



SUCCESS STORY IN BURLINGTON

We are a small club in Burlington, Vermont, managed and run completely by volunteers. Over the past few years we have struggled to maintain and build our membership base. About two years ago we started a 0-20 MP game that followed our open morning game. Our new players are drawn primarily from an adult education bridge class.

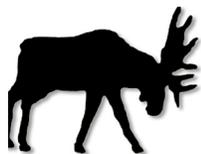
One of our players made the effort to visit each class and invite the students to come to our club, be introduced to duplicate and play. Our director volunteered his time and three of our members volunteered to answer questions and make the new players feel welcome. Many other club members helped out by filling in, either to answer questions or to play if there were an odd number of people. We're not sure if our enthusiasm for the game was transmitted to the new players or their enthusiasm drove us to new heights, but we began to offer a short instructional period before each session. This evolved into our presenting six lessons on Saturday mornings. Our reputation is growing and we now attract players from local social bridge clubs.

Many thanks to Vermont Unit 175 who underwrote the cost of instructors and allowed us to present these classes for a nominal fee. We also gave a series of lessons on 2/1. Our membership base is growing and many of our original 0-20 players are now playing in our novice and open games. Our 0-20 sessions are on hold for the summer and we celebrated our students with a free lunch for the players in both the morning open game and the newcomers. The following poem was read at the luncheon by author Barbara Davis.

*Many of us who entered this club were fearful,
Even so, we tried to be cheerful.
The knowledge levels were quite diverse.
We were sometimes loud, but tried not to curse.
The instructions were great, you told us a lot,
Though we won't remember because our memories are shot.
Conventions and doubles, openings and passes,
Thank you all who taught the classes.*

*Ken, Linda, and Don you deserve awards for patience galore,
Answering our questions has been a chore!
After playing bridge all morning you volunteered to stay,
Even agreeing to sit in to enable people to play.*

*A special thanks to Ken...and Linda too, for the myriad hands you made
To reinforce the lessons before our new info had a chance to fade!
Your love and dedication to the game,
Should earn you great fame,
But the world isn't fair as our parents often said,
So please accept this poem instead!*



Vermont Friendly Bridge