge players.

Along with Wayne Oden, owner of the Bridge and Games Studio of Houston, I manned the booth for five hours and we experienced a level of interest that surprised us. Wayne gave away free plays and a free bridge lesson to all takers. He said, "If just one out of every 10 comes to my studio, I will be ecstatic." Wayne also received offers from a number of retirement centers to hold bridge lessons and games at their facilities. These were not assisted-living facilities, but actual retirement centers with active seniors.

If you are looking to expand your teaching classes, consider having a booth at the conventions, seminars, and fairs in your area. Your local

convention and visitor's bureau can give you a schedule of upcoming events. You can create a display (paid for in part by the ACBL Cooperative Advertising Program) that can promote your abilities as a teacher as well as the game of bridge. The display should be able to adjust to the focus of the convention – for seniors the focus was how bridge keeps us mentally alert – for schools it would be how bridge meets the learning requirements for schools, etc.

Explore these recruitment opportunities. I'm sure you will be pleasantly surprised.



**B ♦ R ♦ I ♦ D ♦ G ♦ E   T ♦ E ♦ A ♦ C ♦ H ♦ E ♦ R**

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