

A GAME FOR ALL AGES

Summer camp mixed lessons, tournaments and recreation.

By Dave Smith

There are youth summer camps for just about everything — why not bridge? At least that's what Chris and Mary Beth Shaw thought. They organized the second annual Youth Bridge Camp at Lake Williamson Christian Center near Carlinville IL. Last summer, 20 campers from four states came for the six-day program.

Here's the report from Chris Shaw:

Students came from Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and Tennessee. We had bridge lessons that were on three levels for the two-hour morning and two-hour afternoon sessions: Beginners were those who had no bridge experience when they arrived. The intermediates were those who had completed the School Bridge Lesson Series or at least one year of an after-school bridge club. The advanced campers were those who had at least two years of bridge experience and had attended last year's bridge camp. Each camper was provided an instruction booklet with material geared for their level.

The campers had at least one hour of

morning recreation before lunch. They also spent an hour and a half at the beach in the afternoon before supper. A tournament was held in the evening and then a special activity to close out the day. There were hayrides and s'mores at the campfire, sun-daes, pizzas and snacks.

Here were some of the comments: "The kids were really fun and enjoyable to work with," said a staff member. "I wish I could stay a few more days," said a camper. Another added, "Heck, yeah, I'm coming back!"

We had 10 counselors, two instructors and two managers for all six days. We also had daytime table coaches from both the Springfield IL and Edwardsville IL bridge clubs who drove 40 miles each way to help out.

How did we recruit campers? We dis-



Players from four states came to the Youth Bridge Camp. The tee shirts say, "Bitten by Bidder the Bridge Bug" and were designed by camper and ACBL member Kate Warma of Carlinville IL.

tributed flyers at District 8 tournaments and used the ACBL tournament e-mail announcement process. We also notified campers from the previous year and depended on word of mouth.

The program had great support from the ACBL. Campers fees were subsidized by the ACBL Educational Foundation, District 8 and Unit 223, as well as individual donations.

We are planning to hold the third Youth Bridge Camp this summer. □



Twenty youngsters and 14 counselors attended to the Youth Bridge Camp last summer at Lake Williamson Christian Center near Carlinville IL.