

A GAME FOR ALL AGES

Youth bridge was his passion.

By Dave Smith



Luke Lucas (left) was an advocate for youth bridge in Festus MO, a small town of about 11,000 that is 35 miles south of St. Louis. Lucas died in January. This report is about the Youth summer program he conducted last June.

conducted last June.

"I direct at the bridge club and teach a class of novices," Lucas said, "but my passion is youth bridge."

Last year, Lucas went to all the schools in his county to offer bridge classes. None of them was interested in teaching bridge at their school, but there was interest in a summer program at the YMCA.

Classes were set up for students ages 11 to 16. More than 200 signed up. Lucas said they used Easybridge! and added some of Pat Harrington's lessons.

Lucas gave this account of the program.

There's a report at our Unit 143 web site — www.unit143.org/festusbridgecamp2010.htm. — that pretty much says it all. There were 209 youth in 10 classes with five classes per day for 30 days throughout June.

So what did they learn? The youth are able to count their points, arrange cards by suits, and they know the suit ranks including notrump. They learned to recognize the difference between playing in a trump suit versus notrump play. They learned the opening and responding point levels and the rebids by each.

I made deals for them to play that corresponded to the lessons so they could practice what they learned. After the play, they filled out a pickup slip that I used to evaluate their success.

Most of the youth loved the classes — there were lots of compliments. We gave out tee shirts and trophies, both of which stimulated interest. When it was finished, most of the youth expressed that they were sorry it was ending.

Now the seeds are planted. We need to water and fertilize them and watch them grow. Let's hope we produce a new crop of duplicate bridge players.



Some children won trophies at the Youth bridge program in Festus MO.



Students, ages 11 to 16, took bridge lessons at the Festus MO YMCA.



Youth are proud of their certificates awarded after they learned to play bridge last summer.