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Center for Bridge Education and Silicon Valley Youth Bridge News

Using Bridge to Teach English

AS A SENIOR at Mission High School, Terence Li joined CBE's first bridge club. He and Edmund Wu were the first two students CBE sent to the Youth NABC. After graduating Mission, he attended Stanford and is now teaching at the Chinese Education Center Elementary School (CEC). Terence has kept in touch with CBE and was approached to see if he thought bridge would be a good adjunct to his teaching program. He did. Here is his report.

CEC is a school that offers a newcomer program serving the Chinese immigrant population.



The main goal is to significantly improve the children's English

language skills and to develop their cultural knowledge. When CBE approached me about teaching bridge, I thought it might be a fun way for the kids to improve their English while learning an interesting game.

It was important to bring in a bridge instructor who could interact with the kids in their native language of Chinese. CBE found Bob Ng who

volunteered to work with the students during their afterschool program time period.

The students who participated ranged from the age of seven to eleven (grades 3 – 5). They loved learning about bridge and they were very excited about the competitive aspect of the game. Bob focused mainly on getting the kids interested in the bidding and the card play aspect of the game first. This required use of Chinese to help the students understand the game first. He brought in powerpoints, diagrams, and many other materials to make the learning tangible and visual for the students. We made sure to provide the time to practice English. On the first day, we provided the visual aids of the suits and the English spelling. First, Bob told the kids what the suit was called in Chinese and then had the students pronounce and practice saying the suits in English. Later, Bob demonstrated one round of play, and he had the students name the number and suit of the card.

Aside from the language aspect that we had hoped to incorporate, bridge provided an intellectual outlet for many of CEC's students. One student told me that he felt that he could master the game because there were only thirteen tricks. This student was one of eleven that started with me on the first day of school in August of 2013. Back then, he gave me a blank look when I asked him how old he was. Now, he is able to carry a basic introductory

conversation. This student will be going to John Ye Hall Chin Elementary School next year.

Another student, who ended up winning the championship during a mock game, exclaimed to me that she had never won anything before! This particular student entered my classroom in February. By that time, my classroom had



grown to 22 students. Since she entered my classroom quite

late into the school year, she will actually be returning to CEC for another full-year before needing to transfer to another elementary school. During and after the regular school day, bridge has the potential of providing a space for language practice and an arena for intellectual development.

For next year, we are already making plans to build in a stronger language component as well as include more students.

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President's Letter

I PLAYED at the California Capital Regional in Sacramento, where a number of our CBE graduates also competed. What a fine impression they made there. A number of individuals commented to me that these guys were perfect gentlemen at the bridge tables (while also taking them to the cleaners.) We've also been receiving very flattering reports about the demeanor of our current students when they compete at the local bridge clubs and tournaments. We should be very proud of our



CBE youth and we can also strive to be as polite as they are when we compete.

Have you taught the young people in your life how to play bridge? If not, what are you waiting for? This summer presents leisure periods when you can break out a deck of cards and introduce your nieces, nephews, children and grandchildren to our great game.

Be sure to mark your calendar for August, when our own Edmund Wu and William Zhu will be in Istanbul competing in the World Youth Bridge Championships. Their matches will be broadcast live on BBO. Dates and times will be announced in August. Plan on being there as a kibitzer to cheer them on.

Contact Information

Web Sites:
Center4bridge.org
Siliconvalleyyouthbridge.org
Center for Bridge Education
274 Greenview Drive
Daly City CA 94014
Visit our web sites for credit card donations

Jeff and Genie Retire

THE LONG TIME SPONSORS of the Lowell bridge club are hanging up their spurs. Jeff and Genie Reynolds have run the club since CBE approached them to do it five years ago. Jeff taught at Lowell and made a strong personal effort to encourage kids to join. It was their tutelage that resulted in the many young players that have started their bridge career at Lowell.

Genie baked goodies every week for the kids, and it seemed that no matter how much she brought they disappeared. Over the years Lowell has had as many as five tables in play. CBE thanks them for all the hard work.

Taking over the club next year will be Marion Robertson with an as yet to be named assistant. She is trying to convince Genie to come back occasionally with or without her wonderful home-made treats.

New Lowell Stars

WATCH OUT! The Lowell Bridge Club has produced more young players who may follow in the footsteps of William Zhu and Chris Chen. With more than three tables in play each week, a couple of the young players have already started to show their prowess.

Dante Tam played in the SF sectional in the side game and took second with mentor Art Quey. Dante has been a regular at the Chinese American Bridge Club having taken 4th in flight A twice. One of times he also was second in flight B.

Cheyenne Yen and Lisa Liao also began cutting their teeth at the SF sectional. Cheyenne has been a regular at the Chinese American Club where she took a second in flight A (with Robert Ng) and a 3rd in flight C.

First SiVY Bridge Camp a Roaring Success

FROM JUNE 16 through June 20, Silicon Valley Youth Bridge with the cooperation of the Palo Alto Bridge Center, held the first-ever Bridge Camp in the Bay Area. More than 30 volunteers helped make it a great experience for 45 young people aged 10 to 16. Some campers had never played any card games, some had taken SiVY bridge lessons at their schools, and others had played in duplicate events.

The week-long camp concluded with a pizza party and a raffle, followed by an optional youth duplicate bridge tournament in which 36 campers participated. Trophy winners in the stratified duplicate tournament were Kevin Huang and Michael Hu (first in Strat A), Rory Xiao and Brent Xiao (second in A), Anand Chandra and Griffin Eberlein (first in B), Jonathan and Matthew Shi (second in B), and Leo Yang and Arthur Zhou (who tied for first in B and were first in C), and Kayl Nash and Kyra Eberlein (second in C). Many tournament participants, including some who had never played cards before the first day of Camp, vowed to play again soon!

The goal of the camp was to create an enjoyable and sociable atmosphere in which to introduce beginners to the challenge and excitement of playing bridge, and to give more experienced players intensive practice in advanced strategies. Teams of teachers and table mentors, led by Debbie Rosenberg, Randy Ryals, Kevin Schoenfeld, and Kevin Rosenberg, offered training at appropriate levels for each group. All campers also experimented with some of the tools provided for them by BridgeBaseOnline.



By the end of the week, even the least experienced campers had learned the basic rules of Contract Bridge and were enthusiastically taking tricks and bidding to their contracts. More experienced players gained greater confidence in executing advanced strategies in declarer play and defense. Almost all the campers said they enjoyed camp “a lot!” Their favorite part of camp was “playing bridge.” Many said that making camp longer would be the best way to improve it.

One father observed that his son seemed hesitant about Bridge Camp after the first day, and wished for a longer snack time. By the second day, though, this camper seemed much more enthusiastic, and on Wednesday he stayed until 6:30 playing with friends and mentors.

One mother said that both her sons were really enjoying camp and had learned a lot. She noticed especially that although her older son had more experience, her younger son was much better about following the accepted “form” for bridge.

Teachers and mentors also expressed enthusiasm about the success of

camp. Several said, “We had a great group of kids—smart, engaged, and a pleasure to know. We hope to see many of them again at future SiVY events.” During the tournament, one teacher said, “I was a little worried the campers would make too much noise during the adult club game [which was ongoing during part of the SiVY Camp duplicate]. Now I’m worried that the adults will disturb the kids!”

Firecracker Sectional Youth Day

THE FIRST ever Firecracker Sectional Youth Day, hosted by the Palo Alto Unit of the ACBL and Silicon Valley Youth (SiVY) Bridge, offered a chance for



many young people to play their first tournament. Players reported that they enjoyed the day –

and many of them earned masterpoints!

Each of the two sessions drew 7 tables of players with 27 young players in all – 12 of them entering one session and 15 entering both. There were several sibling pairs and a parent/child duo.

The days’ players ranged in age from 9 years old

to College – and in experience level from “just learned last week at camp”, to some who had been playing casually for several years.

After each session, the first place winners earned a trophy, presented by SiVY President Debbie Rosenberg. In all, 14 youth players earned masterpoints. Most of them were already ACBL members, but 4 more were inspired to join by winning.

Between sessions SiVY Bridge held a pizza party for the youth players. Five Bay Area players who will go to Istanbul, Turkey for the World Junior Championships this August were introduced to the newer players. Also Billy Miller of the Dear Billy ACBL Bulletin column visited and offered some words of encouragement.

Experienced players and directors were impressed by how even the youngest players were so quiet and focused. All were glad to see evidence of a future generation enjoying the game they love.