

We are excited to bring you the <u>Silicon Valley Youth Bridge</u> Q3 newsletter! Our SiVY players had a very exciting Summer playing bridge.

THANK YOU to all of our volunteers (* indicates a junior volunteer):

- **SiVY committee:** Amber Lin, Kevin Rosenberg, Will Watson, Kai Eckert*, Shankar Iyer, Debbie Rosenberg, Stephanie Youngquist, and Mukund Thapa
- Volunteers: Sharon Chu*, Florin Constantin, Cornelius Duffie*, Brandon Ge*, Kayden Ge*, Xin Ge, Eugene Hung, Ed Lechner, Anant Rathi, Ken Rosenfeld, Olivia Schireson*, Ilya Sherman, Alan Templeton, Gavin Wolpert, Jenny Wolpert, Brent Xiao*, Michael Xu*, Brian Zhang*, Qiang Zhang, Erli Zhou, Bruce Zhu*

Upcoming Events

We are continuing our <u>Casual Fridays</u> every Friday from ~6-9 pm. Stop by for some tasty pizza and bridge fun!

<u>**Pizza Party Tournaments</u>** are every two months with a fun theme. They will award prizes and ACBL masterpoints:</u>

- Sunday, October 13th, 11am: Halloween Pairs Game
- Saturday, December 14th, 11am: Winter Holiday Party / Individual Game
 + Junior US Bridge Championships Training Day

The **2024 Sam Amer U.S. Junior Bridge Championships** is the most prestigious event in the country for young bridge players. It happens every 2 years and this year, it will feature two days of a social and educational training camp and multiple days of serious competition on tablets. This year, it will take place in Atlanta from December 27th to January 2nd. If you are interested, please reach out to organizer Amber Lin (<u>amber.y.lin@gmail.com</u>). Deadline to register is August 31st. Funding for travel is available.



Download our 2024 Fall flier

Programs Recap

Casual Friday

Casual Friday is our main event... weekly supervised play with plenty of pizza and snacks! Since November 2023, we have held 35 events with 50+ different players! Many have never played bridge before. We regularly have around four tables of varying ages and experience levels.

Casual Fridays are held on Friday evenings. The schedule has evolved: typically there is a mini-lesson from 6-6:30pm, a team match from 6:30-8pm, and then an optional hour of casual bridge from 8-9pm. Many of the kids don't want to leave! Parents are also welcome to hang around and join in the fun. Many stay and watch the youth as they learn bridge skills or get some work done on the other side of the club.



Jeremy Zhang, Beatriz Aldana, Kevin Wei, & Liao Zhang play at Casual Friday

Volunteers Will Watson & Xin Ge play with Volunteers Brian Zhang, Bruce Zhu, and Kai 6-years olds Anny Jain & Larry Wei

Eckert teach a new player

Summer Pizza Party Tournaments

The Father's Day Family Game was on June 16th. The event started off with a mini-lesson on "Honor Families" (sequences) on defense - what card to lead and play as 3rd hand. 10 pairs played 18 boards.

You can find the results and hand records here. You can find photos here.



1st Overall: Kyra Helmbold & her dad, David; 67% game!



1st in B & C: Siblings Jayson & Kate Lee



2nd in B: Beatrice Hung & her dad, Eugene Hung



2nd in C: Liao Zhang & his dad, Xuedong Zhang





Special guest Hall of Famer Michael Rosenberg plays with son Kevin Rosenberg against Eugene and Beatrice Hung.

Newcomer 7-year-old Kurt plays with his grandmother Debra Willret against Jayson & Kate Lee

The **SiVY vs. CBE "Battle of the Bay" Tournament** was on Saturday, July 6th. Over the past year, SiVY and CBE have worked together more closely than ever before. Volunteers from both groups frequently attend the other's events. This summer, CBE and SiVY jointly hosted the first ever **"Battle of the Bay"** featuring SiVY kids competing with CBE kids at the Palo Alto Bridge Center. Legendary bridge teacher Larry Cohen gave a wonderful pre-game lesson prior to the tournament. There was lots of pizza, laughs, and good cheer at the game as CBE came from behind to win a close fought battle.

You can find the results and hand records <u>here</u>. You can find photos <u>here</u>.





Larry Cohen joins the event virtually and gives a lesson on competing in balancing seat.



There were two separate sections for more advanced and more beginner players.



Flora Ding, Joseph Hoagland, and Kurt Hoisie were the winners in the Beginner Section.



The CBE team (Kyle Lin, Andrew Eidelhoch, Keith Lin, Joey Qi, Eddy Qi, and Clayton Kaneko) won in the main team match event.

The Summer Holiday Party & Individual Game was on Saturday, August 10th. This annual event is a reunion for many SiVY members who have gone off to college, and is hosted by SiVY member Michael Xu. Michael is now a senior at Amherst where he has started a successful bridge club. Some of the players stayed and played a RealBridge match against Chinese junior players; others played chess, other board games, and more bridge.

You can find the results and hand records <u>here</u>. You can find photos <u>here</u>.



A mix of ages play together at the Kibitzers gather as they wait for individual. *the next round to start.*



A/B/C Winners: Brian Zhang, Evan Alexis, & Jeremy Zhang



Beginner Section Winners: Anny Jain, Milly Jain, & Oscar Li

Summer Camp

This summer, SiVY hosted its first Summer Camp since 2019! Summer camp took place over two weekends, June 22-23 and June 29-30. This format made it more convenient to recruit volunteers and also allowed players to balance other summer activities. There were a total of 29 unique players and 12 players attended both weekends. There was a wide range of ages, with players entering 2nd to 11th grade. We also had some special guests who flew in from other parts of the country! Renown bridge players and teachers Gavin and Jenny Wolpert joined from Florida and brought their three kids. Avid player Rajath Shourie from Southern California brought his twin sons too.

The schedule was from 1-6pm both days and consisted of lessons, practice hands, worksheets, bridge games / activities, and a tournament for the majority of both Sundays. Lessons were sourced from SiVY volunteers, Debbie Rosenberg, the English Bridge Union's free mini-bridge series, and Patty Tucker's Jump Start series. All materials were shared with campers to take home and review. Huge shout-out to Will Watson for making ~400 hands!

You can find the results and hand records from Weekend #1 here and Weekend #2 here. You can find photos here.



Weekend #1, June 22-23

Weekend #2, June 29-30



Camp incorporated worksheets to reinforce lesson concepts.





Campers have supervised play with pre-made hands

All campers received a completion certificate

Players compete in "Bridge Olympics: Complete the Shape"



Various camp tournament winners across both weekends.



International Youth Tournaments

Summer Youth NABC in Toronto

Adapted from a D21 Newsletter article by Chris Chen of CBE

Thanks to the generous contributions of SiVY donors, Center for Bridge Education (CBE) donors, and District 21, we were able to support 13 young players to the Toronto Youth NABC. There were more SiVY youth who attended Toronto but only played in "adult" events having graduated from the Youth NABC.

- Chloe Chow, 13 (CBE)
- Nathan Chow, 17 (CBE)
- Andrew Eidelhoch, 18 (CBE)
- Joseph Hoagland, 12 (SiVY)
- Michael Hoagland, 14 (SiVY)
- Clayton Kaneko, 11 (CBE)
- Jayson Lee, 12 (CBE & SiVY)

- Kate Lee, 11 (CBE & SiVY)
- Eddy Qi, 12 (CBE)
- Joey Qi, 18 (CBE)
- Kevin Wei, 9 (SiVY)
- Larry Wei, 6 (SiVY)
- Jeremy Zhang, 12 (SiVY)

Friday was an especially special day at the Toronto NABC for our youth. It was the second day of the Youth NABC, and the day of the Baron Barclay National Youth Open Pairs where kids from around the world competed for a \$2,000 scholarship. SiVY kicked off the day with a group photo shoot featuring 23 past-and-present SiVY students and volunteers.



Eight pairs from the Bay Area entered the National Pairs game with 6 pairs qualifying to the afternoon session. Andrew Eidelhoch and Joey Qi notched a scintillating 69.60% to lead the field heading into the afternoon. 3 of the top 5 pairs in contention were from the Bay Area! Bay Area qualifiers: Jayson Lee and Lee Blocher (2nd), Nathan Chow and Chloe Chow (5th), Kate Lee and Katherine Yang (10th), Jeremy Zhang and Kevin Wei (13th), and Michael Hoagland and Ryan Sederstrom (19th).

In the afternoon, our youth played well against a tougher field. Andrew Eidelhoch and Joey Qi notched a respectable 62.39% in the 2nd session to finish 2nd and earn themselves a glittering 6.63 gold points. The rest of our top 5 were also successful in the afternoon session. Nathan Chow and Chloe chow finished 6th to earn 2.53 gold. Jayson Lee and Lee Blocher finished 7th to earn 2.21 gold and 0.10 red. That's a 22:1 gold: red ratio for those counting at home.





SiVY players play bridge and win trophies with friends from other parts of North America. Candid photos <u>here</u>; Winners photos <u>here</u>



Following the afternoon game, CBE hosted its annual **Douglas Keller Memorial Dinner** with 18 members from SiVY and CBE in attendance. After dinner, a few members of SiVY and CBE went over to kibitz SiVY's Kevin Wei, who had skipped the group dinner because he decided that 2 bridge sessions in a day weren't enough. When we arrived, it turned out that the Evening Side Pairs game was consolidated with the Evening Collegiate game. That turned out to be fortuitous when we bumped into Evan Alexis (a trophy winner at the holiday

individual. Evan was in Toronto as a representative of Washington University at St. Louis bridge club, and it turned out that he was taught bridge by SiVY's very own Michael Xu back in high school! Coincidentally, two CBE students will start attending Washington University this fall. It's a bridge world after all.

Player's Perspective: "A Chance in Toronto"

By Kevin Wei (9-years old)



Hi, I'm Kevin Wei. I came to Toronto to play Bridge, something I'd call a perfect game to play anywhere. I'd like to share how nice it was to be here. At the YNABC, I met new people, which was one of the reasons I loved to play Bridge. This game means a lot to me, and I am grateful that I was lucky enough to have a grandpa that knows and taught me bridge. I was pleased to see all these children come to play bridge, and I hope that more and more people play bridge, to have more people meet and get to know each other.

Bridge is not only a game where you place cards and try your best to win, but also to learn, improve your skills more after losing, and provide chances that everyone would love to do: meet people and make friends. We strive to become better and better, no matter how good we already are. I'll also play more bridge again and again, no matter how much I've played. We will have more and more fun no matter how much fun we've had. Fun never gets old.

In the end, I'd like to thank all coaches, directors, players, and relatives of the players that taught them. I thank the coaches for their dedicated, determined teaching, not just for teaching me, but for teaching everyone else. I thank the directors because it was hard to get the results typed in and printed out but they were willing to do the hard work, run the tournament, and give us a good time. I thank players, especially teens and even younger friends, for coming all the way here to play a whole lot of Bridge. Finally, I thank relatives that taught children Bridge from the very beginning. I love my Youth NABC tournament experience very much.

Youth Transnationals in Poland

Results report by Kayden Ge (15-years old)

From July 13-18, right before the Toronto NABC, the city of Wrocław, Poland hosted the 8th World Youth Transnational Championships. Many of our SiVY members competed in the tournament, all of them bringing home priceless memories, while some even brought back some hardware.

In the U16 category, there were two teams with SiVY members. Jayson and Kate Lee played on team WePlayBridge4US. Despite not qualifying for the teams or pair final, Jayson and Kate had a solid performance in the U16 Final B, placing 7th with 62.03%. Team JACK featured two former SiVY members, Charlie and Andrew Chen. They finished first in the Swiss, and went on to win the gold medal in dominant fashion. Since the last transnational in Italy in the summer 2022, Charlie and Andrew have been in search of a U16 gold medal, and they finally got their third attempt. Something worth mentioning was that their teammate Kyo Chen, who was not even ten and a half years old at the time, became the youngest world champion ever, an impressive achievement. In the pairs, Charlie made the final with Kyo, while Andrew and his partner Jeff Xiao just missed the cut.

In the U21 category, it was SiVY coaches Brandon Ge, Kayden Ge, and Brian Zhang. For the teams event, Brandon and Kayden played for RDFZ G, teaming up with a group of players from China. Brian played for RDFZ B, his teammates also being from China. In the final round of the Swiss, the two SiVY teams played against each other, fighting for the last qualifying spot for the final. Brian and RDFZ B won and qualified, going on to win the bronze

medal. For the pairs, Brandon played with USBF junior Arthur Gong, while Kayden and Brian played together. Both pairs made the final, and Kayden and Brian earned a bronze medal.

Finally, in the U26 category, SiVY coach Michael Xu played on team Cood Life, while SiVY coach Olivia Schireson was on Team Funbridge Pink, a team sponsored by Funbridge. Michael placed 5th in the Teams Swiss, just outside the qualifying position, while qualifying in 6th place for the pairs final. In summary, our SiVY squad brought home medals from three different events, and had a great time playing bridge and getting to meet new people. We look forward to seeing even more success in the future for them.

You can find all tournament results <u>here</u>. You can find photos <u>here</u>.



Former SiVY coach Steven Chen & sons Charlie (14) & Andrew (12) win Gold in the U16 teams event, with teammates Kyo Chen (10) and Jeff Xiao (12).

SiVY coach 13-year old Brian Zhang wins Bronze with friends from China in the U21 teams event.

SiVY coaches Brian Zhang & Kayden Ge win Bronze in the U21 pairs event.

Player's Perspective: "An Introduction to Tablets and Table Dividers (Screens)"

By Jayson Lee (12-years old)



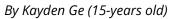
Upon entering the room in Poland, I am greeted by the sight of hundreds of kids from around the world, all gathered in a convention center to play bridge. Immediately, I noticed some peculiar features: a tablet placed in every direction at each table displaying "Love Bridge," and large wooden dividers (screens) that diagonally separate the tables to prevent any unauthorized communication between partners. Additionally, each divider has a small door that opens and closes a gap, allowing the declarer to see the cards.

As I sit down at the table, I feel completely bewildered and uncertain of what is happening. In my mind I am asking myself, how do these dividers work? How do the tablets work? When

do we start? All of these thoughts are flooding my mind which makes me feel nervous while my opponents exert confidence, speaking and acting as if they know exactly what needs to be done. When the team event starts, I see the first person already bidding on their tablet. I look at my tablet and see some bid options. After thinking for a

minute or two, I confirmed my bid as the second person in the auction. When I click the confirm button on the screen, the third person's tablet immediately makes two clicking sounds, which I assume indicates our two bids. As we continue to place more bids, the sound of double clicks fills the room. So this is how these tablets and table dividers work. I didn't expect this challenge but at least now I know! And in the end, we won our first match!

Player's Perspective: "From Gold to Bronze — The Crucial Club"





It was the last round of the U21 Pairs Final at the World Youth Transnational Championships in Wroclaw, Poland. Brian Zhang and I started the final session in ninth place, barely within striking distance, but we were having the session of our lives. Through fourteen boards of the final session, we were having a 73% game, and were in the gold medal position. Of course, Brian and I had no idea.

I took a deep breath and picked up my hand on the penultimate board of the tournament. I was dealer, vulnerable vs non vulnerable. I looked down at: ▲ AJ
♥ AQJ7
♦ QJ62
♣ Q62

Brian and I play a transfer precision system with a 14-16 1NT opening, so I open this balanced 17-count 1. The auction continues (opponents silent):

Brian	Kayden		
	1 ♣ ¹	1.	16+ any hand or 17+ balanced
1 ♥ ²	1 ♠ ³	2.	8+ HCP, 5+ 🛧
		3.	Asking
2 ▲ ⁴	2NT ⁵	4.	8-11 HCP
3♥	?	5.	Further asking

3♥. What does that mean? I had been learning the system for a year now, so some sequences were still unfamiliar to me. I know it has one of two possible meanings; either showing 4+ ♥ or 6+ ♠. Either way, we have a 8-card fit in a major. After some thought, I bid 3NT; it will avoid a misunderstanding. Besides, it's matchpoints, where you frequently bypass major fits to play in notrump anyway.

Everybody passes, and LHO(my screenmate) leads the \bigstar 3, I lift up the screen, and I see dummy:

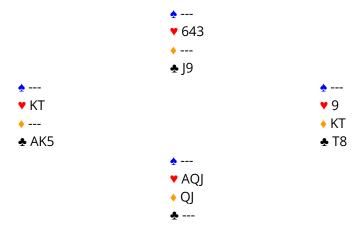
≜ KQT943 ♥ 643
•A
 €J94
<mark>≜</mark> ΑJ
♥AQJ7
♦QJ62
♣ Q62

♣3

I play small from dummy, RHO the 7, so I win the queen in my hand. I count 9 top tricks: six spades, one heart, one diamond, and the club I just won. However, I know that most of the field will be playing and making 4, so I need to find a tenth trick somewhere. The obvious choice is a heart finesse, and if the heart finesse is on, 4, makes five, while 3NT also makes five, which will be a great result for us.

Regardless of where the ♥K is, cashing the spades first is always right, so I do that. LHO shows up with three spades, while RHO has two. RHO pitches two hearts and diamonds(in no particular order), while LHO discards the ♦9, ♥8, and ♦4, in that order. From my hand, I discard a heart, diamond, and two clubs. My opponents play Lavinthal, so I ask LHO what his discards should show according to the convention. LHO tells me that the ♦9 should show that he has something in hearts.

Now knowing this information, I conclude the heart finesse is off, meaning that 4 makes 4, which means I must produce a tenth trick somewhere. I start by unblocking the A. After both defenders follow, this is the full five-card ending position.



Here, playing the A off dummy would be the winning play. RHO would play low, I'd pitch the \P J, and LHO would have to win the AA. Whatever LHO does now, he will give up a tenth trick. If he continues the AK and A5, I can pitch the \P J, and he must give up a heart trick to me. Let's see what happens if he plays a low club to RHO's AT. In this case, I would have to pitch the \P Q. If RHO cashes his \P K, then my hand is good. If instead he exits a heart, I win the \P A, knock out RHO's \P K, who is forced to concede a second diamond trick to me on the last trick.

Unfortunately, this did not happen. I called a small club from dummy, not thinking it mattered which one I played. RHO won with the ♣T, cashed his ♦K, and played another club to his partner's ♣AK. I won the final trick with the ♥A, making nine tricks for 400, a dead bottom, as I had predicted.

After a second dead bottom on the next board, Brian and I dropped to third place, just sixteen matchpoints behind first. 3NT making 4 for 430 would have been a 24 matchpoint top. I thought it didn't matter which club I played, but it was the difference between a bronze and gold medal!

FISU University Championships in Uganda

Written by Kai Eckert (20-years old)

Hi everyone! I'm Kai Eckert, a proud SIVY volunteer! In June I had the honor of representing the United States in the FISU University MindSport Championship hosted in Entebbe Uganda from June 24th to June 30th! After a long draining 30-hour travel day from San Francisco to Entebbe. I was greeted at 11:00 pm local time by 4 wonderful and enthusiastic volunteers who immediately made me feel at home. After a long sleep I was recharged and ready for bridge! But first, I had two rest days which had much exploration! I met the team and went to the animal conservatory and the botanical gardens. It was all organized by our wonderful atroge: Nashim who did an amazing job ensuring we were comfortable, on time and organized every outing.

This was the first time I had met anybody on the team in person except for my partner Isaac Stone. It was wonderful to get to know our team of Aaron Ballesien, Alan Yueng, Kunal Vohra, Brennan Easton, Isaac Stone and myself. What wonderful circumstances to meet under. We got to know each other whilst exploring Uganda and through bridge banter. It's amazing how bridge allows you to immediately make new friends!

The FISU University Mindsport Championship is a competition that hosts both chess and bridge events. There were a total of 23 countries represented with 200+ competitors. In the bridge competition there were 11



teams from 9 countries: Poland, France, UgandaX3, China, Germany, Slovakia, Burundi, Chinese Taipei and the USA.



The opening ceremony was an absolute blast. It was always a dream of mine to stand behind the United States flag in some sort of international competition. Achieving this dream that felt out of reach put me in a state of joy I could never come down from! During the ceremony, all competitors got to party together unrestricted from language barriers and political problems. We got to experience local food and local dance and they even let us join in! A conga line started to form that encapsulated the entire opening ceremony venue!

Competition started the next day. We had 3 ½ days of round robin playing against every team in the competition for 16 boards. After the round robin, the top 4 teams make it to the semi finals whilst the rest of the field played a consolation round robin for 5th place.

It was my first time ever playing with screens, playing in person with Isaac, first time playing our strong diamond system in person, and first time playing on the international stage. There were so many firsts that it was overwhelming. My nerves certainly got to me during the competition but I'm sure that any human would be nervous under these circumstances.

Sadly we didn't make it to the semi-finals but in the end we made it to 6th place. The final rankings were:

1		FRANCE (3) POLAND (5)		7.7	28 16	9 30	44.7 46	13 22	57.7 68	33 38	90.7 106	-15.3 15.3	2 1
	3rd PLACE PLAY-OFF												
2	2 GERMANY (4) ① CHINESE TAIPEI (7)		3.28	9 27	36 23	48.28 50	28 10	76.28 60	34 8	110.28 68	42.28 -42.28	1 2	
1	1 2 O CHINA						141.19	2.00 116.98		258.17			
2		11	👙 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA					117.09	2.00	2.00 119.16		236.25	
3		6	🌚 SLOVAKIA					124.56	2.00	2.00 98.72		223.28	
4		8	8 👵 UGANDA 1					60.04	2.00	2.00 69.80		129.84	
5		9	o UGANDA 2					52.63	2.00	2.00 49.93		102.56	
6		10	😳 UGANDA 3					38.91	2.00	2.00 29.23		68.14	
7	7 1 🛃 BURUNDI						17.89	2.00		20.18		38.07	



Of course I felt bad for the African teams as they were getting blitzed by all of the Asian/European/Western teams. However, I was inspired by their perseverance and their genuine love of the game. They didn't have a good score or much experience and yet their passion for the game was unbreakable. After a rough day of losses every day, they would ask us to play and of course we would agree!

The competition was not my favorite part of my time there though! It was all of the people I met and got to spend time with! Every evening Team USA would play bridge in the lobby. We would be bantering and having fun. Other bridge players, chess players, and volunteers would stop by and ask us to play or teach them how to play. We played with the Chinese Bridge team, German Bridge team, Burundi, Bridge team and the Ugandan Bridge teams as well as introduced some of the Saudi Arabian and Kenyan chess players to Bridge. I actually just recently played with Jeremiah, the Kenyan Chess player we taught, on BBO. A great idea came out of the tournament: our coach Alex Kolesnik is now recruiting US junior players to help teach Ugandan youth bridge online.

The camaraderie through bridge was evident as one of the evenings there was a speedball event planned. The format was to play 2

boards in 5 minutes. WILD! There were very few pairs in the event from the same country. USA basically swapped partners with the German team, and of course we got to see partnerships of every kind. Poland, France. Chinese Taipei, Poland, Uganda got to partner up with a plethora of other teams. Even the coaches and directors and a grandmaster chess player from Poland were playing. I played with a member of the Burundi team and we had a great time. There was a buzz about the room, it was chaotic and loud. People screaming "SPEEDBALL" when they were the first to finish. And loads players taking jestful shots at each other. Scores didn't matter; it was all for fun!

In the end I came home on another long 3 layover journey feeling fulfilled and excited to have another opportunity to go to another event such as this one! Thanks to SiVY, the ACBLEF, and Mitch Dunitz, I only had to pay \$200 out of pocket to compete in this life-changing event, and I hope that other SiVY players can have similar experiences!

If you are interested in seeing how much journey in Uganda was in video format I have posted blogs on my YouTube channel. Not every day is covered yet! There are many more videos to come! <u>youtube.com/@BridginWithKai</u>

You can find all tournament results <u>here</u>. You can find photos <u>here</u>.