

The Chess Journalist

Volume XLV

January 2022

This is the first issue since 2019. The plan is to make it quarterly, but that is subject to having submissions.



CHESS JOURNALISTS OF AMERICA



The Covid Cowboy by Jim Hollingsworth, Best Single Chess Photo 2021 Awards

On the far left is Club Secretary John DeVries. Mr. DeVries is a prolific chess journalist and a retired team captain for the Waco Hogs Chess Team. Some of his works are published in Texas Knights and on the RRSO website. He is a life member of the Texas Chess Team and the Waco Hogs Chess Team.

Chief Organizer and TD Jason Howell (standing ready to flood everything with a bottle of hand sanitizer) insisted on everyone following the Texas Governor's guidance to keep everyone safe. Mr. Howell is a senior chess expert and won the Janes Cup/Waco City Championship in 2018 and 2019. He is also a life

member of the Waco Hogs Chess Team.

Club President Matt Potts (in the cowboy hat) demonstrates ECO opening C-19 to fellow club members in a way only real chess players can appreciate.

Club member Jon

Cromartie observes the action from the far right. Mr. Cromartie is a life member of the Waco Hogs Chess Team.

Jason Howell and Jim Hollingsworth split the 1st prize with 2.5/3 scores. Matt Potts, the Covid Cowboy, achieved 3rd place with a 2.0/3 score.

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Hello From the Editor:

Hello, nice to meet you. I am grateful for the opportunity to provide a Newsletter for the CJA. Being my first issue we will be attempting to find what the audience really wants. This has a mixture of various items. Please send me your comments suggestions or even better send me a story or idea. mcapron243@mchsi.com



Inside you will find contributions from: Joshua Anderson, Rachel Schechter, Jim Hollingsworth, Honeybadger22, Karthik Murugan, John Hartmann, and Mark Capron.

Photos by Jim Hollingsworth, Philip Peterson, Rachel Schechter, Mark Capron.

You will find a bit about me on page 39.

As always when you see chess news please submit it. —Mark Capron

CJA Continuing Education Series Announced By John Hartmann

The Chess Journalists of America, in conjunction with US Chess, will be inaugurating a series of webinars for chess writers, editors, and designers, to help grow knowledge of best practices among its members. This series is led by 2021 Chess Journalist of the Year John Hartmann, current editor of Chess Life and Chess Life Online, along with Joshua Anderson, current president of the CJA.

Webinars are free and open to any CJA member in good standing, and any US Chess affiliate that wishes to participate.

The first webinar will feature Mr. Hartmann speaking on the importance of style guides in editing, along with a discussion of how to create a house style. The date is to be determined.

Future webinars will feature leading members of the chess journalism community, including staff from both US Chess and American Chess Magazine, with particular expertise in relevant topics.

Become a member of the Chess Journalists of America to receive information about each webinar as they are scheduled. US Chess affiliates will also receive notice.

Final Report: 2021 CJA Awards

Background

The 2021 CJA Awards were the largest and most diverse in the years that I have been involved in the awards. We had a record number of entries, 185, in a record number of categories, from a record number of entrants, judged by a record number of judges, at least for the years in which I have been the Chief Coordinating Judge.

Scoring

The entry that scored the most points is the winner of the category. A 5 is the highest score that can be given (a 3 is given for second place, a 2 is given for third place, and a 1 for fourth place, any other entries in a category are given a 0.) As there are 5 judges in each category, a 25 is a perfect score. If 2 entries score the same number of points, they are considered co-winners and there are no tie-breaks. If an entry scores 80% of highest total, then the entry is awarded an honorable mention. There is no requirement that a category have an honorable mention and a . Judges are not supposed to give ties, and we only had one who insisted on not choosing between two entries for 1 point. I did go ahead and split the point between two items fighting for 4th and 5th. The split did not affect anything.

Categories that have only one entry can win the award, be awarded an honorable mention, or be found to not be worthy of an award.

There were a surprisingly high number of ties this year. If you have 1 or 2 entries, can't have tie. If you have many entries, that will really "spread" the scores out

and make it difficult to have two with the same amount and win. So, if we continue to improve turn out we should be fine, if we have less entries in the future, we will be fine, and if we have the same number, we will have a few more times, and we will be fine, too.

Another factor for the ties is that we now have two high quality magazines leading us to have more high-quality entries and more situations where judges have multiple good options to choose from.

Award List of Winners TOP THREE CATEGORIES (OPEN TO PRINT OR ONLINE)

Chess Journalist of the Year

Winner: John Hartmann 25

Hartmann became the first person (I think) to ever win the award back-to-back. He did an excellent job preparing all the materials for the judges to go through and showed us his wide ranging experience and skill set.

Best Story of the Year

Winner: "The New Chess Boom," by Eric Rosen - *Chess Life*: August, 2020 23

The two biggest stories of this year were undoubtedly the chess boom caused by Covid (and more generally how the chess world responded to Covid) and Netflix's series *The Queen's Gambit*. Though coming in second here, Queen's Gambit related entries often did well.

Best Column

Winner: Endgames by GM Alex Fishbein
American Chess Magazine, Issue 17: Pages 50-54 and Issue 18: Pages 54-59 23

Fishbein's column won for the second straight year. This time getting 4 first place votes from the five judges.

BEST CHESS BOOK

Best Book – Instruction

Winner: World Champion Chess for Juniors: Learn From the Greatest Players Ever by Joel Benjamin - New in Chess 16

Honorable Mention: Best Lessons of a Chess Coach by Sunil Weeramantry - Mongoose Press 13

(score needs to be above 80% to win an Honorable Mention)

Previous winner Joel Benjamin won again, this time for a book examining the games of World Champions and how young players can use some of the same tactical motifs as the World Champions.

Best Book – Other

Winner: *The Life & Games of Vasily Smyslov* by Andrey Terekhov - Russell Enterprises 19

Honorable Mention: Smyslov, Bronstein, Geller, Taimanov and Avrebakh: *A Chess Multi-biography with 220 Games* by Andrew Soltis - McFarland Books 16

This is the third time that Andy Soltis has been entered in this category and the third time he has won an award. The differ-

ence is that this time he won an honorable mention. Russell Enterprise won for the first time with Andrey Terekhov's thorough examination of Vasily Smyslov. Smyslov, if he pays attention to such things from the great beyond, is likely smiling down, as he was a subject for both Terekhov and Soltis.

Best Self-Published Book

Winner: *The Carlsen Variation - A New Anti-Sicilian to Rattle Your Opponents* by Carsten Hansen 25

This was the first time in which an experienced author entered the self-publish book. He bested two first time writers and though all three books were good, there was a distinct difference between them.

BEST VISUAL ARTS

Best Visual Art categories were predominantly entries from US Chess, but Northwest Chess did enter a few items as well. This is one group of categories where I know we would like to see more entries as we know there is a lot of artistic talent in the chess world. Much thanks to those who did enter.

Best Photojournalism Article

Winner: "A Fighting Warrior" by Jamaal Abdul-Alim, photos mostly by Gabriela Herman (Chess Life: March, 2021)

This article about Irina Krush highlights her career as player and teacher.

Best Single Chess Photo

Winner: *The Covid Cowboy* by Jim Hollingsworth 18

Honorable Mention:

"Fairy-16" by Philip Peterson (Northwest Chess: January, 2021) 15.5

Though US Chess is the major winner in the visual arts categories, the two winners in this category were an online entry, from Jim Hollingsworth, and Philip Peterson's Northwest Chess January cover. Much thanks to both artists for letting us use their examples in this piece.

Best Art

Winner: "New Chess Boom" Cover (Chess Life: August, 2020) 23

This cover received 4 out of 5 first place votes and is the work of Neil Jamieson and Frankie Butler.

Best Single Chess Magazine Cover

Winner: "Inside Strategies" (Chess Life Kids, June, 2020) 20

Honorable Mention:

"New Chess Boom" Cover (Chess Life: August, 2020) 16

Chess Life Kids cover bested the Best Art winner edging out Best Art. It is the work of Jacob Thomas (artist) and Natasha Roberts (creative content coordinator).

Best Cartoon

Winner: "NASA Chess Club" by Brian Berger (Northwest Chess, September, 2020) 23

This was another visual award won by Northwest Chess, winning four first place votes.

BEST PRINT ARTICLES (OPEN ONLY TO PUBLICATIONS)

Best Regular Newspaper Column

Winner: David Sands Yes

David Sands of the *Washington Times* once again won the Best Newspaper Column.

Best Single Article of Local Interest

Winner: "The Detroit Veterans" by Saleem (Chess Life: August, 2020) 19

Honorable Mention:

Tribute to Mikhail Philippovich Ponomarev (Pages 9-19) by Richard Buchanan - Colorado Chess 17

This category used to be part for just newspapers, but I accidentally left the "newspaper" part and so this became a new category. It was fairly popular category with 4 entries from 4 different publications.

Best Overall Magazine

Winner: American Chess Magazine 25

For the third year in a row, ACM won this award for Best Overall Magazine. I know there are some discussions about making this a more prominent award and we will have those discussions over the course of the winter.

Best Feature Article

Winner: "Worth the Wait: The Queen's Gambit" by Bruce Pandolfini (Chess Life: November, 2020) 23

With four first places, Pandolfini won this category over 6 other articles, several dealing, at least in part, with Covid.

Best Interview

Co-Winner: “25 Questions for James T. Sherwin” by Pete Tamburro (American Chess Magazine, Issue 18: Pages 20-23) 14

Co-Winner: “Adisa ‘The Bishop’ Banjoko” by RZA interview (Chess Life, January 2021) 14

Honorable Mention:

“Interview with Irina Krush” by Dusan Kronic (American Chess Magazine, Issue 21: Pages 7-9) 13

At first glance, it is hard to imagine interview subjects more different than RZA, a rapper in his early 50s and James Sherwin, International Master who participated in the 1958 Portroroz Interzonal. In fact, both men have a long history as successful self-made men involved in many aspects of chess. The style of the pieces, one strictly question and answer, the other more biographical essay, show that both approaches can be well done. Kronic’s work on Krush, the eight time United States Women’s Champion, received an honorable mention, just a point from tying Tamburro and Bajoko.

Best Tournament Report National / International

Winner: “I Feel Blessed to Play Chess” by GM Wesley So (American Chess Magazine, Issue 19: Pages 9-18) 13

Honorable Mention:

“He Came Off the Bench and Scored a Winner!” by GMs A. Mastrovasilis and D. Mastrovasilis (American Chess Magazine, Issue 17: Pages 26-43) 11

Honorable Mention:

“Back to the Future” by GM Jonathan Tisdall (Chess Life: July, 2020) 11

ACM’s piece by and about So, scored the best of 7 articles, with the two honorable mentions also receiving over 10 points.

Best Tournament Report – State / Local

Winner: “Getting Back to Business” by Shlyahktenko (Chess Life: October, 2020) 21

Honorable Mention:

“Live Chess Outbreak in Dallas” by IM Justin Sarkar (American Chess Magazine, Issue 19: Pages 64-70) 19

Robert Shlyahktenko’s won by the slimmest of margins: 3 first place votes to 2 second places ones, with Sarkar scoring the exact opposite.

Best Club Newsletter

Winner: Chess Advocate - No. 1 and No. 2 - by Dwight Weaver - Memphis Chess Club

Weaver continued his fabulous work, creating a print and online newsletter for the Memphis chess clubs. They couldn’t meet often because of covid but there were still two issues published.

Best Instructive Lesson

Winner: “Master Class: Analyzing Your Games with Engines” by Jacob Aagaard (Chess Life: November, 2020) 16

This was one of our more popular categories, with 8 entries. Aagaard, who has won numerous awards over the years won for a piece on how to use your engine to analyze your games.

Best Review

Winner: “Fresh Leaves from the Bookshelf” by FM Carsten Hansen (American Chess Magazine, Issue 19: Pages 93-97) 19

Winner: “Giri on the French Defense” by John Watson (Chess Life: December, 2020) 19

ACM and CL take drastically different approaches to book reviews. CL usually reviews one book and ACM reviews around 10. Both styles are popular and the results certainly suggest that readers (and judges) like both styles, caring more for a review well done than how the review is done.

Best Analysis

Winner: “Nuances in Rook Endings” by Boris Gelfand and Jacob Aagaard (Chess Life: May, 2021) 19

Gelfand may have become the first person to ever play in World Championship title match and win a CJA Award in a print category. We are currently working on putting together a list of all our winners to find out for sure.

Best Historical Article

Winner: “America’s Forgotten Women’s Champion” by Bruce Monson (New in Chess 2021/3) 17

This article about Californian LaVieue Mae Hines, highlights one of most unusual, and strong, women players of the 1920s and 1930s. The other eight articles in this category all received at least a point, many at least 5 points making it difficult for any one article to win an Honorable Mention.

Best Humorous Contribution

Winner: “In Praise of Descriptive Notation,” by John Hartmann (Chess Life: March, 2021) 21

Honorable Mention:

The Masked Grandmaster by Trevor Brooks 17

Humor is one of those categories where judges can be forced to judge very different entries. In this case, Hartmann’s praise of descriptive notation, a tongue and cheek look at the “joys” of descriptive notation won over two other entries, with Trevor Brooks – “The Masked Grandmaster” receiving just enough points to win an Honorable Mention.

Best Personal Narrative

Winner: “Come Ye” by Pete Karagianis (Chess Life: June, 2020) 11

Winner: “Finding Bobby Fischer” by Josip Asik (American Chess Magazine, Issue 18: Pages 32-39) 11

Honorable Mention:

“She Answered the Phone and Helped Change Chess History!” By Bette Marshall (American Chess Magazine, Issue 19: Pages 71-77) 10

Honorable Mention:

“I Feel Blessed to Play Chess” by GM Wesley So (American Chess Magazine, Issue 19: Pages 9-18) 9

Honorable Mention:

“A Knack for Winning Critical Games” by GM Irina Krush (American Chess Magazine, Issue 21: Pages 10-17) 9

This was in many ways the craziest scored category I have ever seen. We had 6 entries, 2 tied for the award and 3 were within just a couple of points and earned an Honorable Mention. We have never had such a large number of award winners in one category. This category, which has a state version, junior version, and print and online, is the brainchild of Al Lawrence who could not find a good location for an adventure he had in France. Moral of the story: If you have an idea for a column, don't be shy, who knows when it will lead to many great entries.

Best Coverage by Mainstream Publication (free entry)

This is a free entry category that always fails to get the attention it should. Basically, the award was designed to help spread word about the CJA. An entry submitted from say a TV station or a newspaper and it wins (and the bar is basically - is it chess coverage that is accurate makes sense) then they get an award and are encouraged to do chess stories and we get additional mainstream promotion, everyone wins.

BEST ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS AND FEATURES

Best Interview

Winner: "13th World Champion Garry Kasparov and Queen's Gambit Creator Scott Frank Visit US Chess Girls Club" - (USChess) 17

Honorable Mention:

"Interview with Magnus Carlsen" by Jon Tisdall (USChess) 16

Honorable Mention:

"The Chess Files: The Answers are Out There" Episode 13 (Cyrus Lakdawala) by James Eade 14

Once again an entry related to the Queen's Gambit won an award, this time for coverage of the creator's visit to the US Chess Girls Club. Just a point behind was Tisdall's work followed by a James Eade interview of Cyrus Lakdawala.

Best Feature Article

Winner: "Chess with Charlie" by Michael Tisserand (USChess) 20

This US Chess piece about Charlie Gabriel and chess in New Orleans was quite well received. A Colorado Chess article about Team USA at the 2020 Online Olympiad for People with Disabilities, by Lior Lapid finished a point short of an Honorable Mention.

Best Podcast

Winner: Premier Chess by Evan Rabin 21

This podcast series was one of 4 entered and the only one not connected to US Chess. It also runs far more often than the monthly US Chess entries. Whether it was his frequency, ability to ask penetrating questions, or his wide variety of guests, he scored quite well with four first place votes.

Best Single Podcast Episode

Winner: Ladies Knight: Dr. Chanda Prescod-Weinstein by Jennifer Shahade (USChess) 17

Shahade wins this category for the second

straight year outscoring three other entries, all of which scored 12 or 13 points.

Best Tournament Report – National/International

Winner: “GM Eishan Moradiabadi on the Magnus Carlsen Tour Finals” by Eishan Moradiabadi (USChess) 20

This article provided not only lengthy coverage of the four player final but included numerous games from the event.

Best Tournament Report – State/Local

Best News

Best Club Newsletter

Winner: Chess Advocate - No. 1 and No. 2 - by Dwight Weaver - Memphis Chess Club

This magazine has a highly artistic bent with a high number of visual for a chess magazine. It also has some good analysis and a unique sense of style.

Best Instruction Lesson

Winner: “The Ways to Make Better Moves” by Dan Heisman 20

Honorable Mention:

“A Beginner’s Introduction to Chess Analysis” by Dan Heisman 17

Dan Heisman did well - all of his entries received an award.

Best Analysis

Winner: “The Candidates” by Jacob Aa-

gaard (USChess) 25

There were four entries in this category with Aagaard’s high level analysis of the Candidates Tournament getting the top score from all 5 judges.

Best Humorous Contribution

Winner: “How Soccer Is Copying the Game of Chess” by Ray Linville 23

As usual this category didn’t draw too many entries. This piece looking at chess and soccer beat out a comic by Diego Delgado, last year’s winner in this category.

Best Historical Article

Winner: “The Evolution of Modern Chess Rules” by John McCrary (USChess) 21

Honorable Mention:

“The Lost State Champions” by Scott Varagona p. 4 - 12 19

The McCrary piece is part of a larger series of articles by him for USChess.com while the Varagona piece attempts to find the winners of several Alabama state championships from the 1950s.

Best Personal Narrative

Honorable Mention:

“Leon Chess Festival: How to Lose to a Super GM Quickly” by Ray Linville

While a popular category in other forms, the online variation was not as well entered. Linville’s experience with the Leon Chess Festival earned him an Honorable Mention.

Best Overall Chess Website

Winner: Eade Foundation 25

This year this category was entered into by 2 people who clearly have a passion for their particular website. Eade for his foundation, the Eade Foundation, which won the category, and Hollingsworth whose website focuses on chess and the Armed Forces.

*Best Overall Website Small Organization (group of less than 500)

Winner: The Chess Refinery

This category aims to judge websites that are designed for small groups, such as a single chess club. To promote this category, the Texas affiliate ran a contest to see which small organization website it would enter. Other groups both inside and outside of Texas were welcome to enter, but none did. Hopeful this, very grassroots, category will continue to grow.

Best Online Blog

Winner: Dana Blogs Chess 17

Winner: Learning with Each Game 17

In many ways, both blogs are introspective and about chess education. They are also both written by two North Carolinians, Dana Mackenzie and Larry Linville.

Best Online Educational Lesson

Nothing entered

Best Online Review

Honorable Mention:

“Queen’s Gambit” by Cub Noble and Nick Osness - *En Passant* p. 4-5

This was an online review entered through Iowa’s *En Passant* – a quarterly periodical focused on the very popular Netflix series and highlight both its strengths and weaknesses. -*Ed Nick Osness is the son of John Osness “The Iowa Chess Man” who helped write the first rulebook in the US and whose name was on .*

Best Non-Instructive Chess Video

Winner: “The Queen’s Gambit” by US Chess 25

Another win for the Queen’s Gambit. In this entry John Hartman interviews Bruce Pandolfini and then several members of the cast from the Netflix series.

Best Twitter Feed

Winner: “Chess Tip of the Day” - @danheisman by Dan Heisman 23

GM Tisdall’s twitter feed was also in this category. The one judge commenting on the category voiced support for Heisman due to his more original and educational content.

Best Coverage by Mainstream Publication (free entry)

No Entries

This is a category largely designed to recognize the efforts of the general populace to write about chess. Unfortunately, this category has routinely been un-entered.

*Best Twitch Channel

Winner: zefcatt (Sara Herman) -

This was a new category for us and entered by two very different entries. This, and many of the new technological categories focus on popularity and questions of how do we address that with the strength of the material presented are bound to be discussed as we prepare for next year’s awards.

***Best Instagram Feed**

JUNIOR (UNDER 20)

The Junior categories are for those authors who are 20 and under.

Best Print Article by a Junior

Winner: “Under the Microscope” by Robert Shlyakhtenko (Chess Life: February, 2021) 15

Winner: “The IM Not a GM Speed Chess Championships” by Carissa Yip (Chess Life: August, 2020) 15

Winner: “The G & H Attack: How Modern Chess Has Evolved” by Harris Lencz (Empire Chess: Winter, 2020) 15

In the many years I have been running the awards we have never had a three way tie for first. It didn’t look like it would happen here, but the last judge to send in results for this category, and who told me how impressed they were with Lencz’s creativity, scored things just the precise way necessary for a three way tie.

Best Online Article by a Junior

Winner: “A Return to the Board” by Jennifer Yu (USChess)

Yu’s report from the 2020 U.S. Class Championships in Virginia during November, 2020 includes not only a report, but also her analysis of several of hers and others games.

Best Personal Narrative by a Junior

Winner: "My First Move and Chess Adventure" by John Burke (Chess Life Kids: April, 2021) 23

Burke’s piece about how he began bested Ghazarian’s report on the PWNCC G/60 Online Masters event.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT

Special Achievement awards have been used throughout most of the award years

Winner: “Readers vs. COVID” by Readers and Editors of ACM (American Chess Magazine, Issue 17: Pages 67-97)

This collection of games played as we collectively suffered through COVID was a unique way to demonstrate the resilience and togetherness of the chess community.

Winner: “48th Anniversary of Fischer-Spassky 1972 Match with IM John Donaldson, GM Lev Alburt, Sal Matera, IM Anthony Saily, Bette Marshall, and Maria Byrne” - Hosted by Joshua Anderson on behalf of CJA

This roundtable discussion brought together a wide variety of perspectives on the famed Fischer – Spassky match. The round table can now be seen at - [\(108\) 48th Anniversary of Fischer-Spassky 1972 Match - YouTube](#)

CRAMER AWARDS

These awards are named after noted USChess official Fred Cramer. Mr. Cramer became involved in chess during the 1953 U. S. Open (won by Donald Byrne). Though most famous for his numerous press events during the Fischer vs Spassky World Championship match, he was notably interested in state organizations, probably not surprising as Wisconsin had one of the strongest state organizations during 1930s – 1950s.

The Cramer awards are set up so that any state federation may submit 2 entries for free. This year we had Alabama, New Jersey, Idaho, Texas, Maine, Florida, Northwest Chess (an organization made up of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho), New York, Colorado, and Iowa. While this is great, we certainly have room for improvement as well.

Best State Championship Report

Winner: “The Championship Abides” by Scott Varagona (Alabama Chess Antics, Fall, 2020, p. 4 - 12)

This category and the Best State Tournament Coverage category overlap significantly, but this category should be thought of as more narrow, while the other more broadly covers the tournaments that the state holds, championship or otherwise. Here, Varagona reports on the online event, thoroughly covering his games and his winning the Alabama state championship.

Best State Tournament Coverage

Winner: 2021 Atlantic Chess News

As noted above there is a bit of overlap with the preceding category, but in this

case Atlantic Chess News does a nice job of covering state events in New Jersey.

Best Scholastic Coverage in State

No entries

Best Overall State Website

Winner: Texas Chess Association 20

This website ran by Jim Hollingworth, was well received, scoring three first place votes and a top 3 finish from every judge.

Best State Magazine/Newsletter – Print

Winner: Northwest Chess (Print Edition) (12 issues: June 2020 through May 2021) 25

Northwest Chess continued its dominant run with another victory in this category – the sixth in six years. Covid or no, the organization once again put out 12 issues, one a month, as they have for about three quarters of a century!

Best State Magazine/Newsletter – Online

Winner: Northwest Chess (Online Edition) (12 issues: June 2020 through May 2021) 23

Colorado surprised Northwest Chess last year, but Northwest Chess reclaimed the title with 4 first place votes.

Best Personal Narrative

Winner: “Girls in the Chess World” by Anjah Lodh - En Passant - p. 20-23 25

Miss Lodh, the Iowa representative to the Haring tournament took first over a very colorful historical remembrance piece from Colorado Chess Informant writer-Curtis Carlson.

Best Photography

Winner: "Shadow" by Philip Peterson (Northwest Chess: December, 2020)

This category was for best single photo in a state publication and was won by Peterson's work.

Best State Chapter Website

Winner: Idaho Chess Association 21

Honorable Mention:

Maine Chess Association 19

This category is like best State Website, but the organizations that run a state chapter website are not always those that are the most prominent group in that state or the group that runs the states activities. This can be confusing for many judges not familiar with state level chess politics. We can discuss in the future if we would like to move these two entries into one. This year, Idaho edged out Maine 3 first place votes to 2.

Moving Forward

Judging Recruitment

As noted above, we do have a good number of folks who are kind enough to help judge the awards. Certainly, 50 plus judges sounds like a lot of judges, but there are many conflicts of interest these days, so as helpful as Dan Lucas, for instance, might be, there are many categories he cannot judge due to conflicts of

interest. Also, we have many judges who only judge a couple of categories due to specialty considerations. Bette Marshall, may have known Bobby Fischer, but she does not play like him. However, as a famous photographer she is in an excellent position to bring knowledge to judging photography categories. Therefore, we are always on the lookout for more judging help.

Finally, I would like to thank quite a few people, most of whom are judges, but some who helped in other ways. This list is not in any order: Brandy Anderson, John Hartmann, Josip Asik, Vladimir Vuksan, Dusan Kronic, Vasishta Tumuluri, Yajat Gupta, John Hilbert, Dan Heisman, Peter Minear, Rodion Rubenchik, Pete Tamburro, Mark Taylor, Al Lawrence, Eric Johnson, David Sands, Matt Bengtson, Andy Soltis, Anthony Saity, John Donaldson, Mark Capron, Howard Goldowsky, Jim Hollingsworth, Mike Klein, Myron and Rachel Liberman, Dan Lucas, Sean Manross, Rebecka Ratcliffe, Sophia Rohde, Judit Sztaray, Dov Gorman, Anand Mishra, Melinda Matthews, Anthony Gold, Eric Holcomb, Jeffrey Roland, Alexey Root, Todd Winkler, Bette Marshall, Eric Vigil, Shaw Wang, Ralph Dubisch, Jennifer Vallens, Ralph Bowman, Ray Linville, Scott Varagona, Matt Traynor, Christopher Shen, Robert Shlyakhtenko, and John Hendrick.

As is the case every year, we will begin the next award season in February by asking anyone to contribute ideas for new categories and then go from there. Hope you can all be involved.

Joshua Anderson

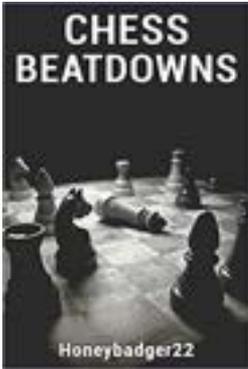
Best Self-Published Books

Joshua Anderson, Honeybadger22 and Karthik Murugan

“Wow, these are great, I should write a book of my games.” If they are being honest with themselves, and daydreaming a little, many players looking over their wins have had this thought.

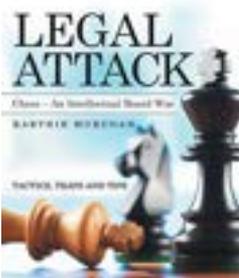
“So many kids need better instruction, so many kids need to learn and practice their tactics.” This phrase, or something just like it, have been uttered by chess coaches of beginners for years.

The two books that were submitted for Best Self – Published books and were first books, were done by authors who not only had these feelings but did something about them



[Chess Beatdowns \(Chess Beatdowns: Honeybadger22, .: 9798734792094: Amazon.com: Books\)](#) was written by Honeybadger22 (as a medical professional he felt it best to write under a pseudonym) and is fifty victories annotated to showcase various tactical motifs. He provided

the full game, but the accompanying diagrams only focus on the tactic that won the game.



[Legal Attack: Chess - An Intellectual Board War \(Legal Attack: Chess - an Intellectual Board War - Kindle edition by - Murugan, Karthik. Humor & Entertainment Kindle eBooks @ Amazon.com.](#) by Karthik Murugan.

Murugan's book starts with a quick explanation of the moves. He then moves to tactical motifs,

such as forks, pins, etc. and a wide variety of checkmates. In each case, Murugan provides 2 sample puzzles and then 8 more puzzles for the reader to solve. He finishes with a few tips and strategies for the beginner player.

Both books started with their respective ideas and quickly moved to the mechanics of writing the books. Both players used diagrams heavily. Murugan simply took from Chessbase, keeping the algebraic notation on the sides. Honeybadger22 chose recognizable, but slightly less well-known diagrams sans the coordinates on the sides.

Once the book was put together, both authors needed help with layout. Honeybadger22 went to the Fiverr website and was able to find someone online who could layout everything for him. Murugan took a more traditional approach – he asked his dad (ah, the advantages of youth!). Both were able to provide a layout that is quite readable.

Much like layout both authors needed help with distribution. Distribution through multiple websites can be difficult to manage even for the most experienced authors. These neophytes realized the importance of getting distribution help. Honeybadger22 decided to do everything through Amazon. Murugan took an alternate approach with his decision to work with Archway Publishing. This allowed him to easily sell over multiple websites including Amazon and Walmart.com.

While Murugan's work ended here, Honeybadger22 began the final step, one Murugan skipped. Honeybadger22 solicited reviews of his book from noted chess players. While some ignored him and others sent back non-applicable responses, Honeybadger22 ultimately obtained reviews from several title players. These adorn the book's back cover.

In the end, both authors were pleased with how the books came out and, especially Murugan, are thinking of writing a second book. We certainly look forward to their future books and encourage all our readers to work

on producing their own works and let us know how it goes!

Author's and editor's note: *The Chess Journalist* had a strong history of helping explain and promote how to articles related to the publishing of chess work. An article about how to self-publish a chess book would be both historically consistent and of great interest to *The Chess Journalist*.

CJOA Mc Donald's link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rERiT0fprOO>

MC CHESS ANYONE?

In 2018 St. Etheldreda Chess Coach Eric Luster took his middle-school daughter Shakira and her friends Imani Hill and Trechelle Williams to Mc Donald's on 95th & South Halstead in Chicago for lunch. They sat down to some good food, took out a few chessboards and started playing. In 2019, after a year of Mickey D's chess play, their team nabbed first place in Greater Peoria's All Grade competition. They won the state championship.

Did the fries make the difference? Or was it hard work in a fun friendly environment? Likely both. Anyway, Mc Donald's—in a 'not just about the food' effort—created a Community Brand Trust series of commercials—the first of which featured Coach Luster and his team. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/creativegroup/mcdonalds/a-table-to-call-home/>

These "I'm lovin' it" commercials run worldwide with very positive effects. Chess class enrollment (despite Covid) is reportedly up among young African American women. And more than a few chess clubs have begun meeting at their local Mc Donald's. Special thanks to Wieden + Kennedy Inc. / New York, Mc Donald's ad agency reps, for their tireless efforts to bring this project to light.



Shakira? Currently studying with GM Yaro Zherebuka, Shakira (1705) attends Marist Secondary in Chicago, where she captains her chess team

(Imani & Trechelle play second and third boards) while they prepare for the IHSA Illinois state finals. All young ladies are active participants in the Illinois Chess Association Warren Junior Scholars' Program.

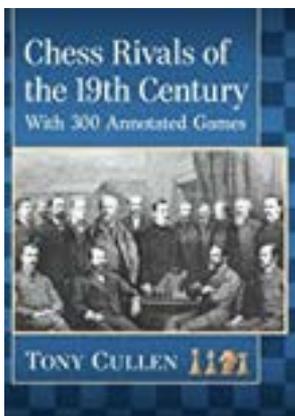
We, in the chess world, are all "lovin' it"!

By Rachel Schechter



**Book Review: Chess Rival's of the 19th Century With 300 Annotated Games,
By Tony Cullen
Reviewed by Joshua Anderson**

McFarland regularly attempts biographies focusing on more than one player. Tim Harding's Eminent Victorian Chess Player's: Ten Biographies was the first and more recently Andy Soltis's has written two: Tal, Petrosian, Spassky and Korchnoi: A Chess Multibiography with 207 Games and Smyslov, Bronstein, Geller, Taimanov and Averbakh: A Chess Multibiography with 220 Games. In Tony Cullen's Chess Rival's of the 19th Century With 300 Annotated Games, Cullen "aims to give the reader an overall view of competitive chess throughout the 19th century." (p.1)



Cullen goes about showing the competitive chess by highlighting the games of 50 noted masters of the 19th century. As he notes in the introduction the bulk of the book focuses on the 2nd half of the 19th century as there were no international tournaments

before then. Many of the players lived and died in the 19th century, while some lived well into the 20th century, those games are ignored. It is not exactly clear why these 50 players, but it includes everyone the reader would expect - Bourdonnais, Staunton, Morphy, Blackburne, Pillsbury, Lasker, etc., and lesser known masters like De Vere, Englisch, Charousek, and Walbrodt.

All the chapters are basically the same in style. Each has:

A short description of the player, at most a couple of pages, often with a block quote, and often that quote is from an obituary.

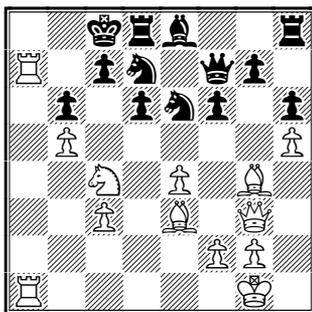
Some sort of picture, usually a line drawing that appeared in a contemporary magazine or newspaper.

Tables of match data and tournament data.

The games, which are usually half the chapter, include 300 complete games and numerous game fragments, usually endings.

From page 271, we see an example of a partial game. The book is replete with these types of highly tactical affairs.

**Winawer – F. Riemann
Berlin, 1881**



28. ♔ × d6!! f5 If 28... ♗d6 29. ♗×d6+ ♕b8 30. ♖b7 mate 29. ♖a8+ ♗b8 30. ♗×b6+ c×b6 31. ♖×b8 mate.

Some annotations are done by Cullen, but most are annotated from contemporary magazines or tournament books. If there are any gross errors, then the correct idea/moves is given by Cullen.

While the book does a good job of demonstrating some fascinating games played in the romantic pre-computer era, I found the numerous block quotes and limited biographies to be frustrating. Given the lack of real information about the individuals, an examination of these games by highlighting the major tournaments of the era, might have been a better way to go.

Due to the good explanations of the interesting games, this book is recommended, but with the noted reservations.

71 Chess-playing Warriors Battle in Third Largest Ever U.S. Armed Forces Open Chess Championships

By Jim Hollingsworth, Military Chess Committee Chair



62nd Annual U.S. Armed Forces Open Chess Championships (USAFOCC)
City of Grapevine, Texas, October 8-11, 2021

Photo by American Legion Post 379 Historian Daniel James Fallon

71 chess-playing warriors, from 20 states and representing all service branches, including the Coast Guard and the Space Force, battled over Columbus Day Weekend at great Wolf Lodge in Grapevine, Texas. One out of every three players were Army. Also, one out of three were Texans. The turnout threatened to surpass the attendance record set in 2004, when Navy hosted 83 players. We were on course to welcome over 120 players. However, several people withdrew for various reasons, such as finances or military duties. The biggest factor was pandemic concerns, especially about one week prior. And this is certainly understandable. Fortunately, I am unaware of

any COVID-19 incidents because of the 62nd USAFOCC. We used social distancing and common-sense precautions. Masks were optional in the “Texas-size” tournament hall, the skittles room, and during the Veterans Banquet. There were expectations people would do the right thing and they did.

For those who were able to show, it was an epic championship adventure few will ever experience. A father and son sharing top honors in a legacy going back 46 years. The Naval Academy winning the Commander’s Cup. Two being honored with lifetime awards for selfless service. An opening ceremony led by American

Legion Post 379's Color Guard. Welcoming remarks by local politicians. A 24x7 slideshow featuring players, staff, VIPs, and other information. A Veterans Banquet. Dinner speakers. The crowning of military champions for four states. FIDE Rapid and Blitz tournaments. Drawings, door prizes and gifts donated by generous sponsors and individual donors. The largest group of chess-playing (not retirees or active duty) to ever play in a USAFOCC. And much more.

The main event, a five-round FIDE-rated championship, consisted of two sections, the Armed Forces Open (AFO) and the Veterans Open Championship (VOC). The AFO is a "feeder" event for the annual NATO military championships, normally held in Europe. The exception was in 2018 when Texas Tech University hosted the 29th NATO Chess Championships. Selection of US military chess rep-

resentatives for the NATO Championships is highly competitive. Because NATO rules do not allow VOC players, the USAFOCC tradition is for two separate sections. This ensures a VOC player does not spoil an AFO player's chances for representing the U.S.

Because of space constraints and a looming deadline, I am limited in writing about everything that happened in the 62nd USAFOCC. However, the Texas Armed Forces Chess website will eventually be updated to include massive amounts of information. For this article I will focus on demographics, our military chess champions, the Throneberry Military Chess Legacy Awards, opening ceremonies, veterans' banquet, key staff, the 2022 NATO Championship, and next year's 63rd Annual US Armed Forces Open Chess Championships.

Demographics

One out of every three players were Army. Also, one out of three were Texans.

Demographics by Branch				Demographics by State				
Branch	AFO	VOC	Totals	State	AFO	VOC	Totals	Pct.
Air Force	13	1	14	TX	15	11	26	36.60%
Army	13	12	25	VA	4	2	6	8.50%
Army & Navy	1		1	CA	3	2	5	7.00%
Coast Guard	1		1	MD	5		5	7.00%
Marines	5	4	9	FL	3	1	4	5.60%
Navy	15	5	20	OK	3	1	4	5.60%
Space Force	1		1	LA	1	2	3	4.20%
Grand Totals	49	22	71	CO	1	1	2	2.80%
				CT	2		2	2.80%
				HI	2		2	2.80%
				NC	2		2	2.80%
				NJ	2		2	2.80%
				AK	1		1	1.40%
				AL	1		1	1.40%
				GA	1		1	1.40%
				MT		1	1	1.40%
				NY	1		1	1.40%
				PA	1		1	1.40%
				SC	1		1	1.40%
				WI		1	1	1.40%

Military Chess Champions

Deciding the 62nd USAFOCC Championship was about as close to a family affair as one can get. Airman First Class and Chess Expert Charles M. Unruh swept the 49-player AFO section with a perfect 5.0/5 score. Meanwhile his father, US Chess Executive Board Member Chuck Unruh, topped the VOC section with a 4.5/5 score to win his second military chess national title. The icing on the cake was both being present to watch and enjoy each other's accomplishment.

In 1975 Chuck Unruh won the US Armed Forces Chess Championship. He often tells friends he would have been happy reenlisting and winning more military championships. However, the Air Force limited him to only 81 square feet of living space in the barracks. There was not enough room for all his chess books!



Air Force Major General John Wood (left) presents the title and plaque for 2021 U.S. Armed Forces Chess Champion to Airman First Class Charles M. Unruh (right).

Photo by Aldo M. Mendoza

Air Force Major General John Wood (left) presents the title and plaque for 2021 U.S. Veterans Chess Champion to Chuck Unruh (right).

Photo by Aldo M. Mendoza

Side Events

The 62nd USAFOCC schedule was packed with plenty to keep the players busy. The official championship dates were October 9th to 11th, 2021. US Chess Candidate Master (norms-based) Edward Wendler swept Friday evening's 38-player FIDE Rapid field with a perfect 4.0/4 score.

The next evening (Saturday), after Round 2 and a dinner break, a FIDE Sectionals tournament had the following winners. Each received an impressive trophy courtesy of Austin's Rooks and Rocks Chess Club and great artisanship by Former Texas Chess Association President Gary Gaiffe and Larry Tipperreiter.

FIDE Blitz Sectionals (6) Blitz Section A
Blitz Section B
Blitz Section C
Blitz Section D
Blitz Section E
Blitz Section F

Rob Keough, 8.0/10
Andrew Periano, 9.5/10
Anthony Witt, 9.0/10
Ian Barruel, 8.5/10
Thomas Boyd, 7.0/10
Eric Osgood, 8.0/10

Navy Wins the Commander's Cup

The Naval Academy Chess Team was recognized at the Veterans Banquet for their exemplary collective chess skills while winning the 2021 Commander's Cup. Air Force Major General John Wood presented the Cup and commemorative coins to the team members.



From left to right: Air Force Major General John Wood, MIDN Nicholas Clark, MIDN Daniel Ruggiero, MIDN Wesley Nygard, MIDN Everett Stenberg, and MIDN Ethan Borst

Photo by American Legion Post 379 Historian Daniel James Fallon (October 10, 2021)

The writer is an explorer. Every step is an advance into a new land. Ralph Waldo Emerson

State Military Champions Crowned

Four state chess associations accepted our offer to crown their state champions at \$25 (our cost is \$25 per plaque). Since we offered two titles, the extra costs were funded by targeted private donations, rather than the 62nd USAFOCC's General Fund.

Louisiana	Ernesto Lizarondo (AFO)	Alec Bridgemen (VOC)
North Carolina	Gregory Risk (AFO)	
Oklahoma	Charles Unruh (AFO)	Chuck Unruh (VOC)
Texas	Englebert Roy (AFO)	Darryl West (VOC)

This is something the USAFOCC has offered for years. For me this is like when Soldiers deploy, and generous people back home send care packages. Soldiers always appreciate the show of support.

Army Chess Teams Roll Over Sister Services

The Rollins (Military) Scoring system for combined events was developed specifically for the US Armed Forces Chess Championships. In the US Chess Federation's Official Rules of Chess, 7th Edition, Chapter 2, page 133 the author explains Rollins “... *is especially useful for Swiss tournaments where the number of teams is small and the total number of participants is large.*”

Before the 62nd USAFOCC, the organizers discussed the merits of using Rollins. My impression is Rollins can be a bit daunting for some TDs. However, Louis Reed figured it out quickly and made it look easy.

See photos page 23

The Throneberry Military Chess Legacy Awards

The 62nd USAFOCC story would not be complete without mentioning Harmon D. Throneberry, Command Sergeant Major, US Army (retired). For years he was known as “Mr. Chess” in the San Antonio area and was a top organizer and tournament director in Europe, the Washington D.C. area, and Texas. He is a US Chess Benefactor, a US Chess Life Member, a Texas Chess Association Life Patron Member, and founder of many chess clubs. He is also an American Legion Paid Up for Life (PUFL) member. Texas Knights published an article about him, A Chess Player Seven Feet Tall, in its Jan-Feb 2003 issue (<https://texaschess.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Texas-Knights-Jan-Feb-2003.pdf>).

Today Harmon Throneberry's chess activities are mostly limited to the Internet. He follows Texas military and women's chess with great interest. I approached him and asked permission to present an award at the 62nd USAFOCC named in honor of him. He seemed in a good mood, so I “pushed” the envelope. Could I name two awards after him? He agreed and I gave everything I had and knew about our players to our Awards Committee, Carmen Chairez and Mike Donovan. Players had sent their bios and chess photos for our 24x7 slideshow. It was easy sharing those with the Committee. However, choosing the awardees was anything but easy!



Army is the AFO's Top Service Team for 2021 (using the Rollins Scoring System)

All team members received commemorative challenge coins from American Legion Post 379. From left to right: Mike Donovan, Kenneth Nguyen, Englebert Querol Roy, Aldo Mendoza, and Gregory Risk. Air Force Major General John Wood (far right) presented the coins.

Photo by Staff (October 11, 2021)

Army is also the VOC's Top Service Team for 2021 (using the Rollins Scoring System)

All team members received commemorative challenge coins from American Legion Post 379. From left to right: Jhonel Baniel, Nathan Woods, Daniel Mattson, and Charles Fricks (Not shown is Darryl West). Air Force Major General John Wood (far right) presented the coins.

Photo by Staff (October 11, 2021)



Presentation of the Harmon D. Thronberry Armed Forces Chess Legacy Award. From left to right, Jim Hollingsworth, John Farrell, and Mike Donovan (Awards Committee member). Photo by American Legion Post 379 Historian Daniel James Fallon (October 8, 2021)

Presentation of the Harmon D. Thronberry Veterans Chess Legacy Award. Jim Hollingsworth (left) presents Chuck Unruh (right) with the award for exemplary and selfless dedication to Military Chess. Photo by American Legion Post 379 Historian Daniel James Fallon (October 10, 2021).

On Friday evening, immediately after the FIDE Rapid tournament, Retired Marine Staff Sergeant John Farrell was presented the Harmon D. Throneberry Armed Forces Chess Legacy Award for exemplary and selfless dedication to Military Chess. Mr. Farrell is a Chess Expert and US Chess Life Member. He served as Team Captain, US Armed Forces Team, at the 2018 NATO Championship. He has been a US Armed Forces Team member at eight NATO Championships. He is the 2018 Texas Armed Forces Open Marines Chess Champion. He won the Class A Championship at the 2021 US Class Championships. He was Virginia's representative to the 2021 John T. Irwin National Senior Tournament of Champions. And he was Chief Organizer for five US Armed Forces Open Chess Championships.

On Sunday evening, during a surprise ceremony at the Veterans Banquet, US Chess Executive Board member Chuck Unruh received the Harmon D. Throneberry Military Veterans Chess Legacy Award for a lifetime of military chess excellence and service. Mr. Unruh won the Air Force and Armed Forces Championships in 1975. He earned the title of USCF National Master in 1976. He is a US Chess Life Member. He is Chairperson on various US Chess committees. He was elected to the Executive Board (EB) with five years of EB service. Currently, he is US Chess Vice President of Finance. He was President of the Oklahoma Chess Association for 10 years and is the three-time Oklahoma State Chess Champion. He is active in the oil and gas exploration and production business.

Chuck Unruh's award was one of the best kept secrets in Oklahoma and Texas. He registered in January and worked with the organizers and US Chess Executive Director Carol Meyer to help with military chess fundraising. We were confident he

would show, but sometimes life can interfere with the best laid plans. His close friends and family members were brought into the loop. "Whatever you do," I said, "don't let him change his mind!"

Perhaps it was his good friend Paul Covington telling him they need to visit Texas and see if Jim can pull this off? Perhaps it was chess organizer Rebecca Rutledge telling him she wished her son, Max, could play? Perhaps it was his son Charles joining the Air Force just so he could play, and his dad could watch? Whatever it was, one must love it when a plan comes together!

Opening Ceremonies

On Saturday morning the real party began! American Legion Post 379 (Bedford, Texas), the umbrella organization for Texas Armed Forces Chess (the sponsoring affiliate), commanded by Mike McCrady, provided the Opening Ceremony Color Guard. Mike Sivers served as the Color Guard Commander. Dennis Gossett joined him, along with Loyld Colgin and Jonathan "Rammer" Ramirez. American Legion Post 379 Historian Daniel James Fallon took great photos during much of the weekend. Claresse Roberts, the 2018 Texas Women's Veterans Chess Champion, sang the National Anthem.

The Honorable Darleen Freed, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Grapevine, provided welcoming remarks. She is no stranger to welcoming chess players to Grapevine. In 2019 she volunteered as a motivational speaker for chess-playing girls at the National Junior High Championships.



Opening Ceremonies Color Guard from American Legion Post 379 (Bedford, Texas)
 From left to right: Dennis Gossett, Loyld Colgin, Jonathan “Rammer” Ramirez,
 and Mike Sivers (Color Guard Commander)
 Photo by American Legion Post 379 Historian Daniel James Fallon (October 9, 2021)

Veterans’ Banquet

At Sunday night’s Veterans Banquet, the Chicken Cordon bleu was the best I ever tasted. We had drawings and door prizes. Just as dinner was ending, there was a video by Just Beth, the talented chalkboard artist. The crowd got noisy at the end as branches present cheered whenever she held up a card saying, “Go Navy! Go Marines! Go Space Force! Etc.” I may seem biased, but the loudest cheers were at the very end for “Go Army!”

The Veterans Banquet featured several excellent speakers. The Reverend Dr. Thomas J. Belke gave the invocation. After dinner Air Force Major General John Wood, playing in his first rated tour-

namment, inspired all with his eloquent remarks.

Also speaking was Michael Lenox, Chief Petty Officer, US Navy (retired), President of Chess Vets. He talked about how his 501(C)(3) charity partnered with Paralyzed Veterans of America to offer free tournaments and instruction to disabled veterans. One of their programs is “Operation Play Chess” which has presented thousands of magnetic travel chess sets to military and first responder organizations and individuals. Chess Vets donated 100 of those travel chess sets to the 62nd USAFOCC players as gifts. I need to mention he is also the 2018 US Chess Co-Person of the Year.



Michael Lenox, US Chess Co-Person of the Year (2018), gave an eloquent presentation about disabled veterans and chess rehabilitation

Photo by American Legion Post 379 Historian Daniel James Fallon (October 10, 2021)

I kept a promise to Suraj Vadapalli and his mother. Suraj is a junior high student in Houston and could not attend. I told everyone about the free online Lichess tournaments he is setting up for veterans. He is Vice President of his school chess club. He has been a volunteer at the Michael E. DeBak Veterans Hospital for three years. He is enthusiastic about chess and works on projects helpful to veterans. I think we will hear from Suraj again and I look forward to meeting him at the earliest opportunity.

Eventually it was my pleasure to introduce the keynote speaker, VB Corn, Colonel US Army (retired). When I was a Lieutenant stationed at Fort Hood, VB Corn was my Battalion Commander. He commanded the 1st Cavalry Division Artillery during Operation Desert Storm. I

was incredibly pleased when he accepted my invitation to speak at the Veterans Banquet pro bono. He shared lessons learned from the Gulf War and talked about a specially designed war map (one of only five such maps in existence). Today, he enjoys a busy but quiet retirement in North Central Texas.

Key Staff

For me, the 62nd USAFOCC was a three-year labor of love. I received numerous person laudatory comments, but really, I could not have accomplished anything without the people in the list below. I will add their full stories to the Texas Armed Forces Chess website as soon as possible. John Farrell, Co-Organizer. Louis Reed, Texas Knights Editor, Chief Arbiter. Gary Gaiffe, Deputy Chief Arbiter. Chris

Wood, Arlington (Texas) Chess Club President, Logistics Chief. Larry Tipperreiter, Support Staff. Dale Chaney, Master Sergeant, US Air Force (retired), Adjutant. Troy Gillispie, Arlington (Texas) Chess Club Director of Outreach, Planning Committee. Robert "Doc" Shearer, Chess Journalist, Planning Committee. Doug Stephens, Games Judge. Jocelyn Stephens, Graphic Artist. Carmen Chairez and Mike Donovan, Awards Committee. Daniel James Fallon, Chief Photographer. Air Force Major General John Wood, Awards Presenter. Robert McQueen, Tammy Matta and Bob Curtis, Special Staff.

2022 NATO Championship

At least three to five players in the 62nd USAFOCC are prime candidates for selection to represent the U.S. Military at the 32nd NATO Chess Championship in

2022. I am not going to jinx anyone's chances by mentioning any names in this article. What I will say is our current NATO chess representatives and our USAFOCC recruits under consideration are warriors first and chess players second. They are quite good with both skill-sets. They will represent our Nation well, next year in Estonia. Anyone else interested should contact John Farrell (email: john.f.farrell1@usmc.mil).

Next Year's 63rd Annual US Armed Forces Open Chess Championships

As I write this, plans are underway for the 63rd USAFOCC in the New Jersey area next year. Details are being worked out. We do appreciate donations made to Military Chess on the US Chess website. Every little bit helps!

<https://new.uschess.org/civicrm/contribute/transact?reset=1&id=5>

About the Author

Jim Hollingsworth is Chair of the Military Chess Committee. He played in five Army Chess Championships and made the Army Chess Team in 1989. He is the 2007 Fort Bragg Chess Champion and the 2018 Texas Armed Forces Chess Champion. He won the 1987 Lawton (OK) City Chess Championship and the 1987 Cameron University Chess Championship. He serves as a Chess Journalist of America Judge. He is a Texas Chess Team member and the Texas Chess Association (TCA) Vice President. He is a Life Member of US Chess and TCA. He is also a fulltime student pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design.

"They are warriors first and chess players second. Many distinguished themselves during the Vietnam War and/or the Global War on Terrorism. Many also distinguished themselves on their service chess teams, in U.S. Armed Forces chess championships, and in NATO chess championships. More importantly, they are all brothers-and-sisters-in-arms serving or who have honorably served our Nation in time of crisis. They represent every branch of service, including the Coast Guard and the Space Force. Some are retired officers and NCOs. Some are wounded warriors. Others answered our Nation's call after 9-11 and returned to civilian life to make our Nation stronger."

— Jim Hollingsworth —

In the Limelight: Rachel Artemis Schechter

Hi Rachel, would you please tell us a bit about you?

Though friends call me “The Vagabond Queen” (I’ve lived in NJ, ME, CA, DK, and IL), my chess origins are humble, and with rare exception, ordinary. That my cats play chess is interesting. That they occasionally beat me? Embarrassing.

How about your family?

My dad was a golfer and occasional politician. My mom, his greatest fan. I’m blessed with a brother, a daughter, two grandchildren, tons of cousins, aunts and uncles. As a child I remember lots of love, good food, good sports, dancing and poker. And while I’ve no chess lineage to speak of—my beloved nephew Evan (God rest him) showed a talent for the royal game while attending SUNY.

About how Chess fits in your life?

For me, Chess IS Education. What *can’t* we teach and learn from the royal game? History, philosophy, art, drama, life skills, science, sportsmanship, morality, mathematics, war, poetry. Infinite possibilities within a finite structure. And having taught K-College for the past 30 years, I say this with some accuracy and assurance.

Who taught you? Self-taught. Seven years old. Those black and red plastic pieces, black on white directions. Fascinating. Kinetic magic. Better than Monopoly or Parcheesi. At 10, I created my first set of chess pieces from a crate of empty perfume bottles. Matched the shapes and sizes, filled them with food dye and water, even named them. But chess opps weren’t common for Jersey girls back then so I ran with softball, swimming, field hockey, penny poker, Twain, Dostoyevsky and Shakespeare.

What inspires you? What inspires you to write? The sea inspires the best of me.



How did you end up applying the “Chess Is Education” philosophy?

Married in my twenties. Derailed in my thirties. A tough decade. Death, divorce, child custody woes. But I started playing chess again. Casually, as a respite from the emotional turmoil. At 35 I entered my first rated tournament. Lost the first 6 games in record time. A week later, I dropped another 6. Played a round of golf and considered backgammon. Then I found a few of my perfume pieces in my parents’ garage. Bolstered me. Two weeks later, I drew the first game, dropped the next 4 and drew the 6th.

Hooked. I joined two clubs, bought books, a chess computer, slowly improved. Then my Rabbi presented a choice. “You can study Torah Talmud with me and keep chess as a hobby. Or you can study

chess.” Needless to say, I hobbled with chess.

How life prepares us...

Some years later: a game-changer. October 1999. I was teaching Ingmar Bergman’s *The Seventh Seal* at Ramapo College of NJ. How the Knight played chess with Death intrigued some of the students.



They set up a couple of boards in class and started a small, informal chess club: *The Fischer Kings*. One night, they asked me to join them for dinner: “Come on, Professor, it’s your birthday. Let’s go into the city—we’ll drive” A little wine, a little weed, and a lot of laughter later, we wound up at a club in Soho. It seemed much like any other club—barfare, tables, low lights and jazz, about 30 people—pleasant, unremarkable—but then— there he was. The man himself. Bobby Fischer.

Bearded, jeans, baseball cap, casual, crowd-centered, holding court. I caught my breath. How? Onlookers, whisperers, couple of guards at the doors. Apparently, he was back in the states on one of his very secret, very undocumented visits. Major. This was major. I stared. Geez, Bobby Fischer. Beating opponent after opponent—quiet, good-natured, matter of fact. The vodka flowed. After about an hour, one of my students pushed me forward and I found myself at the board opposite Bobby. He grinned—that famous boyish grin—we shook hands—and he

demolished me—three games—less than 15 minutes. Patted my hand in a surprising gesture: “Usually it’s black who plays the Sicilian.”

“Oh, I, uh, sorry—”

He smiled, shrugged.

“Say, aren’t you Rachel—that professor? That film with the ultimate knight sacrifice? Fischer Kings Chess Club?”

I sat back, startled.

“Rachel Schechter, yes. How did you know?”

“Shev told me,” Bobby said, resetting the board.

I stared. Shev. Samuel Reshevsky. Of course. The next would-be opponent was tilting my chair. Heart in my throat, I leaned forward needing to know what every chess player needs to know:

“Say, Bobby, I—”

Another tilt to my chair. Bobby glared at the guy doing the tilting.

“What?” he said kindly, “What is it?”

“Do you think—well—will I ever be a good chess player?”

He grinned, boyish—suddenly young—adjusted his baseball cap, poured another vodka.

“You? A good chess player? No, never.”

I blushed, averted my eyes.

“Oh, well, I—”

He leaned forward, grabbed my hand, quick glanced at the students behind me.

“But you’ll be a helluva chess *teacher*, Rachel Schechter, a helluva teacher.”

I stood, smiling. Two students clapped me on the back. We moved toward the exit. I turned back around to say, ‘thank you’, but

Bobby...Bobby Fischer was gone. Two other players sat at his board.

I rubbed my eyes and shook the vodka from my head. Scanned the room. The place had emptied. Nearly 2:00 a.m. I walked back to the table.

"Excuse me," I said, "Where's Bobby? Where's Bobby Fischer?"

The players laughed:

"Russia?"

"How are we supposed to know?"

"No, no, Bobby Fischer—he was right *here*. We just played *chess*. Here at *this* board, *this* table—where did—?"

They shrugged, focused in on their game.

I moved slowly through the club and stood outside with my students.

"*You saw it*," I said to them. "I played 3 games of chess with Bobby Fischer! You saw it."

They nodded:

"Yeah, of course."

"Is that who that guy was?"

"I've only seen a few pictures of him—"

I breathed in the night air—full of wonder—and looked to the stars.

How life prepares us...

Shortly thereafter, my daughter Diana won a scholarship to Amherst College in Massachusetts. So, I moved to Maine: my frontier years. A log cabin, wood stove, ten acres, fresh well water, reclusive snows. Studied, wrote a play, a novella, two children's books, a sleeve of poems. Played chess as often as I could—at a Borders (before they closed)—and a private club in Bangor downtown. Yes, Maine was beautiful. I was cold for five years. Even the cats' whiskers froze.

But it wasn't until I trekked west at Diana's behest—"Mom, leave winter behind, California has *everything*"—that I met my first chess student since New Jersey. Diana landed her first job with a major law firm in San Francisco. I landed on Planet Mar—in—an unique entity complete unto itself.

And it was there I met RJ.

A whip smart 8-year-old. He could quote the Periodic Table. Just couldn't grasp reading.

"We've tried everything," his worried father confided. Public school, private school, charter school, workshops. The kids are making fun of him, he's fighting on the playground, and he's beginning to withdraw. Somebody suggested a psychiatrist, but... A couple of the parents in the neighborhood said you're a teacher from the east coast. Maybe you could—?" he wrung his hands. "His mother and I just don't know what to do..."

"Of course, I'll work with RJ," I said quickly, confidently. "We'll meet right here in my study, two days per week, after dinner. Does that work?"

RJ's dad sighed, relieved, then:

"Since the 2008 market crash—I—we lost everything—money's tight—"

I rolled my eyes; so had we all; it was thanks to G-d's good grace (and Diana's substantial salary) that my cats and I were surviving.

"No worries," I said, "It's free. We can trade services. You wife has a dress shop downtown? I can't even thread a needle. Perhaps—?"

We clasped hands warmly.

I met with RJ the following afternoon. I'd gone through several texts beforehand and decided to try the basic phonetic++ approach. He seemed tired, a bit wary, had been through this before. Then he spied my chess set:

"Hey—what a cool chess set—I didn't know the pieces came in different colors!"

I smiled:

"You play, RJ?"

"Well, yeah, I mean, a little bit—do you?"
I shook my head.

"Not really. Do you think you could teach me?"

RJ animated.

"Sure!" he said, bounding to the board, moving the pieces. "But—but what about our reading lesson?"

I shrugged.

"Another day. Teach me how to play chess. What's this piece?"

"That's the king—the most important piece on the board—"

I picked up paper and pencil.

"King. How do you spell that? K-A—"

RJ shook his head, grabbed the pencil.

"No, it's king, rhymes with sing, wing, K-I-N-uh G, yes G!"

"You sure?"

"I think so."
I handed him a copy of *My First Dictionary*.

"Look it up."

He backed off.

"I—I never used a dictionary before."

"I never played chess before. First time for everything. Just find the big letter K..."

And so, it went. By the end of the month, RJ and I were chessing and reading and chilling with the cats. After two months, we were comparing elementary chess texts, playing notated games, and of course, chilling with the cats. We'd work on his school vocabulary lists and assignments—just to get them out of the way, of course—then settle into the game.

"I *swear* your cats *know* how to play chess, honest! The tiger stripe just beat me with the Scholar's Mate. Is that possible?"

I smiled, shrugged:

"She learned it from the Russian Blue."

After three months, RJ had improved in all of his classes, found a few friends, and traded in his playground fights for a soccer uniform. Word spread through the neighborhood that I used chess to teach children. I had tutorial requests for history, math, even one for Greek.

RJ's dad pumped my hand. His mom hugged me.

"I—we can't thank you enough, Rachel."

Tears stuck in my throat. Their son had given me an experience educators *dream* of—skill sets merging—cylinders clicking in—the ultimate meeting and meshing of minds—to achieve the desired goal. And then some. It's why we do what we do.

"It's I who should be thanking you," I said.

So, suddenly I had a handful of students, local schools invited me to visit, consult. Was I interested in full time teaching? I met RJ at a local park:

"Hey—Miss Rachel! Hey—how are you?"

"RJ—great to see you, dude. How's life?"

"Good," he said, soccer ball at his feet. "How're the cats? Playing any chess?"

"You'll have to come over, teach them the Sicilian," I laughed.

He laughed too, then reached inside a pocket, handed me a silver chess king.

"Oh, it's your *king*, I can't take it."

"I want you to have it—I have other ones. My parents bought me *three* chess sets."

We laughed together.

“Well, okay, in *that* case—”

“Say, did you know me and Bobby Fischer have the same initials? He’s Robert James. I’m Robert Joseph. Must mean *something*.”

I looked into his clear blue eyes then up into the California sky. Indeed, it did R.J. Indeed, it did.

How life prepares us...



My Affiliate FB Treasure Chess photo

After a brief stint in Denmark—where I learned the Scandinavian—I landed in the university town of Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, in 2014—a few hours south of my then Chicago-based attorney daughter Diana—and was suddenly knee deep into my middle game. Dr Gs Brain Works, a high-end game store hired me as a chess instructor—we built boards, designed pieces, wrote chess stories, analyzed chess films. Very wholistic. Then a Montessori school hired me, then elementary schools Dr Howard and Carrie Busey. At one point I had 100+ students. I formed the *Treasure Chess Affiliate*, ran a handful of scholastic tournaments, wrote a few articles. The Illinois Chess Association appointed me to their Youth Committee, then as Downstate Vice President and as a National US Chess Affiliate.

This past September we coordinated with McDonald’s (yes, *the* McDonald’s) to launch a series of their Community Brand

Trust commercials featuring three Illinois Chess Champions. ‘From in the Hood to Over the Board’. (*Ed—See page 16.*) Currently I’m working on a flagship chess program for Parkland College Community Education. And so it goes...

Proof positive that the royal game *benefits all* who engage it, advances all who venture upon its squares. (Even those of us who play the White Sicilian!) But we don’t advance alone. We advance each other. Special alphabetical thanks to: Joshua M Anderson, Ajith Antony, Dewain Barber, Serge Bouillot, Bill Buklis, Mark Capron, Champaign-Urbana Unit 4 School District, Patrick Cohen, George Cook, Dr G’s ChessWorks, Jim Eade, Fun Fong, Uvencio B Hernandez, Mike Hoffpauir, Illinois Chess Association, Susan Kantor; Beatriz Marinello, Kim Doo McVay, Carol Meyer, Serge Minin, Judy Misner, Montessori School Champaign-Urbana, News Gazette Champaign-Urbana, Parkland College Illinois, Jennifer Pearson, Susan Polgar, Allen Priest, Kevin Pryor, Evan Rabin, R.J, Michelle Rodriguez, Kyle Spresser, Palle Torngaard Sand, Dave Schloss, Jeff Scott, Jennifer Shahade, Polina Sharapova, Yurii Skrypka, Maret Thorpe, Harry Winston. And my lovely cat

Honey for introducing me to the Feline Defence.

So yes, for me, Chess IS Education. From aerodynamics to zymurgy what can’t we teach from the royal game? What can’t we learn?

What’s the best thing about Chess?

Last night my 6-year-old future paleontologist grandson Logan calls me:

“Cora and I played pawns and she beat me!”

His sister Cora is my 3-year-old I-can-do-anything granddaughter.

“Cora beat you at pawns?”

“Her cat—Nana—her *cat* beat me! Can you believe it!”

“Cora’s cat? Which one?”

"The pink one."

"No worries. Nana will get you a leopard."

We laughed. The feline fianchetto? Maybe there's a chess lineage after all.

Lets switch it up a bit and discuss some more about literature and chess literature.

Do you have a Favorite Quote?

From the head: "The play's the thing wherein we catch the conscience of the King." From Hamlet

From the heart: "For when the One Great Scorer comes to mark against your name, he writes not if you won or lost but how you played the game." Grantfield Rice, American Sportswriter"

"The readiness is all." Also from Hamlet

Who are some of your favorite authors or a specific book?

I like Shakespeare, Agatha Christie, Mysticism, and Marvel Comics.
I dunno why.

What has been your greatest success in Writing? In writing in Chess? I like my ongoing *Chess Keys* series. First person chess reality fiction from the coach's point of view. I firmly believe *chess builds confidence, camaraderie, and community* and write to that end.

See *A Rook & A Quarter* from the Chess Keys series on page 34

Greatest Writing challenge? Whatever the subject, the greatest challenge for most writers is the dreaded 'Blank Page'.

Filling the blank page with something of value, or at least of interest. Though I dabble mostly in short forms, for the past 2 ½ years I've worked on a novel titled *The Gifts of Rabbi Oleksandr*: a mystical rabbi provides moral guidance for 3 best friends growing up on the shores of the Black Sea, Odessa Ukraine. And yes, one of the main characters is a chess player. Genre? It's new adult fiction, 90% dialogue interspersed with 4-5 poetic sequences. Agents and/or publishers are most welcome!

When reading about Chess what aspect draws you in most? History, Openings, endings, Biographies, etc? The History intrigues me most—who we were, how we got here—predicting where we might go.

Do you have a Favorite Chess Book? If so what is it?

David Schenk's *The Immortal Game*

How about a couple fun ones? *Two Blue Shoes* for my grandson Logan. Processing final animation and edits. Chess quips like: "Why did the vampire enter the chess tournament? He heard it was a blood sport." "Why did the chess player throw the clock out the window?" "He didn't want to lose on time."

And finally Chess keeps me sane and focussed. Plus, there's nothing better (for me) than bringing youngsters onto the board.

Thank you Rachel this has been most enjoyable hearing your story and I believe Chess is Education.

"Combinations have always been the most intriguing aspect of Chess. The masters look for them, the public applauds them, the critics praise them. It is because combinations are possible that Chess is more than a lifeless mathematical exercise. They are the poetry of the game; they are to Chess what melody is to music. They represent the triumph of mind over matter"
(Reuben Fine)

The Gijon International Chess Tournaments, 1944 – 1965: A History with Biographies and 213 Games
by Pedro Mendez Castedo and Luis Mendez Castedo

Reviewed by
Joshua Anderson with input from J. Eugene Salomon

Not all stories need 100,000 words. McFarland recognizes this and has begun to expand past their large thorough biographies into historical works that examine some chess idea, theme or tournament history. Their recent book – *The Gijon International Chess Tournaments, 1944 – 1965: A History with Biographies and 213 Games* by Pedro Mendez Castedo and Luis Mendez Castedo, is a fine example of the latter.

As the title suggests, the Gijon Tournaments were held in the Asturian region of Spain, from 1944 to 1965. These events were started by the Casino de La Union chess club and the City Council festivities committee. Gijon is on the Bay of Biscay and with Spain not taking part in the Second World War, was an attractive place to hold a chess tournament.

The first event brought World Champion Alexander Alekhine to the region, along with Antonio Medina, the Spanish champion, and child prodigy Arturo Pomar. They received travel expenses, free accommodation and a fee, besides any prizes. They played against six of the best local players. Alekhine, even though he was not the great player he once was, still won the event and he and Medina finished one and a half points ahead of the field. This pattern for the tournament would continue for the next twenty – one years with a few nonlocal players, often Dutch, coming and playing against the best local players. In 1945, and again in 1948, local player Antonio Rico Gonzalez won the event, but often the invited foreign play-

ers, such as Max Euwe in 1951, won the event. He was also the only local player to play in all 11 of the events (the annual event had a small break in 1952 and 1953 and a large break from 1956 to 1965.)

The book, not surprisingly, is divided into a chapter for each tournament. The chapter starts with both the Final Cross table and the round-by-round individual scores. This is a great addition that is missing from too many books lately, though this reviewer would prefer a running total rather than just how the player did each round. This was followed by a brief, one or two pages, about the tournament, and then a one- or two-page profile of the winner of the event. In 1948, when Rico Gonzalez won for the second time, the authors chose to highlight Manuel Golmayo de la Torre, the best Spanish player during the first third of the twentieth century. In each case, a game the winner won is then shown.

At this point, the games of each year are then highlighted. The first couple of games are annotated, usually highlighting the winner's performance. The annotations seem to come from the authors, but are generally unattributed, save when they are taken from another source (Bent Larsen, for instance, won the tournament in 1956, put one of his games in his first game collection book.) Most of the games are not annotated. It is unclear if this is all that could be found or if the authors chose their unannotated selections based on some criteria.

The typical appendices and indexes are included at the end. The most noteworthy being a brief biographical summary of everyone who participated in the events. Many of the players from other countries were IMs or GMs with many of the local players being untitled, but probably of master/expert strength based on the various city and regional trophies that they won.

Though a brief book, that might have a few more games or a bit longer biographical information, the book does a nice job covering the eleven tournaments and highlighting the chess history of the Asturias region. It is a nice history that can be enjoyed by all.

Much thanks to Eugene Salomon who helped me with a few points. He served as assistant and “gopher” for the 1944 event, participated in the 1947 event, and wrote the Foreword for the English edition. Luis Mendez Castedo will be returning the favor and writing the Forward for Eugene Salomon’s autobiography, publication in the coming months.



Myron Lieberman Passes, 1941 – 2021

It is with great sadness that we report that Myron Lieberman passed away on Christmas eve. Both Myron and Rachel, his wife, helped with the CJA Awards for many years. They always did a thorough job and no reminders were ever needed.

We will have more information in the next issue. Below is a picture of Myron and Rachel.



CHESSE KEYS: A ROOK & A QUARTER

By Rachel A. Schechter

January 2017. Beginners' Chess Class.

Students setting up. Javier and Erik, friends, rivals, promising players, are 8 moves into their game. Neither has castled. I sit at their table.

"Are either of you gentlemen planning to castle?"

"We like our kings in the middle," says Javier.

"Keeps your opponent guessing," says Erik. "Javier has no idea what I'm planning."

I look at their board. Neither do I. Doubled and isolated pawns, blocked bishops, undefended knights...

"We've gone over this," I say lightly. "Control center, develop your pieces, castle your king to safety..."

"We get tired of castling," says Javier.

"Who knows?" says Erik, "We might invent something new."

I smile. I like their attitude. Flying in the face of 2,000 years of chess logic. Beginners. Invent something new? What's not to like? But I *am* their instructor. I think into my pockets. Loose pieces, loose change, notions.

"Okay," I nod, "Let's invent something new."

I place a quarter on the table. They exchange glances.

"What's that?" says Javier.

"It's a quarter, duh." says Erik.

"I know it's a quarter. You think I'm stupid?"

"Nobody's stupid," I say. "This is the smartest game on the planet."

Other students gather 'round. I spin the

quarter on the board. Spin... Spinning...

"Put this quarter under your rook on a8," I tell Erik.

"What about the rook on h8?"

"You lost that rook."

"Oh, right," he grins, placing the quarter under the a8 rook.

I take out another quarter and slide it towards Javier:

"Place this quarter under your h1 rook."

"Why not the a1 rook?"

"Can you castle with the a1 rook?" I ask.

The other students shake their heads:

"No, he already moved that rook—

"...he forfeited the right to castle--"

Javier places the quarter under the h1 rook. Class is quiet, absorbed on the board.

"What now?"

I calculate the board.

"It's your turn, Erik," I nod, "Castle queenside."

Erik castles queenside.

"Now pick up the quarter," I say, "You just earned 25 cents."

"Really?" exclaims Erik, "I earned money? I get this money?"

"That's not fair," says Javier.

I quote Goethe:

"'*Chess is the fairest of all games.*' It's your turn, Javier. What's your next move?"

Javier castles kingside, grins, tosses his quarter into the air.

The class animates; everyone wants quarters; everyone wants to castle.

"Do we get to KEEP this money?"

Students are silent; all eyes on me. I sigh, look into the board, spin a few more coins. Students keeping the money? Well, this is America. But no. No. I don't like it. Parents won't approve. School won't allow. But suppose... I study the board, see seven moves deep.

"We can't keep the money," I say firmly, "It's against policy. But we *can earn* it for learning and applying good chess concepts. Like castling. What are other good chess skills?"

"Pawn chains?"

"Promotion?"

"Notation?"

"Checkmates?"

"What about draws?"

"We can determine categorical skills and assess values," I say. "*It's our invention--*"

"What about losing?" asks Erik.

I stand up, shake my head.

"There are no losers in my class. I win and I learn."

"Yeah, but—"

I think, pace:

"Okay, if you are checkmated, or lose on time, you will still earn money."

Everyone is excited, setting boards, shaking hands.

"But what about the money?" asks Javier. "What do we DO with it?"

I sit back down, look to the students:

"Any ideas?"

"Take a vacation?"

"Buy more chess stuff?"

"Buy trophies?"

"Invest it?"

I nod, notating:

"All good ideas. But let's think harder. We know chess can enrich and improve life. So, how can we use *our* chess money to *improve* lives?"

Tara, studious and shy, a promising player, speaks softly:

"My best friend Kim lives next door to us. When her dad lost his job, some of the neighbors gave her family money until he found a new one. Is that what you mean? Like charity?"

"Excellent. Charity. What other charitable examples can we think of?"

The children react quickly:

"Sick people need help..."

"Old people with no family..."

"Some kids are orphans..."

"What about animals?" says smart, adorable, and suddenly tearful Li Wu. "We got our cat from a shelter. There were puppies and kittens living in tiny cages. It was very sad."

"We saw a man on the street with a sign. He had no place to live." This from Sasha, a chess natural, visiting from Moscow.

Sai, quick wits and a born leader, jumps up:

"We can help them ALL!" he shouts. "We can give ALL of them some of our chess money!"

Enthusiasm, wildfire. I'm surrounded by brave knights and future queens, armed with rooks, flanked with bishops, ready to save the world. I look into their clear eyes and generous hearts: our hope for the future. ***Our keys to the future.*** I clear my heart from my throat:

"Okay, we have an opening plan, we'll need strategy, tactics."

"Can we start playing today?" chime the students.

I spin, flip the two quarters:

"We already have. This is what you earned today—for charity. Now, where

shall we keep our...treasure?"

"Yes, treasure, it's treasure!"

"Like the pirates--buried treasure!"

The students rummage through the classroom.

"What about that chest?" I say, pointing to the top of a bookshelf.

"Whoa! It has a lock and everything!"

We put the chest on a table, gather 'round it.

"There's no key," says Alana, quiet, poise, determination.

The class is dismayed: "It's locked, we can't open it."

I smile, reach back into my pocket and pull out a key:

"Voilà!"

"Hey—how'd you do that?"

"I knew this pirate back in California," I smile, **"It's our Chess Key to the future."**

I open the lock, lift the lid, hand one quarter to Javier, the other to Erik.

"Boys, will you do the honors? Make the first contribution?"

The quarters clink; the class cheers. Ann Marie, the youngest at 4, tugs on my sleeve.

"May I put something in the treasure box?" she asks.

"Of course, honey," I smile.

She opens her hand:

"It's a white pawn," she says, and drops it atop the quarters. "For our chess treasure."

"Treasure Chess?"

"Yes, yes, Treasure Chess!" shouts the class.

A whirl of activity:

"Can we decorate the Treasure Chest?"

"I'll start writing the game rules--"

"Me too--let's work together."

"Can we earn money for good sportsmanship?"

"Let's make a list of charities."

I am swept into their enthusiasm, listening, smiling, suggesting, advising, drawn again into their young eyes and kind hearts. I feel pride, hope. If this is the future, the future looks good.

Anne Marie tugs again at my sleeve:

"Here's a black pawn," she whispers.

I hold it up to the class:

"51% of all chess games are decided by one pawn. Never underestimate its value."

Echoes of: "Really? How is that possible?"

I drop it into our Treasure Chest and laugh:

"It's part of The Crustacean Defense."

Erik nudges Javier:

"What's the Crustacean Defense? Did the pirates invent that? We better start paying attention."

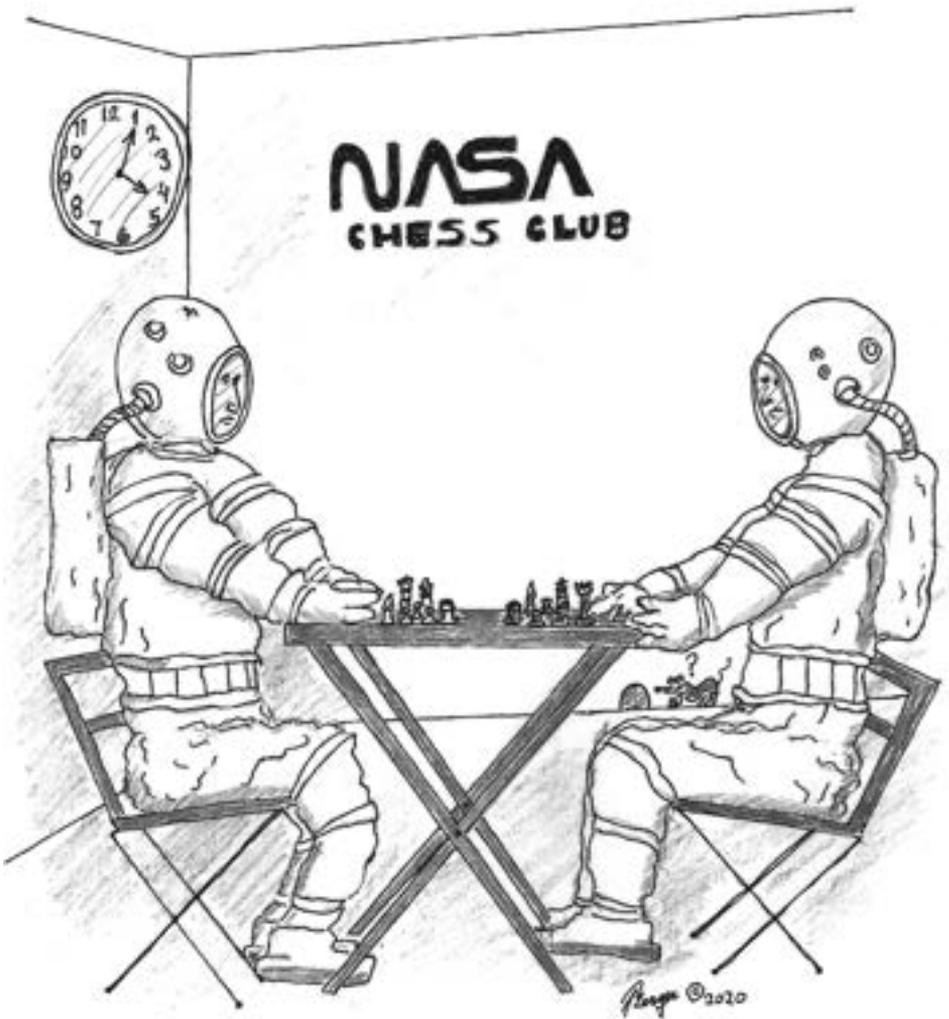
"Just castle," says Javier. "I'll Google the pirate thing later."



.....
Thus, Treasure Chess (my affiliate) was invented, rewarding students, their parents, coaches, clubs, and of course, their communities.

A Rook & A Quarter, was inspired by Illinois Chess Students at Montessori, Carrie Busey, Dr. Howards and Chess Works in Champaign-Urbana. Note: Actual names and circumstances have been altered to protect "youth, our future"

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**DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THE NASA CHESS CLUB
CONTINUES TO PLAY OVER THE BOARD.**

FIDE Bluebook: *Capablanca's Chess System* Now Available on Amazon!

<http://amazon.com/dp/B08C9RPP1Y/>

That's right. This prestigious volume, compiled by renowned chess researcher **Dr. Uvencio Hernandez Blanco** (FIDE Education Commission Councilor) and chosen by FIDE in 1996 as the Official Manual for Teaching Chess in Schools is now accessible via Amazon (link).



Blanco asks: How can we effectively bring *more* chess education to *more* youngsters worldwide in basic classroom settings? Particularly in developing countries. What's the best methodology?

What's the most successful and flexible curriculum? How should

it be best structured for teacher/student/classroom interaction? Who benefits and how? (And *The Chess System* answers)

A forerunner to many of our current chess ed projects, Jose Raul Capabalanca's *Chess System* outlines an innovative 36-week program (divided into three 12-week segments) geared primarily for 4th, 5th and 6th graders. Correct, concise and easy to integrate lessons. And though *all* coaches and clubs would greatly benefit from this unique, scientific approach, the emphasis is on youth—on teachers equipping said youth with the tools they need to create better lives, and so, a better society. "Chess education based on a new cultural, educational and recreational approach." (Blanco)

Each lesson contains: A Specific Goal, Content, Suggested Methodological Strategies and Suggested Evaluation Strategies. For example:

Specific Goal: Using combinations to gain material advantages

Content: Assorted combinations (via various media) used to gain material

Strategy: Students define and gather information re chess combinations used as such reproducing games and positions; students create schemes, observe, compare, discuss concepts and design game techniques; students provide solutions to tactical problems. The teachers provide all materials, guide and motivate students in their quest.

Assessment Strategy: teachers consider objectives met when students can define "winning material combinations", provide examples, and solve problems specific to task.

Blanco (who draws upon the work of several international chess masters and researchers) begins slowly...examining chess elements and the benefits thereof, then moves through the Fundamentals of the Endgame, Middle game, and finally, the Opening. What appeals to me (as a chess educator) is how the same goal can be achieved through a variety of methods. Blanca provides us many roads to reach the same destination. Proven, well-researched, well-documented roads.

Most fascinating, perhaps, is Blanco's Level III "Capablanca: Analysis & Positional Assessment". This study of the brilliant positional play of Capablanca, Alekhine, Morphy, Tal, Petrosian, Fischer, Kasparov and others is intricate and intriguing, recommended for serious chess players/educators.

The Chess System is a scientific method, an established paradigm that works. It has served as "a daily guide for the formation and growth of millions of young people...in the construction of a better society." (Blanco) In any country.

In any language. Therein, however, is the rub. It is presently available in Spanish

only. If you're fortunate enough to speak Spanish, you're fortunate enough. If you're like many of us who struggle unilingually, you're stuck with Deep L or Google.

Ergo...

We're actively seeking translation English collaborators for this renowned tome. Interested? Please contact us here at CJOA inmediatamente!

Rachel A Schechter
January 2, 2022

People who want to improve should take their defeats as lessons, and endeavor to learn what to avoid in the future. You must also have the courage of your convictions. If you think your move is good, make it.

—José Raul Capablanca

Meet the Editor

Hello my name is Mark Capron and I live in Iowa. I have been hooked on chess since I was very young. My current passion is collecting chess books. Mostly historical, tournament and biographies. I am at best an average OTB player and a bit better at correspondence chess. I have been very active as a director (Senior Level and NA for FIDE) over the years. I served on the IASCA Board of Directors from 1995 till April 2019. Back in 2002 I took over the editorship of the *Iowa Chess News En Passant*. When I thought I had to move out of state in 2019 I passed on all of my State of Iowa responsibilities. Eventually the company made a different decision and the move was cancelled in mid 2020.

I work as a chemist and laboratory manager at Procter & Gamble. I have a BS in Chemistry from the University of Northern Iowa and a MSc in Chemistry from the University of Iowa. My research involved looking for natural insecticides and fungicides by looking at the behaviour leaf-cutter ants. This was fun until you got a call at midnight from the custodian saying your ants are out of the cages... again. LOL. I also did some work with cabbage loopers and their

trenching behavior. Had a couple of jobs before settling in at P&G.

I have a lot of hobbies along with Chess: I am an armchair paleontologist and anthropologist. Read a lot of Science Fiction and Fantasy books. Love sports, softball, soccer, baseball, wrestling, and especially football in all forms. I am an Iowa Hawkeye fan, a Raider fan and a Cubs fan. I play drums in a weekend cover band, @juniperstreetband on Facebook. We play mostly classic



rock music.

I am married, (30 years in June) and have two grown children, one brand new granddaughter.

Nice to meet you all.

Edmond R. Gaines 1948-2021

Iowa City - Edmond R. Gaines, 72, passed away on Tuesday, May 25, 2021, at Lan-



tern Park Care Center in Coralville, IA.

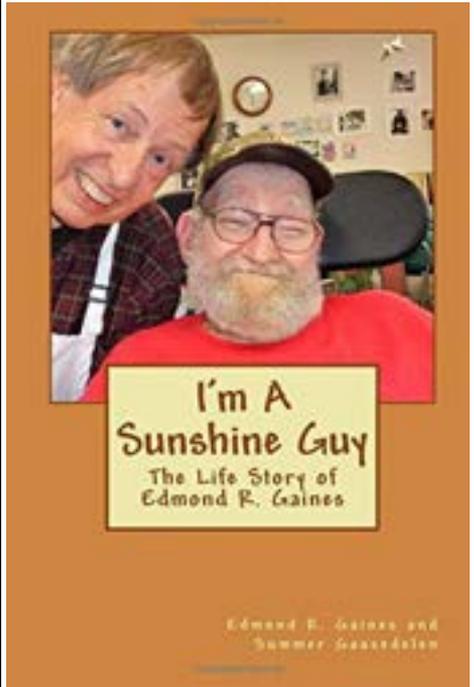
Ed was born on December 12, 1948, to Lillian Slater and Richard Gaines in Quincy, Illinois, and grew up in Burlington, Iowa. Complications related to a blood incompatibility due to the Rh factor, caused Ed to suffer a brain hemorrhage shortly after birth, leading to cerebral palsy. Although the outlook for any kind of future looked grim, Ed's parents refused to give up on him, and eventually found doctors who gave them hope .

Ed enrolled in the University Hospital School in Iowa City, where he was taught

the physical and social skills he would need to lead a successful and independent life.

He eventually graduated from Burlington High School and earned an AS degree from Southeastern Iowa Community College.

Ed was a chess player, and a self-proclaimed "Scrabble King", He enjoyed writing poetry and was the subject of a book, "I'm a Sunshine Guy" written by Summer Gaadsedelen, who was a care giver for Ed while earning her degree in social work at the University of Iowa.



(info about his life taken from his Obituary)

Ed could be seen at Wild Bill's Coffee Shop in North Hall, where he and two other individuals with disabilities continued the work started by Bill Sackter. He ran a small graphics arts business and eventual-

ly opened his own coffee shop, Mr. Ed's, located in the former International Student Center on campus.

I (Mark Capron) met Ed in the mid to late 80s. You could see him wheel in to almost every chess tournament held in the Iowa City, IA area. Perhaps Ed's greatest over-the-board accomplishment was winning the Iowa Open Reserve Championship in 1988. Ed went 3.5/5 to tie for the title with David Perry. I ended up dead last in that tournament, losing to Ed in the 2nd round.

Ed's highest rating was around 1575. Ed started showing up on crosstables around 1982, but must have played some prior to that. According to the USChess site he played 255 games from 1991-2004, winning 112, drawing 21, and losing 122. He had a correspondence rating of 1331.

I was fortunate enough to direct the last rated event Ed played in, the Hawkeye

Mind Challenge XI Reserve in 2004. The event had 27 players and Ed placed in at tie for 3rd.

Ed had trouble with coordination of his hands and arms due to the cerebral palsy and many times had a person record the games for him. However, when he won a game he would clap those hands together and giggle. It was pure happiness coming from him on those occasions.

At Ed's visitation/funeral they allowed folks to share stories. I really wish I had a recorder as the stories were heartfelt, entertaining, emotional, and funny. One funny story theme that came through was his love of Mountain Deeeewwww!! (As Ed said it while baying to the moon).

Everyone who met Ed was better for it. Ed had a zest for life that would rub off on anyone who came too close. Rest in Peace Ed and have a Mt. Deeeewwww.



How Was This Issue Put Together

I use MS Publisher as the main software. Any games that come in get put into Chessbase and then pasted into Publisher. For any chess diagrams I use both Chessbase and Chess Openings Wizards. For a chess font I use Linares. For any crosstables I create them in MS Excel and import into the Publisher program. Photos usually just get pasted in. In some cases MS Word can be helpful to get a specific format or to do some type of magic before going into Word.

The easiest way to submit information to me is to send it in MS Word. For games send as a Chessbase file or a pgn file.

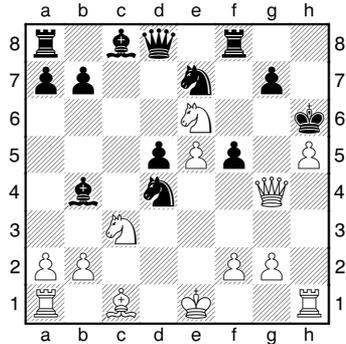
There may be way easier ways to do things, but thinking back on how I started 20 years ago I have come a long way. I used to do everything in MS word. I would have 20 files per issue then have to print them each out and organize them to get in order, especially when we did the book format. I welcome all ideas on how to make things easier and faster.

Oddities and Peculiarities

Gundersen, Gunnar - Faul, A H [C02]
Pietzcker Christmas Tournament Melbourne, 1928

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 c5 4. c3 cxd4
5. cxd4 ♖b4+ 6. ♜c3 ♜c6 7. ♜f3
♜ge7 8. ♜d3 O-O 9. ♜xh7+ ♝xh7
10. ♜g5+ ♝g6 11. h4 ♜xd4 12. ♝g4
f5 13. h5+ ♝h6 14. ♜xe6+ g5 15.
h×g6 ♯ 1-0

As you might note, it is a checkmate given by *en passant*. Only one known to exist in tournament play. You can find a video of it at - [GM Chess Analysis #42 Back to Front Chess! - Gundersen vs Faul](#) - YouTube and [Chicago Chess Blog: En passant mate](#)



After 14. ♜xe6+

Submitted by Joshua Anderson



Honorable Mention: Best Chess Photo of 2021 by Philip Peterson (From Northwest Chess, January 2021)