

Erin Kelkar Letter

Dear Patty, Carolyn, John, Lola, Karen, Nancy, Barbara, Marty and other Atlanta Junior Bridge volunteers,

I want to thank you for the wonderful opportunities Atlanta Junior Bridge has provided our family. My kids, my husband, and I enjoyed learning bridge basics at your camp in the summer of 2006. Tage and Maya participated in continuing lessons, games, and tournaments during the school year. This summer, Maya went to the advanced beginner camp while Tage attended the intermediate camp.

When we began home schooling, the opportunity to socialize and compete against other students was something my children missed. At AJB events, my daughter chats and giggles with female middle school players. Although there are not as many teenagers for my son to meet, I like the friendly atmosphere evident when my six-foot-tall son bends down to confer with his seven and nine year old teammates for a Swiss game. Games and tournaments allow them to see how they rank against other students.

Tage's and Maya's participation in bridge has also influenced our extended family and friends. Maya encouraged one of her friends to learn to play bridge from her uncle this summer. During trips to New Orleans to visit relatives, we played bridge with their grandmother, great aunt, and their 97-year-old mother. My son and his great-grandma have difficulty finding a common topic for conversation. When they partnered for bridge, they easily beat Maya and me. While playing, they both relaxed and began talking. On another visit, Maya's great-grandma spent time reviewing the daily hands from the bridge newspaper column with her. After playing with Tage and Maya, their Grandmother Nancy began participating in a weekly social bridge game and plans to play duplicate bridge when she retires.

My kids also write about their bridge activities to their grandparents in India. Since their grandparents are lifelong players, it is fun for the kids to share their interest. Because of the lifestyle differences between India and the United States, I am never sure if Tage's and Maya's Indian grandparents understand my kids' descriptions of scout trips and swim meets. However, I know that when they write about playing in a Swiss team game or doing well in a tournament that their grandparents appreciate this activity.

With three weekly youth games and lessons, you are providing wonderful opportunities for our children. The toughest part of being a "bridge parent" is allowing my children to participate according to their interest and not pushing them to do it all. Thanks to your excellent organization, I know my children will enjoy bridge their whole lives.

Sincerely yours,

*Erin Kelkar*