



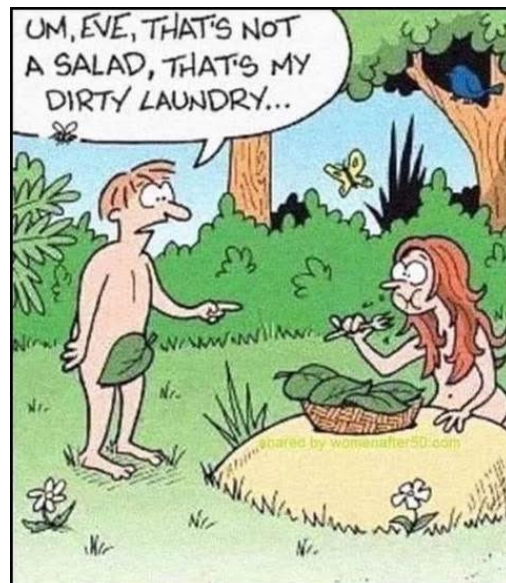
PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

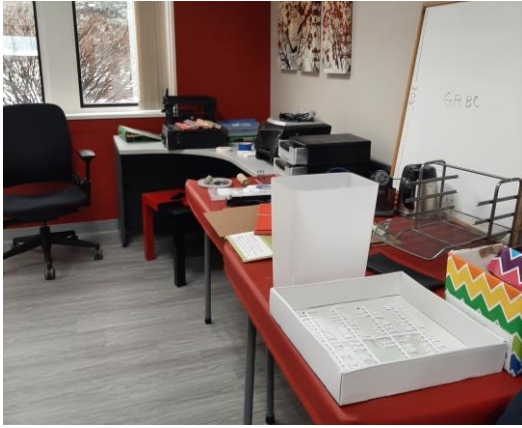
ALERT – January 29, 2024

Click [here](#) to access our regular game schedule.

Looking Ahead

- ♥ Our BBO games during the week of January 28 - February 3 will be **Junior Fund Charity games** = double black points, BBO\$1 surcharge
- ♥ Malkin Howes will be giving a mini-lesson on **Filling Out Your Convention Card** at the Monday morning bridge lab on January 29.
- ♥ **Starting Signals – Attitude** workshop by Neil Jeffrey, Tuesday, January 30, 6:00 pm
- ♥ Dave Quarrie will be giving a mini-lesson on **Declarer Play (Suits)** at the Monday morning bridge lab on February 5.
- ♥ **Online Swiss Teams game**, 7:10 pm Tuesday, February 6
- ♥ **The Friday night open games on February 9 and February 16 are cancelled.**
- ♥ **Niagara Sectional**, February 9-11, St Catharines
- ♥ **Both BBO games on Sunday, February 11 will be special games with a \$1 extra entry fee and yield 50% red points.**
- ♥ **Pop-Up 499er F2F Pairs Game**, Sunday, February 11, 1:00 pm, \$1 surcharge
- ♥ George Pepall will be giving a mini-lesson on **Slam Bidding (No Trump)** at the Monday morning bridge lab on February 12.
- ♥ **STaC Week**, Tuesday, February 13 – Friday, February 16, silver points, \$1 surcharge
- ♥ **There will be no bridge lab on Family Day, Monday, February 19**
- ♥ Lynda Burnett will be giving a mini-lesson on **Play of the Hand (Suits)** at the Monday morning bridge lab on February 26





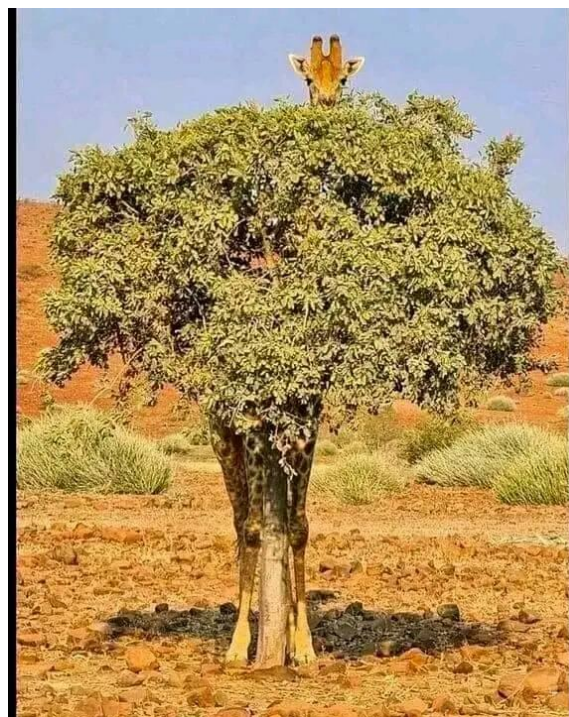
Everything Must Go!

We have cleaned out all the stuff that was in the rolling shelves in the passageway to the teaching room and are in the process of rehousing everything that we need to keep. The leftovers are displayed on tables at the back of the main room.

If you're at the club this week, please feel free to take anything that might be of value to you or to someone you love. On Saturday, February 3, everything that is still there will be taken to the dump.



AND THE WINNER IS... It's already Week 3 of our **online playing draw**, and the Silver Rush brought out 166 entries! Congratulations to the winner this week: **Brian Gaber**. Brian (and his partner, plus 25 other pairs) played in our lucky Monday evening 499 game, on January 22. Every time a current GRBC member plays in one of our online games, their name goes into the draw to win a gift card, estimated to be worth \$25 more than all those **silver** points. Play with us on BBO by Tuesday, and the next (and final, for now) winner could be you!





Bean There Done That

Contributed by Steve Allen, Treasurer (GrandRiverBridgeClubTreasurer@gmail.com)
Mr. Bean made a bet with Steve Allen.

Following the end of the 2023-2024 membership drive last summer, the GRBC had only **205** members. That number was a far cry from the **261** members in the previous year. Mr. Bean proposed a lucrative wager with Mr. Allen that we would return to that membership level by February 29, 2024. Since then, 35 people came out of their long senior's moment and renewed. In addition, we had 18 brand-spanking new members join the club. GRBC is currently sitting pretty with **258** paid up members, with a month to go.



Most new members don't just walk in off the street, but rather they tend to be encouraged by very special people known as "existing members". We reward these ambassadors of our club by giving them two free games, like these recent heroes: Randall DeKraker (Mary Nickel), Scott Hills (Ed Hills), Joe Blake (Becky Blake), Steve Allen (Firouzeh Sharifi), Sheila Charters (Andrew Widdis), ??? (Tania St-Denis), ??? (John Hutchison), ??? (Bruno Richter), ??? (Sandra Stone) and Nanci Phelan (Lorraine Ward).

I don't know who some of the recruiters were. Please email GrandRiverBridgeClubTreasurer@gmail.com to help me out.





Player Profile – Kathy Burns

Contributed by Louise Dawdy

This week we are pleased to profile Kathy Burns. Kathy first became interested in bridge a dozen or so years ago when she and her husband, James, retired and moved to Ottawa from Calgary.

While living in Ottawa, Kathy took lessons with a friend and played in a friendly game at a non-sanctioned club. She and her partner fumbled along and all was well until COVID hit. While Covid sidelined Kathy from many activities, it did provide her with the opportunity to play bridge more seriously. Coincidentally, she and James soon moved to K/W to be closer to family. With the pandemic in full swing, Kathy found it difficult to meet new people and feel settled in their new home.

A providential phone call from a GRBC volunteer helped to change that. The volunteer quickly set Kathy up with a number of friendly GRBC members to play online with. Looking back, this gesture was greatly appreciated.

Insofar as career goes, Kathy's life as an accountant is a distant memory. Since retiring, Kathy has been able to spend more time outdoors, whether golfing, hiking or gardening in the summer, or skiing (backcountry and downhill) in the winter.

Kathy recently became a gran for the fourth time. When home, she and James spend a large part of their time with their grandchildren (one aged four years, two two-year olds, and a new-born).

She and James enjoy travelling, and they have been fortunate to cross many destinations off their bucket list. Although Africa is the lone outlier on the list, they hope to complete that soon. Their favourite destinations have been those closer to home: Haida Gwaii and Great Bear Rainforest in B.C.

Kathy also considers herself to be especially fortunate to have lived in many places across our amazing country. Kathy was born in Quebec, spent her working life in Calgary, retired to Ottawa, enjoyed cottage life in Quebec, and now lives closer to family in K/W.

Kathy's favourite bridge tip is: Don't try to learn too much, too fast. Play with different partners as you will learn something new from all of them!

Kathy added a heartfelt note about how remarkable GRBC and its many members are. She noted the welcoming and dedicated nature of its members.

Kathy's BBO handle is Cagney60. Be sure to say hello when you see her online or at the club.



The Answer Lady

Contributed by Susan Lawton

As the “The Answer Lady” I have been responding to questions from “newer” players over the past several weeks. A request has been made to share those players’ questions and my responses in the Alert, essentially a column for the beginner player! You can write to me at suzan2420@yahoo.ca.

Question

Answer Lady, in a recent tournament I encountered a bidding variation that I hadn't seen before. The bidding began with 1NT (15-17 HCPs), by North. Responder, South, then bid 2♣ and, once Opener denied a four-card major suit with a 2♦ bid, Responder bid 2♥ to show a five-card heart suit. Opener passed and that is where the contract ended up. When the hand came down, Responder's hand had four points (two queens). I hadn't seen this bidding sequence before and later asked the opponents about their bidding. They indicated it was “*all about shape and you don't really need eight or nine HCPs to bid Stayman*”.

It was a team game so I can't show the hand, but I remember it clearly and have shown it below. Our teammates bid the hand as I would have expected 1NT-P-2♦ (hearts), so the contract ended up in the same place. I am curious about your thoughts. Is it all about shape? When do points count? Don't you need at least eight or nine HCPs to use Stayman?

♠xxx ♥Qxxxx ♦Q ♣xxxx

Answer

Who knew something like Stayman and Jacoby transfers could be so controversial and involve so many opinions?

- You don't need 8/9 HCPs to use Stayman?
- It's really all about shape, not HCPs?

I have to admit I too have seen this type of thinking and bidding in both online and F2F games. These approaches might work for the very advanced players who have the instincts and the skills to know the shape and point count of their partner's hands. For the newer player, and I'm going to include myself in this category, wandering off the grid can have serious and negative consequences.

Yes, shape plays a role in hand evaluation - think of all those successful pre-emptive bids - but HCPs are also supremely important. Responder already knows that the 1NT opener has a balanced shape and 15-17 HCP. With this quite specific information, Responder should be able to look at their hand and have a pretty good idea of where they should end up – both the strain (suit or no trump) and the level (how high). In this case, the Responder has a five-card major and very minimal values. Let's look at the hand provided and apply the Jacoby transfer guidelines. We'll deal with the Stayman question in a later column.

After a 1NT opening, responders need at least five cards in a major suit to make that Jacoby transfer - either 2♦ transferring to hearts or 2♥ transferring to spades. With seven points or less, Responder will pass after Opener completes the transfer.

With eight or nine points and only five cards in the major, Responder would bid 2NT, and with 10-12 HCPs and only five cards in the major, Responder would bid 3NT.

- In response to the former bid (2NT), Opener would bid game with a maximum (either 3NT or four of the major if Opener has at least three cards in that suit) or stop below game with a minimum (either pass or bid three of the major if Opener has at least three cards in that suit).
- In response to the latter bid (3NT), Opener would pass or bid four of the major if they have at least three cards in that suit.

Applying those guidelines to the hand provided, with Responder's four HCPs my suggestion for the bidding would be: 1NT-2♦-2♥-P, just as with your teammates. With their minimal values, Responder would pass after the transfer was completed. On this hand, 1NT-2♣-2♦-2♥ worked out okay for your opponents, because Opener did not have a four- or five-card spade suit (but please note that Responder has become declarer – not ideal, as the big hand is exposed as dummy). And what would have transpired had the bidding gone: 1NT-2♣-2♠? What would Responder bid now? 2NT? An extremely difficult contract to achieve with those measly four HCPs in Responder's hand!



Time You Learned our Lessons!

Newcomer bridge labs most Monday mornings, 9:00 am – 11:30 am, except on holiday Mondays. Upcoming mini-lessons include **Filling Out Your Convention Card** with Malkin Howes on January 29, more **Play of the Hand (Suits)** with Dave Quarrie, **No Trump Slam Bidding** with George Pepall on February 12, more **No Trump Play of the Hand** with Lynda Burnett on February 26, **Responses to One No Trump** by Diane Bourdeau on March 4, and **Playing in our F2F Games** with Ted Boyd on March 11. NO EXTRA CHARGE

Starting Signals – Attitude

Instructor: Neil Jeffrey

Cost: \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members

Level: **Novice**

Date & Time: Tuesday, January 30, 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Venue: Our teaching room

Current Enrollment : 4

This workshop will go ahead with only four registrants, but additional students would be strongly welcomed! Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Pre-Emptive (Weak) Twos – Including the Responses

Instructor: Jack Cole **ONLINE**

Cost: \$40 for members and \$50 for non-members

Level: **Novice**

Dates & Time: 9:00 am – 11:30 am, Friday, March 1 and Friday, March 8

Venue: ONLINE

Current Enrollment: 1

NB: We must have received eight registrations by January 31 (that is this coming Thursday) for this module to proceed.



Mike Peng successfully resuscitated Annie at our second session of CPR/AED training last Saturday (as did all of the other participants). Annie is officially alive and well, thanks for asking.

Many thanks also to Barbara Arthur for organizing these training sessions and to Barb's daughter Karen who gave the group a very well-organized presentation with lots of hands-on practice.

While we hope that we will never have occasion to put our newfound skills into practice, at least ten of our members are now well prepared for such a contingency.



Dear David

Asks and Cuebids

The following hand features a number of interesting agreements which I have with my regular partners. I am not encouraging you to adopt any or all of these agreements. My purpose is to show how thinking through a problem may benefit you.

Dir: W Vul: E-W 19 4 6 11 ♠ K 8 5 4 2 ♥ 7 5 4 3 2 ♦ 4 ♣ J 4	♠ A Q 10 3 ♥ Q J ♦ A K 9 7 5 3 ♣ K ♠ 9 7 6 ♥ A 10 6 ♦ 6 2 ♣ Q 10 7 6 2 ♠ J ♥ K 9 8 ♦ Q J 10 8 ♣ A 9 8 5 3	
<i>North</i> 1♦ (1) 3♣ (3) 4♣ (5) 4NT (7) 6♦ (9)	<i>South</i> 2♠ (2) 3♠ (4) 4♥ (6) 5♣ (8) pass	

1. 1♦ shows opening points with at least five diamonds.
2. 2♠ promises at least three diamonds, a singleton or void in spades and eight-plus high card points.
3. 3♣ is an artificial asking bid, requiring responder to further define the parameters of the 2♠ bid.
4. 3♠ shows exactly one spade and 10 or 11 high-card points.
5. 4♣ is a cuebid, showing the ♣A or ♣K. (North's problem is that partner could have the QJ of clubs instead of the ♥K or ♥A for his 10-11 HCP, so he temporizes with 4♣ in order to give partner a chance to cuebid the ♥A or ♥K.
6. Since partner knows he has exactly 10-11 HCP, why not show him your ♥K.
7. At this point, it can't cost to ask for keycards, since 7♦ may make if partner has something like ♠x ♥Axx ♦QJxx ♣Axxxx.
8. Alas, partner has only one keycard.
9. The play in 6♦ is straight-forward.

Why am I showing you this hand when you don't have any of the understandings that I have with my regular partners?

Even if you don't play mini-splinters (the 2♠ bid) or have understandings about the exact range of partner's HCP, you can still use cuebidding to show aces &/or kings and a willingness to probe beyond the game level. I would also suggest that if you decide to add cuebidding to your arsenal, you should bid your cheapest ace or king first.

For example, if spades is your suit and you have the ♣K and the ♥A, cuebid the ♣K first in order to save room. The auction may go: 1♠-3♠(forcing)-4♠-4♦-4♥. If your first cuebid had been your heart ace, your partner may now cuebid 5♦ and you will have lost the ability to cuebid your ♣K at a safe level.

I would like to tell you that we got a top board on this one, but it was a three-table game, and one pair was in 3NT and the other pair blasted to 6NT, needing a finesse for their 12th trick. Another average, Sigh 😞



“Sorry for the wait, ma’am. We’re a little short-handed.”

For Intermediate *Jake's*
Play a Bad Hand Well

No. 131

♠ J32
 ♥ 1074
 ♦ AQJ87
 ♣ KQ



♠ A54
 ♥ AJ963
 ♦ 6
 ♣ A965

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	1♥
Dbf	1NT	Pass	2♣ ¹
Pass	2♥ ²	Pass	4♥
All pass			

1. New Minor Forcing
2. 3-heart support, minimum

I was South declaring a 4♥ contract and received the ♠6 opening lead. Dummy's ♠J was covered by East's ♠Q, and I won the trick with my ♠A. I then cashed dummy's ♣KQ safely at Tricks 2 and 3. At Trick 4, I led the ♥4 from dummy, East played the ♥2, and I took the trick with my ♥A, West contributing the ♥8. At Trick 5, I cashed my ♣A and discarded a small spade from dummy. At Trick 6, I led the ♦6 and successfully finessed West's ♦K with dummy's ♦J. At Trick 7, I led the ♦A from dummy. If you were in my shoes, what would you do now?

SOLUTION

This is what you can see after six tricks have been played.

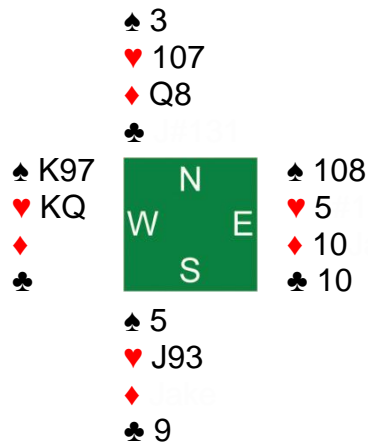
♠ 3
 ♥ 107
 ♦ AQ87
 ♣



♠ 54
 ♥ J963
 ♦
 ♣ 9

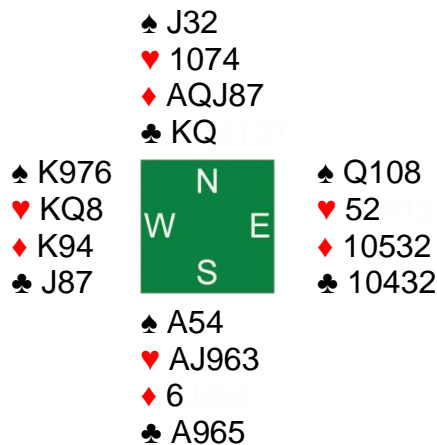
The question is what to discard from your hand on dummy's $\spadesuit A$. You have two choices: the $\clubsuit 9$ or the $\spadesuit 4$. On first glance, you might think it should be your $\clubsuit 9$ because the spades are more or less under control. On second glance, you should realize that if you do that you will have only spades and hearts left in your hand and, no matter what you choose to play next, you will lose the lead and the opponents will be in the driver's seat. Let's say you lead a spade. In this case, the opponents will cash the $\heartsuit KQ$ and then play a winning spade for one down.

The correct play is to discard a spade (the $\spadesuit 4$) from your hand and then ruff (with a trump higher than the $\heartsuit 5$ just in case, let's say the $\heartsuit 6$) a small diamond. East will follow suit and West will drop the $\diamond K$. Now it's time to lead the last club from your hand. Here is the full hand with five tricks to go.



As you can see, when you put the $\clubsuit 9$ on the table West has no defense. If he ruffs high, you can discard dummy's $\spadesuit 3$; if he chooses not to ruff high, you can ruff the $\clubsuit 9$ in dummy and then discard your spade loser on the $\diamond Q$. No matter how the opponents defend, you always can make your contract with an overtrick.

Here is the complete deal.



It is very important to anticipate the risks that come with losing the lead and prepare counter-measures in advance.

Top Master Point Earners at our Club

Contributed by Allen Pengelly

This table lists the individuals who have earned the most master points at our club in each of three master point bands since the beginning of December.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	25.10	1	Lori Cole	15.40	1	Peter Gaasenbeek	8.99
2	Mike Peng	18.44	2	Jack Cole	13.57	2	Brian Gaber	7.59
3	Edith Ferber	16.11	3	Regina Williams	12.17	3	Audrey Cook	7.40
4	Moira Hollingsworth	15.11	3	Denis Williams	12.17	4	Stu Cowan	6.93
5	Neil Jeffrey	13.44	5	Kevin Latter	11.94	5	Debbie Miethig	6.92
6	Steve Carpenter	12.75	6	Nancy Cattanach	11.34	6	Russel Kerr	6.68
7	Cindy Mahn	12.74	7	John Kip	10.62	7	Andrew Widdis	6.59
8	Dave Quarrie	11.64	8	Louise Dawdy	9.99	8	George Rybiak	6.54
9	Malkin Howes	11.14	9	Cheryl Kip	9.41	9	Sharon Nesbitt	6.52
10	John Hanemaayer	9.94	10	Martin Jones	9.15	10	Casi Zehr	6.15
11	Dianne Aves	9.27	11	Rick Arthur	8.12	11	JP Fraresso	5.56
12	Roy Dandyk	8.46	12	Elinor Girouard	7.99	12	Richard Rybiak	5.41
13	Neil Coburn	8.19	13	Cheryl White	7.69	13	Randall DeKraker	5.36
14	Margot Stockie	7.84	14	Joe Blake	7.48	14	Sheila Charters	5.26
15	Stephen Young	7.75	15	Renate Boucher	7.24	15	Jane Wilson	5.00
16	Kathy Russell	7.29	16	Lynda Burnett	7.15	16	Paul Raymond	4.98
17	Robert Griffiths	7.16	17	Susan Durance	7.08	17	Doug Fickling	4.77
18	Susan Lawton	6.63	18	David Dennis	6.98	17	Mark Sherwood	4.77
19	Adriaan Kempe	6.62	19	Jim Dalgliesh	6.86	19	Robert Darby	4.51
20	Wayne Schroeder	6.24	20	Andy Martinek	6.57	20	Phil De Montigny	3.51
21	Ted Boyd	5.89	21	Glenn Mockford	6.33	21	Joan Stroud	3.45
22	Mary McClelland	5.82	22	Nanci Phelan	5.97	22	Pat Northey	3.35
23	Sharon Boyd	5.63	22	Tony Verhoeven	5.97	23	Andrew McNaught	3.04
24	Diane Jamieson	4.75	24	Molly Worden	5.27	24	Sandra Kendall	2.79
25	Paul Latimer	4.68	25	Bev Hitchman	5.24	25	Jeannie Leforge	2.76

If you would like to play in a particular game but lack a partner that day, you can either:

- For both online and f2f games, log on to [Pianola](#), click on Partner Finder, and create a Partner Finder advert. This needs to be done at least a few hours in advance of the game. *When you use Partner Finder, it will allow folks to see your contact information. If you have posted a Partner Finder ad, kindly remember to check your phone and email and, when you've found a partner, delete your ad. Someone who replied to your ad may be waiting for a response.*
- For online games only, log in to the game in question and register yourself on the Partnership Desk tab (or look to see if someone else has already registered there).

If you are looking for a regular partner, contact [Joan Slover](#), our membership lead. Please let her know what sort of game/partner you are interested in – your playing level, your available time slots, F2F and/or online, and any other pertinent information.

We have fun in **spades**.
 We play with all our **hearts**.
 We treat our members like **diamonds**.
 We can do CPR at our **club** now.