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A NEWSLETTER FOR TEACHERS

THE BRIDGE TEACHER

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For your information...

ABTA Master Teachers — Congratulations to Gerry LaChance, Collingwood ON, and Ann Zorn, Billings MT for successfully passing their tests to become Master Teachers.

Free-Play for Juniors — The ACBL Board approved a measure to provide free-play coupons to ACBL Members 18 and younger for regional events. The previous upper age limit was 15.

King/Queen of Bridge — Do you know a graduating high school senior who is an ACBL Member who plays and promotes bridge? They could become the 2012 King/Queen of Bridge.

To enter the contest, applicants will need to send an e-mail with personal information and qualifications, along with the name of their school and school principal, the school address and phone number to education@acbl.org no later than May 11.

Starting times at the Philadelphia NABC — All championship sessions will start at 10 am and 3 pm in Philadelphia. The seminar schedule and other “extra” you are used to attending at the NABCs may not be held when you expect. Be certain to check out the details.

Youth NABC — The 2012 Youth NABC will be held during the Summer NABC in Philadelphia. The dates will be July 19-21. Go to <http://www.youth4bridge.org> for more information.

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AMERICAN CONTRACT BRIDGE LEAGUE
6575 Windchase Blvd.
Horn Lake MS 38637-1523
662-253-3100

www.acbl.org



The Memphis NABC was a great success!

I hope you had a chance to come play, meet the Horn Lake staff and help ACBL celebrate it's 75th Anniversary.



A reception was on the first Friday of the tournament to celebrate ACBL's birthday. Robert Hartman, ACBL CEO, kicked off the festivities with a champagne toast. Celebrants enjoyed a performance from the Beale Street Flippers, a group of athletic acrobats, and a live performance from the Reba Russell Band.

Over 500 players visited the ACBL Headquarters and Museum during the tournament. The ACBL staff loved meeting the players and the players were happy to put a face to the name and voice.

The American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) held its annual Conference in Memphis in conjunction with the ACBL's 75th Anniversary. The ABTA was celebrating 55 years of teachers joining together to help those who teach Bridge to “do it better – more effectively – more knowledgeably – more professionally.”

The ACBL and Baron Barclay sponsored a luncheon for ABTA members during the convention. During the luncheon, Brenda Simpson, ABTA President, presented a plaque to the Education Department. The plaque reads: “The ABTA wishes to express extreme gratitude to the ACBL Education Department for providing bridge teachers with the tools to excel and outstanding support to keep them teaching.”





2012 Teacher of the Year

Mary Jane Orock

By Joyce Penn

Recognizing very special bridge teachers is the thrust of the American Bridge Teachers Association's annual award honoring the Teacher of the Year. Sponsored by Master Point Press, the winner receives a crystal plaque and cash award, for teaching excellence. The 2012 winner, Mary Jane Orock, from Fort Worth Texas, is a quintessential teacher who knows her subject matter and inspires her students. She

has the enviable ability to adjust her material, delivery and methods to every level of player. Having enjoyed a distinguished career as player, teacher, and director, Mary Jane's students are bursting with pride in their teacher. One student states, "she never makes anyone feel dumb. She is never petty, pretentious, or irritable. I cannot imagine a more worthy candidate to be the recipient of this year's award." Another student feels Mary Jane has "enriched the entire Fort Worth bridge community through her teaching excellence and promotion of ethical and enlightened play."

Mary Jane enjoyed an illustrious career as an US Air Force nurse, rising to the level of Colonel, in 20 years. Her students are delighted that she chose to teach bridge, instead of nursing, in her retirement years.

Six other gifted teachers were recognized for teaching excellence at the recent American Bridge Teachers Association Annual Conference, held in Memphis. Judged on teaching excellence, innovative methods, service to bridge and service to their community, all finalists are "winners" in every respect, held in high esteem by their students and peers. These include the following teachers:

Carol Lee Bellam, Calgary Alberta Canada

David Glandorf, Clear Lake, TX

Verna Goldberg, Louisville, KY

Kathy Rolfe, Lake Winnebago, MO

Richard Rothwarf, Philadelphia, PA

Jeff Schuett, Riverwoods, IL

2012 Teacher of the Year Committee:

Marti Ronemus, York PA

Tina Radding, Charleston SC

Joan Anderson, W Des Moines IA

Linda Lee, Toronto ON

Joyce Penn, Columbus OH, Chairman



A note from Dana Norton — Time flies when you are having fun! I started work in the Education Department 23 years ago, but it seems like yesterday. I have enjoyed working with all of you over the years. By the time you read this issue of the newsletter I will no longer be in the Education Department. I will officially be retired from ACBL on April 20. In the future please remit all correspondence to education@acbl.org.



2012 Applebasket Award

The ABTA's Applebasket Award for best teaching tip of the year was awarded to Kathy Rolfe of Winnebago MO. *Here is Kathy's tip.*

Are You Desperate Yet?

When I teach how to respond to an opening bid of one of a suit with 6 to 9 points (or 6 to 10) depending on which book I'm teaching from, I list the priorities to respond and 1NT is always the last choice. I call that choice the Bid of Desperation! It does not mean responder has a balanced hand. It does not mean you actually *want* to play Notrump, although you may end up doing so! It simply means, "Partner, I have to bid and this is the only bid available."

So:

How to respond to 1 of a Major with 6 to 9 points:

- 1) Raise partner to 2 of the Major with 3-card support.
- 2) Can't do that? Then bid a suit of your own at the 1 level.
- 3) Can't do that? Bid 1NT!

How to respond to 1 of a minor with 6 to 9 points:

- 1) Bid a suit of your own at the 1 level, must have 4 cards in your suit.
- 2) Can't do that? Raise partner to 2 of the minor (must have 5(+) ♣; 4 or 5 ♦).
- 3) Can't do that? Bid 1NT!

When my students are practicing this concept, I'll let them struggle with what to bid and, if they can't come up with the response, I'll ask, "Are you desperate yet?" Then they laugh and say, "Yes! 1NT!"

♥ King/Queen of Bridge ♥

Do you know a graduating high school senior who is an ACBL Member who plays and promotes bridge? They could become the **2012 King/Queen of Bridge**. Recent winners have been cited for outstanding tournament performances plus administrative, recreational and promotional activities related to bridge.

This competition was established in 1973 by longtime youth advocate Homer Shoop, and is administered today by the ACBL Educational Foundation. The ACBL Educational Foundation will present a \$1,000 scholarship to the King/Queen of Bridge.

A partial list of previous winners reads like a who's who of bridge: Jeff Meckstroth, Bobby Levin, Steve Weinstein, Brad Moss, Martha (Benson) Katz, Joel Wooldridge and Eric Greco.

To enter the contest, applicants will need to send an e-mail with personal information and qualifications, along with the name of their school and school principal, the school address and phone number to education@acbl.org no later than May 16.



Is It Time for Two Over One?

By Betty Starzec

The annual convention for the American Bridge Teacher's Association is normally held prior to the Summer NABC. This year to help celebrate the 75th anniversary of the ACBL, the ABTA moved its convention to the Spring NABC in Memphis. The program was exceptional this year with top players as speakers and healthy conversations on where bridge is headed. A number of speakers stated that they believe it was time to start beginners' classes with Two Over One (2/1). Well, what do you think? Are you ready?

We all know bridge is a dynamic game — ever changing never static. But often times change takes its time to become main stream. Al Roth and Tobias Stone introduced the modern negative double in 1957. But it wasn't until much later that it was acknowledged to be part of Standard American let alone 2/1. Remember when it was a bid that needed to be alerted? Now, it is recognized as an absolutely essential part of a modern bidding structure.

In 1989, my 16-year-old son, Brian, a bit of a non-bridge playing card shark, thought bridge looked easy and wanted me to teach him the game. He also wanted to play at our club the following Saturday. Well, I really gave it to him — bridge in a week complete with 2/1, some conventions and upside down carding. I wanted to show him bridge is a game you needed to respect because it takes time to really master. Well, the game at that time was a Handicapped Game — I'm sorry to say we came in 1st — yes, sorry, because my son walked away saying “see I told you it was easy.” (Just so you don't think Brian was really cocky, he did graduate from MIT and now owns his own company.) Were we lucky? — you bet. However, I started thinking how it did not make any difference what I taught him — he knew nothing so 2/1 was just as easy for him as teaching Standard American would have been. So, if it doesn't make a difference why not teach everyone 2/1?

To me the answer obviously lies in knowing your market. I truly believe it is just as easy to teach 2/1 as it is to teach Standard American. However, is your market ready for the transition? My classes at a local retirement center certainly would not want to learn 2/1. Their goal was to learn enough to play in the card room with their

friends on Tuesday evenings. However, if you are a club owner and transition your students immediately into a newcomer game at your club, the time may be right for the transition to 2/1. Part of your responsibility as a teacher is to understand what your students expect to get out of your classes — again, you need to know your market and give them the information they need and want.

2/1 is now played by 95% of the expert community according to the Encyclopedia of Bridge. Just as no one today is teaching Standard American using four-card majors (which I learned in 1974), the transition will surely come to teaching 2/1 to beginners. It seems we are on the cusp of this transition. When you make the transition is obviously up to you and your market. ♠

Tips & Tricks

It's always helpful to know what makes other clubs and teachers successful in recruiting new Members, and the Marketing Department has compiled a list of a few Tips & Tricks for you.

Visit <http://www.acbl.org/marketing/tips.html> for advertising tips, campaign ideas for introducing new players to duplicate, increasing class/workshop attendance, publicity tips, event ideas and advice on creating player satisfaction and loyalty. Many of these Tips & Tricks even qualify for the Cooperative Advertising Program!

If you would like to share your campaign/marketing ideas that have been successful, please send them to marketing@acbl.org with the subject of “Tips and Tricks.”

We'd love to hear from you!



Seminars and Meetings at the Philadelphia Summer NABC

There is more to the game at the NABCs when Members have an opportunity to take advantage of numerous educational and social activities. Here is a listing of the seminars being offered in Philadelphia at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown. For more information, contact education@acbl.org.

Club Directors Course

July 10, 11, 12

Comprehensive course that prepares candidates for directing club and bridge cruise games. Anyone interested in becoming a club director or a director aboard a cruise ship is invited to participate. Study materials may be purchased through **Baron Barclay Bridge Supply** (www.baronbarclay.com).

Pre-register online by July 2 at <https://web.acbl.org/Education/CDC/index.do>, or contact Joyce Stone at 662-253-3138, or send an e-mail to: directorcourses@acbl.org.

Fee: \$50

Date: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday – July 10, 11, 12

Time: 1 – 10 p.m. Tuesday with dinner break

9 am – 10 pm Wednesday with lunch & dinner breaks

9 am – noon Thursday followed by lunch break & testing

Reception for Club Officials & Teachers

Friday, July 13

This is the ACBL's "thank you" reception for the club officials and teachers who recruit and retain our Members. All club managers, teachers and club directors are encouraged to attend.

Fee: FREE of charge.

Date: Friday, July 13

Time: 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

The TAP—Teacher Accreditation Program (TAP)

July 12-13

Introduction to the ACBL Bridge Series material and other popular teaching products. Learn modern teaching techniques from one of the ACBL's premier teachers in this 10-hour interactive learning course which includes three hours of hands-on experience. Learn the business side of teaching bridge and be introduced to 64 weeks of class material and more! There are even techniques to move your students into duplicate faster. Leave with the tools needed to develop a successful teaching career.

To pre-register, use the link at: <http://www.acbl.org/teachers/upcomingTaps.html>

Contact education@acbl.org for more information.

Fee: \$125 (Previously ACBL Accredited Teachers can take the course for no fee.)

Date: Thursday, July 12 – 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm & 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm

Friday, July 13 – 9:00 am to noon.

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Seminars and Meetings at the Philadelphia Summer NABC

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Club Manager and Teacher Q & A

Saturday, July 14

Come by for coffee and meet with members of the ACBL staff. This interactive information session will be hosted by Carol Robertson, Director of Club and Member Services. She will be joined by Vicki Campbell, ACBL Marketing Director; Jim Miller, National Recorder & Director of Elections with a special visit by our new CEO, Robert Hartman. We will be there to answer your questions and share thoughts about club games, marketing tools and programs. So bring your best ideas and hear from others about growing the game of bridge.

Fee: **FREE** of charge.

Date: Saturday, July 14

Time: 8:30 am – 9:30 am

Board of Governors Meeting

Saturday, July 14

ACBL General Membership Meeting

All Members of the ACBL Board of Governors are invited to attend the Summer NABC meeting. This meeting is also open to the general Membership of the ACBL. Discussion will include recent actions of the Board of Directors, reports from the CEO and treasurer and new proposals from the Board of Governors.

Fee: **FREE** of charge.

Date: Saturday, July 14

Time: 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Club Director Refresher Course

Tuesday and Wednesday, July 17 and 18

Continuing education for bridge directors to increase their skills. Must attend both sessions (Tuesday and Wednesday).

Fee: **\$15** covers both sessions. Sign up at door.

Date: Tuesday and Wednesday, July 17 and 18

Time: 9:00 am – noon, both days

