

# Frequently Asked Questions

(April 9, 2009)

**For the reader's convenience, we have broken the frequently asked questions and their answers into four categories: personal situations, technical matters, club management, and self improvement.**

## **PERSONAL SITUATIONS**

1. How can I arrange a game with someone in the club if I'm new to The Villages or just visiting for a few weeks or months?

**Answer: On this website click on "Administration." Below the list of board members is the partnership chair's name and phone number. She prefers telephone calls to email. Give her the dates and times you are available and try to give her at least a three-day notice. Additionally, a member may place his/her name and phone number on the sign-up calendar maintained by the partnership chair when the contact person is at a Club game.**

2. If I want to get one of the white plastic name tags with the black lettering, how much do they cost and who do I see about this?

**Answer: The cost is: \$9.00 for sturdy plastic magnetic; \$3.00 for thin plastic magnetic, and \$2.00 for thin plastic clip on. Contact any director to get your name on the order list. It may take several weeks to get your name tag, since we submit orders in batches of 10 or more. The board and the game directors strongly encourage the use of nametags, even by veteran players.**

3. If I need a ride to one of our local games in The Villages, how would I secure such a ride?

**Answer: The club does not provide transportation to the games, however, as you meet various players, you will find that some living near you may be willing to assist you if you have a problem getting to the game.**

4. Is there a "Lost and Found" if I should lose my convention card, sweater, or some other object?

**Answer: All normal items like sweaters or convention cards found after a game are stored in our locked, bridge equipment cabinets for later pickup. Critical items such as keys, purses, or medications are usually retained by the game director or left at the Recreation Center office.**

5. If I'm physically handicapped, can I reserve a North/South seat?

**Answer: Yes, this can be arranged. Call the game director a day or so prior to the game you wish to attend. If possible, you should arrive 25 minutes prior to your game time.**

## **TECHNICAL MATTERS**

1. If I look at the board results for a particular game and I find what appears to be a scoring error, what should I do?

**Answer: On this website click on “Directors.” Call or email the director who ran the game in question. If appropriate be prepared to give your partner’s name and number as well as the names and numbers of your opponents.**

2. If the director is called to the table and he or she makes a ruling that I do not agree with, do I have any recourse?

**Answer: If you disagree with a game director’s ruling, you should immediately ask for a ruling from the Appeals Committee. (See the front page the internet copy of the April 2008 Newsletter for more information of this committee. Click on Newsletter, and then click on April 2008.) If the game director’s ruling is on a point of the law, the committee will agree with the game director. If the ruling is a judgment call and if the committee differs greatly with the ruling, the committee may overrule the director. In the case of a procedural penalty, the committee cannot overrule the game director; however, the committee may ask the game director to reconsider the penalty.**

3. When declarer claims and lays down his/her hand, do I have the right to ask the declarer to play out the hand? I would make this request if I thought I could take one more trick.

**Answer: You do not have the right to ask the declarer to play out the hand. Call the game director. According to the ACBL, play is over when a claim is made. The game director is responsible for deciding how the hand is to be played and who gets the remaining tricks.**

4. I don’t understand the use of the stop card.

**Answer: This is used when a skip bid is made. If you use it, it should be used consistently. The card is an announcement used for the benefit of the opponents. The player next in line to bid should pause about 10 seconds before pulling out a bid card. Were that player to pass quickly immediately after a skip-bid, it would convey unauthorized information to his/her partner.**

5. Must I live in The Villages to participate in club games?

**Answer: The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club is an invitational club. Any resident, renter or prospective home buyer staying in The Villages may play in the ACBL sanctioned bridge games in The Villages. Any guest with a Village guest pass who is visiting in The Villages may also play. These restrictions are imposed by The Villages developer, not by The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club.**

1. What rules govern play at the Club?

**The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club is governed by the ACBL General Convention Chart (2008-08-05). To obtain a copy of the chart, go to [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org). In the small ACBL Site Search window at the top of the page, type General Convention Chart and click “GO!” A [pdf] for the chart will be displayed: PDF] t16 general cc 520226.indd, (the one dated 2008-08-05, not the one dated 2007-04-02) and click on it. The chart will then appear (you will need the Adobe Reader 8 on your PC which is available free from the site [www.Adobe.com](http://www.Adobe.com) if you do not have it). In addition to the general chart there is the mid-chart and the superchart.**

**The ACBL General Convention Chart governs all bids allowed in club games and items that must be alerted or announced.**

**The card allows, for example, someone to open 1NT with 15+ HCP and a balanced or unbalance hand, including a singleton or void. “FORCING 1NT OPENING BID (15+ HCP) indicating a strong hand, balanced or unbalanced”. If the hand is unbalanced, it may be considered a psych bid. In practice, one is usually allowed one psych bid per session.**

**Chuck Deal, the Clubs Head Game Director, writes:**

**“If a pair has an agreement (or develops a habit) of bidding notrump with unbalanced hands, they are required to alert the 1NT bid. Much is left to the director to control the situation. Keeping a record of how often a pair may violate the rule is a good method to use for control. Usually just making it clear to a pair that violates the rule is sufficient control. They know you are watching.”**

#### **CLUB MANAGEMENT**

1. When players pay \$2.00 to play bridge (and \$4.00 as a guest), what does this money go for?

**Answer: Our gross annual receipts are approximately \$30,000. Our expenses are: game director fees (\$23,000), ACBL fee (\$3,000), and supplies (\$4,000).**

2. I have heard the director refer to an up-and-coming “STAC game.” What is a STAC game?

**Answer: The letters “STAC” stand for Sectional Tournament At Clubs. During a STAC game, silver points can be earned.**

3. Some directors have encouraged me to arrive well in advance of the start time for a game (e.g. 1:00 p.m. afternoon game and 6:30 p.m. evening game). I don't see why I can't arrive whenever I want to, assuming it's before the start time.

**Answer: The director running that particular game needs to know if there will be one section of play or two sections (A and B). He/she needs to know if there is an odd number of pairs and, hence, a sit-out in one direction. Beyond this, if you prefer sitting in a certain direction, you should arrive at least 25 minutes in advance. For a number of reasons, we ask that you arrive at least 20 minutes before game time.**

4. How do I become a member of The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club?

**Answer: There are no membership requirements for The Villages DBC. Just get a partner and come to play. Instant Membership Applications are available at Laurel Manor at game times. These applications will assign you an ACBL number immediately. The current annual dues to join are \$26. Just tell the game director you wish to join the ACBL.**

5. What is the ACBL and must I become a member of this organization in order to participate in local and/or tournament games?

**Answer: The American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) is the governing body of a worldwide bridge association. They sanction or approve club games and hold Sectional, Regional, and National Tournaments for the membership. Similar to chess, they maintain performance records (in the form of masterpoints) and rank each player in accordance with their past performance. They also publish a monthly Bulletin (magazine) with results of tournaments and many helpful teaching articles. There is no requirement to join the ACBL to participate in local club games or ACBL sponsored tournaments.**

6. How does someone become a game director?

**Answer: Ask the head game director, Chuck Deal, how you can contact a unit official for the ACBL. This official will appoint a monitor for you and notify the ACBL of the person selected. Your monitor will receive the Club Director Test and instructions for administering it. The test includes questions about Mitchell and Howell movements, the Law, the most frequent rulings, and the ACBL score commands. Three hours is the average time for completion.**

### **SELF IMPROVEMENT**

1. How can I improve my bridge playing through classes or private study?

**Answer: The Villages' Lifelong Learning University may be offering a basic course on bridge. Talk to the head director about other courses that may be offered.**

ACBL web site offers Fred Gitlemann's Learning to Play Bridge software, part 1 and part 2. They can be downloaded free from [www. ACBL.org](http://www.ACBL.org). Part 1 is very basic, but students can learn a lot from Part 2.

For a modest monthly fee of \$7, you can take advantage of this excellent learning site: [www.bridgedoctor.com](http://www.bridgedoctor.com) There's also a seven-day trial period which is worth trying out.

You can get advanced "Bridge Lessons" on line at [www.rpbridge.net](http://www.rpbridge.net) This website is for Standard American players, not 2 over 1.

Mike Lawrence provides free website [www.bridgeclues.com](http://www.bridgeclues.com)

If you go to this website, you can click on "Bidding" and later on "Play."

Each day you can enjoy this interactive website and practice your bidding and play of the hand skills.

Since we do not have a wealth of courses being offered in this area on bridge, you may want and need to read some books on your own. The books listed below with an asterisk (\*) would be most appropriate for beginners or beginner/intermediates.

### **Bridge Defense**

\* Kantar, Edwin B. (1999) Modern Bridge Defense, Master Point Press, Toronto, Canada.

Kantar, Edwin B. (1999) Advanced Bridge Defense, Master Point Press, Toronto. Canada.

Brock, Sally (2007) Leading Questions in Bridge, Master Point Press, Toronto, Canada.

\*Lawrence, Mike (1996) Opening Leads, C&T Bridge Supplies.

William Root has a number of excellent bridge books on defense as well as other aspects of the game.

### **Play of the Hand**

\*Watson's Play of the Hand at Bridge

\* Pat Harrington's series of three little booklets: Modern NT Bidding (#210208); Major Suit Raises 1 (#210316) and Major Suit Raises 2 (#210326). Publisher is Baron Barclay.

Guy Leve (2007) Encyclopedia of Card Play Techniques at Bridge, Master Point Press.

Marty Bergen's Points Schmoints and his other bridge books.

### **Conventions and Bidding**

\*Audrey Grant's Bridge Basics I

\*Audrey Grant's Bridge Basics 2 Competitive Bidding

\*Audrey Grant's Bridge Basics 3 Popular Conventions (covers Stayman, Jacoby Transfers, Strong 2 Club openings, and Slam Bidding).

\*Audrey Grant's new book Improving Your Judgment Opening the Bidding

Audrey Grant's Improving Your Judgment Doubles

If you play 2/1 the best books are the two volumes by Max Hardy: Bridge Bidding for the 21st Century. (Standard and Advanced)

\*Seagram, Barbara & Smith, Marc (1999) Twenty-five Bridge Conventions You Should Know, Master Point Press, Toronto.

\*2 over 1 Game Force (2009) by Audrey Grant and Eric Rodwell and published by Baron Barclay. (If you are playing Standard American and want to learn basic 2/1 this is a great new book. It essentially replaces the older material Grant wrote on 2/1.

Making the Winning Bid -- Bidding Guidelines for the Advancing Player by Howard Ringel (2008) and published by Virtualbookworm.com. This is for more advanced players.