

A GAME FOR ALL AGES



Warren Buffett congratulates youth tournament winners: Eighth-graders Ben Carey, Brock Ericson, Erick Hernandez and seventh-grader Marcelina Delgado-Walker.

Youth bridge growing in Omaha

By Dave Smith

Youth bridge in Omaha NE has programs in elementary, middle and high schools. Sharon Gathmann, local coordinator of youth and education, describes it as “successful and expanding.”

“We have a number of teachers working with students in various schools, in addition to volunteers from our own Unit 241,” says Gathmann. “We anticipate additional growth as the Omaha Public School District is expanding their after-school program in several of the middle schools. This is the age group we are targeting for the time being.

“Unit 241 is committed to this program and our members are very supportive,” Gathmann says. “Thanks to a successful fund raiser held this past July, we will be able to increase our involvement.”

Earlier this year, the youth played in the Ruth Scott Youth Bridge Tournament. Unit 241 newsletter Editor Jeff Buckwalter reports the following:

Pizza, bridge and fun

Sixty-four kids played together for a day of pizza, soft drinks, cookies and the greatest game in the world: bridge. Ruth Scott, owner of the Omaha Bridge Studio, sponsored the Second Annual Omaha Youth Tournament for elementary, middle and high school students.

Participants were greeted at the door and directed to their game area, where

they were given a sheet of paper with a list of questions. They had to ask other students in the room answers to simple bridge questions: “How many suits?” “What are their ranks?” “How many points do you need to open one of a suit?”

The youngsters had to write the name of the person who gave them the answer on the sheet. This allowed them to mingle and get to know one another. All those who completed the sheet had a dollar stapled to it in the goody bag they received at the end of the session.

The main game had 11 tables with two-board rounds. Play was a little slower than an adult game, so only nine rounds were played. There was also a five-table mini-bridge game — they managed to get in eight rounds.

Halfway through the event, the kids were given a choice of either playing through the fifth round or eating pizza and then playing. It was amazing to see more than half give up food to continue playing bridge!

After all hands were finished, the directors announced the winning pairs. Each player also received a free goody bag prepared by Dee Miller.

One of the interesting things overheard at a table was a simple comment by a partner who said, “You really played that well.” This after declarer just went down three. I guess the adults can still learn something from the kids after all. □



The Bridge in Schools program in Omaha NE held a tournament for young bridge players earlier this year.