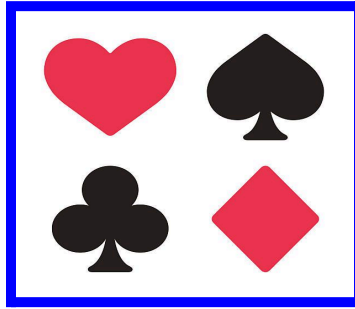


ALERT! APRIL 2025

A Publication of ACBL Unit 206



Editor: Mary Robertson Features Editor: Cheryl Whitfield

A Message From Richard Splanger, Our President...



"Spring is in the air." I don't know about you, but personally I am excited that spring is here. Spring is a sign of rebirth as well as birth in the world around us and the same is true at the Bridge Center. It is exciting to see the new people from LBIAD. It is exciting to see new people playing in our regular games. It is fun seeing people come back from their winter holiday.

To build on this excitement, we will be adding some new types of games over the next few months. You will start to hear more about this soon!! These new games will be for both new players and experienced players. As this information starts to become available, if you have other ideas to enhance the experience at the game - please reach out to me or anyone on the Board. We are here to make the game a success FOR YOU. Don't be shy.

Richard Spangler - President



HATS OFF TO.....

Hats off to Janie Hunt, Donna Cart and Suzy Bryant for setting up and managing our new bulletin board for the club! Thanks to Fairyland's generous gift, the Board agreed this attractive display is appropriate to add news of the club, key accomplishments, and key facts about the club and its members. Janie, Donna and Suzy took on this task to identify what information to include and then to update the board accordingly. It is great to see the masterpoint milestones people have achieved and to acknowledge the club's success in fundraising behind The Longest Day. It is also helpful to see things like a reminder to everyone of the board members and even little things like our wifi password. Thanks to Janie and Donna for putting it together!

Myra and Larry Reneau will be out of town for a couple of weeks. Myra has expressed her appreciation for the outpouring of sympathy, hugs and prayers upon the death of her precious father, Lloyd Carroll on March 19, 2025.

Upcoming Bridge Games

Follow this link to our club's website calendar for more information: [CBC Calendar](#)

The Club's online games have been suspended for the moment. We ARE looking at other options. How does Sunday early evening sound? Let Myra Reneau know.

Learn Bridge In A Day - Saturdays 10 AM.

Dan Chandler's lesson and game: Tuesday evening at 6:30 pm - Face to face, played at the Bridge Center. After a short lesson, players with more than 50 MP will play with those players with less than 50 MP. We need players with more than 50 MP to come and partner up with someone learning the game. Can you sign up for one Tuesday per month? The cost to play is \$5 per player.

Saturday Bridge Tips classes are very popular! Bridge Tips Class has been moved to 1:00-3:00 on Saturdays-please note this change.

Come Chat with Joe Viola every second Tuesday of the month at 10:30 AM at the CBC. Do you have a question about a particular hand? Are you wondering which defense over a no trump opening he thinks works the best? Does he recommend upside down carding or standard? All you need to do is bring yourself and your questions, and Joe will do his best to answer them. If you are concerned about something particularly complex, you can always clue him in beforehand so he can come prepared.

Wednesday Lunch and Learn Schedule - 11-11:30 AM Q&A included
Come and support our experienced club members as they volunteer to share valuable bridge knowledge.

Wednesday, April 30th will be a fun game: PICK YOUR PARTNER. Players will be encouraged to choose a partner they have never or rarely played with. The game will be stratified to benefit all-even our newer players. We will share more details closer to the game.

Special 199er games are being scheduled-stay tuned

SPECIAL REMINDER REGARDING NOISE LEVELS AND SCORING

The noise level during play at the Bridge Center has become a problem. The Directors ask for quiet, yet the noise level sometimes remains pretty loud. Players trying to concentrate are disturbed when several tables have finished and people are telling stories, jokes or talking about hands just played. We all like this part of the camaraderie, however, we need to respect the players who are still engaged in making their contract without this disturbance.

Another issue that involves our Directors also needs to be addressed. We are each responsible for making sure we are sitting at the correct table in the correct position every single time. North is responsible for verifying with the Bridge Mate the above is correct and the correct boards are in the correct order to begin play.

North is responsible for entering in the Bridge Mate all the information related to the contract. Before West confirms the final score, West is also responsible for making sure the contract, the direction of declarer and the results were entered correctly by North. It only takes a matter of seconds to verify this information, but it's an important job. If we all do this job diligently,

there will never be a need for a Director to have to return to the Club after hours to correct a score entered incorrectly.

There's nothing that causes more trouble for a Director than players either playing the wrong boards or discovering at the end of play they have too many or too few cards. Occasionally cards get mixed up and put in the wrong slot. So, counting your cards BEFORE you look at them, EVERY HAND is vitally important to avoid this kind of trouble. If there's been a misplaced card, the Director can re-deal the hand before play and there's no penalty. If you are the player with too few or too many cards at the end of play, you will be responsible for penalizing everyone at the table. No one wants to be that person. Just count before you look at the cards please.

This message is being sent to you from the Chattanooga Bridge Center Board of Directors.

Nooga East Bridge Club

Every Monday at 12:30 p.m. there's a bridge game at Christ United Methodist Church located at 8645 East Brainerd Road across from Hurricane Creek Shopping Center. Players are asked to arrive no later than 12:15 p.m. so the game can begin promptly. For those of you in Cleveland or North Georgia, this is just a hop, skip and a jump away. We are a very welcoming, fun group and are always looking for new players of all levels. Are you interested? Just email noogabridgeeast@gmail.com to make a reservation. Need help finding a partner or have a question? You can text or call Sue Riddle at 423.509.3583 or Sharon Lewis at 423.240.5360.

The Fairyland Duplicate Bridge Club



at

to

The Fairyland Bridge group plays every Thursday our Club. This group combines celebrating special occasions along with a delicious lunch and great cards, stay tuned to upcoming game announcements to make sure you don't miss the fun. Players should be registered before 10:15 to allow play to begin at 10:30. Lunch is provided between 12-12:30, afterward the game resumes. Reservations are appreciated, please reach out Susie Crouch at 423.443.6889.

Friday Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee

Our popular Friday Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee Game occurs on the fourth Friday of the month. Bruce Antman coordinates this game and will have sign-up sheets at the CBC for both Mentors and Mentees. If you can't sign up in person, you can text or call Bruce at 423.290.8207. The Mentee group is growing, and we always need Mentors to help our newer players with valuable on-the-spot advice. Don't be bashful. Sign up early and make Bruce's life easier.

Partnership Committee

If you need a partner, our Partnership Committee can help. All you need to do is text the new Committee Chair, Anne Donnovin at 423.605.2996 and let her know that you're interested in playing more often. Anne will do her best to match players with similar experience and skill levels. (Thank you, Jan, for doing this for a few years. You did a great job)

Memorial Donations

Are you considering making a memorial gift to the Chattanooga Bridge Center? Please note that though your contribution is truly needed and appreciated, it is not tax deductible. Our club is registered as a social club, 501(c)7 not a 501(c)3. Don't let that stop anyone from making a meaningful donation to the club in memory of a special bridge player or the family member of a special member of our club.

BRIDGE HUMOR

Giving a man his physical, the doctor noticed several dark, ugly bruises on his shins, so he asked, "Do you play hockey, soccer or some physical sport?" "No," the man answered, "I play bridge with my wife."

"One should always play fairly when one has the winning cards."-Oscar Wilde

"Those bellhops in Miami are tip-happy. I ordered a deck of playing cards and the bellboy made 52 trips to my room."-Henny Youngman

"Marriage is a lot like playing cards. In the beginning, all you need is two hearts and a diamond. By the end, you'll wish you had a club and a spade."-Unknown

"Bridge is such a sensational game that I wouldn't mind being in jail if I had three cellmates who were decent players."-Warren Buffett

GETTING TO KNOW OUR VOLUNTEERS

This is a new article highlighting some of the CBC's dedicated volunteers who turn their energy into solid results.

This month, Margie Moses, one of the Saturday Bridge Tips Class Instructors, shared with us how she got started at the CBC and how she wound up co-coordinating the very popular Saturday Bridge Tips classes along with Janie Hunt.

Here's Margie's story:

When I first moved to Chattanooga in 2016, I met some ladies through the Newcomers Club and began substituting in their party bridge games. I hadn't played bridge in about 35 years. In 2018 a friend suggested we try duplicate bridge at the Chattanooga Bridge Center. I got my ACBL number and left party bridge in the dust – I was hooked!

I am so grateful to the very many CBC players who have helped me along the way. Taking the time to actually play with a novice and go over the hands to make play and bidding corrections, teach new stuff and just be so encouraging. Their help was and still is invaluable.

During Covid, I worked online with a number of players who wanted more opportunities to practice with supervision. That's why, when several years ago, Janie Hunt asked me to help with her efforts for novice players, I was excited to pitch in. I understand the anxiety a beginner feels about playing this game against those who know so much more. Our Bridge Tips goal has always been to re-enforce fundamentals and offer practice hands to give newer players enough confidence and courage to sit at a duplicate table and play .

Janie and I prepare handouts that cover the topics we feel are required skills. We then put together a dozen or so hands that pertain to each topic. The time and energy required to do this takes many hours of preparation – some topics more than others. So far, the feedback from our "students" is very positive about this approach and that's what keeps us motivated. The people who attend these Bridge Tips sessions are a mixed bag – some are rank beginners who took Dan's LBIAD class and some already regularly play at the club and are looking for help in specific topics. We encourage everyone to study what we're presenting and only add new conventions to their card slowly. Time at the table just can't be duplicated any other way no matter how much you study. Practice (and failure) is the best teacher.

I still consider myself a student as well. The beauty of this amazing game

is that in any player's lifetime, they will never see 4 identical hands again. Each time you sit at a bridge table, everything is different. Some monster slam bids are set by good defense, and some combined 20 point part score hands make game. You just have to expect the unexpected – and this keeps things interesting, challenging and sometimes frustrating. The goal is to get players invested in trying to learn enough skills to be competitive.

When we see our novices playing at the club, it's a great feeling of satisfaction that we're doing something worthwhile. With the national average of bridge players being 75 years of age, the focus for CBC is to mine Chattanooga for interested players and then to provide the tools they'll need to tackle this amazing card game.



OUR 2025 THE LONGEST DAY GOAL: \$16,000

The Chattanooga Bridge Center's The Longest Day website page is active and can receive donations by club members. Mary Robrertson will continue to coordinate our annual fundraiser; Jan Alexander has agreed to serve as Treasurer again.

During The Longest Day week, bridge games will begin Monday, June 16 at Nooga East and at the Club Tuesday through Friday that week. A lunch and special game will wrap up the 2025 event on Friday, June 20. Be on the lookout for more information as the time approaches.

[THE LONGEST DAY DONATIONS](#)

One Last Thing

By John Friedl

Every Card Has A Meaning (Continued from the March 2025 issue)

In last month's Newsletter column I illustrated how the defense could draw inferences from the play of a single card on the opening lead, plus the bidding in the auction, to work out twelve of the cards in Declarer's distribution. After the second trick was played, the defenders knew exactly what Declarer's distribution was, and therefore they knew what their partner's distribution was as well.

This same principle applies when you are the Declarer and you are able to draw inferences from the opponents' bidding (or lack thereof) and the cards they play on each trick. I've constructed a relatively easy sample hand to illustrate how this might work. It is based on the same concept – every card has a meaning, and assuming you are not playing against complete beginners, the opponents are not choosing cards randomly from their hands but are making logical decisions.

Here is the auction. You are South, the dealer.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
4♦	4♠	All pass	1♠

West leads the jack of clubs and this is your hand and dummy.

North (dummy)

♠ K10874
♥ AJ7
♦ 95
♣ KQ10

South (you)

♠ AJ932
♥ K85
♦ 62
♣ A87

You begin by counting your tricks – winners and losers. You have seven fast winners – two spades, two hearts and three clubs. You have two definite diamond losers, a possible heart loser, and you have to find the queen of spades as well. It is possible that West holds the queen of hearts and a finesse of the jack will be successful, thereby eliminating one possible loser. How will you plan the play of the hand as Declarer?

First, let's analyze the opening lead. What do we know about the lead of the jack of clubs? Usually the lead of an honor card comes from the top of a sequence, touching honors such as the jack and ten. But here we can see the ten of clubs, so that's not it. Also, West preempted with a jump overcall bid of four diamonds, typically showing at least a seven-card suit, maybe eight. Why didn't he lead from his long suit? It doesn't take a Sherlock Holmes to deduce that the jack must be a singleton.

What else do we know about West's hand, aside from the fact that he has seven or more diamonds and one club? He must have at least one spade. Why? Because if he was void in spades he wouldn't be able to ruff the second club trick, assuming East could win the ace and lead a club back at trick two. Therefore, we can place at least nine cards with West – seven diamonds, one club and one spade. How will this guide our play of the hand?

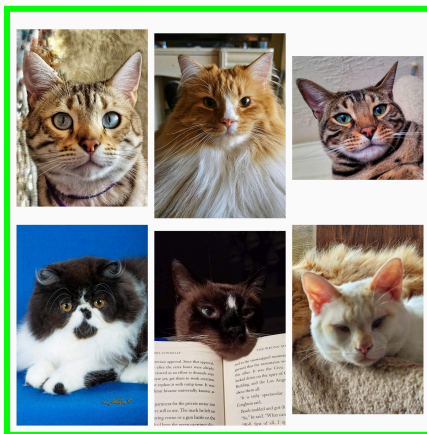
Our primary objective is to avoid losing four tricks. We know we are going to lose two diamonds, and we will lose a heart if East holds the queen. Therefore, we need to avoid losing a trick to the queen of spades. If spades are divided 2-1 there is no problem. But what if they are 3-0? In that case, we need to play the suit so as to be sure we can finesse against the hand that holds all three spades.

Hopefully you can see where this is heading. A common guideline in planning the play for Declarer is called the "Rule of Vacant Places." If we know that West started with seven diamonds and East with two, that leaves six vacant places in the West hand and eleven vacant places in the East hand. Therefore, it is more likely that East will hold the queen of spades.

That's a good rule to follow if you are starting from scratch and don't have any additional information about either defender's hand. However, here we are armed with the virtual certainty that West has at least one spade, and we can guard against the possibility that he has all three missing spades by first cashing the ace from our hand. If both opponents follow, the problem is solved. If East shows out, we lead toward Dummy's king-ten and finesse for the queen. And if West shows out? Then we're either playing against Jeff Meckstroth or someone who just graduated from Learn Bridge In A Day.

Arnie's Angle - For Those Who Wish To Learn More About The World In General

The Human-Feline Bond



(Thank you, Myra and Larry for sharing this photo of your fur babies)

Cats in Ancient Civilizations: The human-cat relationship dates back at least 10,000 years. Evidence of this relationship first emerged in the Fertile Crescent, a region of the Middle East where farming first developed, cultivating grain that attracted rodents that in turn attracted wild cats. Humans welcomed the wild cat as a protector of crops and food storage. In Cyprus, bones of a cat buried with its owner were unearthed dating to 7500 BC. In Egypt around 1950 BC, cats as protectors of grain became revered as gods and cats were depicted in art and were even given their own burial rites. The ancient Egyptians believed that cats were a symbol of grace and poise and that they brought good luck to their owners. In ancient Rome, cats were also highly valued and were kept as pets and exhibited in shows. The Romans believed that cats were a symbol of cleanliness and hygiene, and they were often used to keep homes and public spaces free of rodents and pests. Forward to the Middle Ages when cats were used on sailing

ships to control rodents. And that is how this type of cat was introduced to the New World aboard such ships as the Santa Maria, Nina, and Pinta.

Cats as Pets. Long before cats were domesticated, they made themselves useful to humans by hunting rodents that damaged crops. As humans began to settle into communities, wild cats started to live alongside them. This occurred about 10,000 years ago and was not a planned event but was an evolutionary process. Wild cats that were less fearful and more tolerant of humans were more likely to survive and reproduce. Over time, cats developed a symbiotic relationship with humans, where they provided pest control and in return got access to food and shelter. As cats became more domesticated, humans began to appreciate their companionship and started to keep them as pets. Cats were valued not only for their hunting skills, but also for their affectionate and playful nature. They became an integral part of many households and were even given special treatment in some cultures. Today cats are common pets on all continents of the world, and their global population is difficult to ascertain with estimates ranging from between 200 million to 600 million. As of 2019, 43 million US households owned cats, with an average of 2.2 cats per household giving a total population of around 95 million. The US also had an estimated 58 million feral cats. In the US in 1985, cats outnumbered dogs as pets for the first time, in part because of the development of cat litter in 1940, which eliminated the unpleasantly powerful smell of cat urine.

Today in the US, human owners of cats typically keep cats indoors, except on US farms, where cats live outside most of the time and are a deterrent to mice, rats, snakes, and other pests. The farm cat and the ship cat, whose primary function was pest control, was sometimes referred to as a "mouser", and in London, England there resided a cat at Number 10 Downing Street with the official title of "Chief Mouser to the Cabinet Office".

Domesticated Varieties of Cats. The current number of cat breeds is quite large, with the US Cat Fancier's Association recognizing 41 breeds, of which 16 are "natural breeds" that probably emerged before humans began breeding pedigree cats, while the others were developed over the latter half of the 20th century providing more interesting colorations, giving us today's wide variety of beautiful multi-breed, multi-colored cats. Because of common crossbreeding, many cats are simply identified as belonging to the breeds of domestic longhair and domestic shorthair, depending on their type of fur.

Cats Have Positive Effects on Human Health: Interactions with cats are known to improve health and reduce physical responses to stress and also may decrease blood pressure. Cat ownership may also improve psychological health by providing emotional support and dispelling feelings of depression, anxiety and loneliness. Cats are also thought to be able to improve the general mood of their owners by alleviating negative attitudes. According to a Swiss study carried out in 2003, cats may change the overall psychological state of their owner as their company's effect appears to be comparable to that of a human partner. The researchers concluded that, while cats were not shown to promote positive moods, they do alleviate negative ones. One study found that cat ownership is associated with a reduced risk of heart attacks and strokes. Cats are also great for people who live alone or have limited mobility, as they provide comfort and entertainment. However, the effect of these pets on human health is closely related to the time and effort the cat owner is able to invest in the cat, in terms of bonding and playing.

Therapy Cats: Therapy cats are trained to help ailing humans in a medically

beneficial way particularly in regard to relaxation and healing. Certain breeds are desirable as therapy cats due to their personality and temperament. Some examples of preferred breeds are the American Shorthair, Siamese, and Persian cats. Some therapy cats are used as alternatives to therapy dogs due to the cats' size and nature, allowing them to work with patients/people who might otherwise be scared of dogs. The sound of cats purring as well as petting them can deliver both psychological and physical benefits. Therapy cats are used as companions to help the recovery and well-being of people who have had strokes, high blood pressure, anxiety, and depression. Therapy cats are also used as companions at juvenile detention centers, for children with developmental disabilities, and for children with language, speech and hearing difficulties. Therapy cats are also sometimes used in hospitals to relax children who are patients, as well as helping those in hospice care cope with their terminal illness.

Cats May also Have Negative Effects on Human Health: Because of their small size, domesticated house cats pose little physical danger to adult humans, but in the US cats do inflict about 400,000 bites per year that result in emergency room visits, almost 90% of which are bites from provoked animals. Cat bites may become infected, sometimes with serious consequences such as cat scratch disease or, very rarely, rabies. A large percentage of cats are infected with parasites including roundworm and fleas, with infection rates ranging from around 40 to 60% in both domestic and feral cats worldwide. **Allergic reactions to cats** are relatively common, happening in as many as every 3 in 10 Americans. The major allergen is found in the saliva and/or dander of all cat breeds. Allergic reaction is typically manifested by hay fever, asthma, or a skin rash. Some owners cope with this problem by taking allergy medicine, along with bathing their cats frequently, since weekly bathing will reduce the amount of dander shed by a cat.

Scratching Posts and Declawing: A natural behavior in cats is to hook their front claws into suitable surfaces and pull backwards. Cats, like humans, keep their muscles trim and their body flexible by stretching and scratching. Additionally, scratching serves to clean and sharpen their claws. Indoor cats benefit from being provided with a scratching post so that they are less likely to use carpet or furniture, which they are known to ruin. Another response to indoor scratching is declawing. This is a surgical procedure to remove the claw and first bone of each digit of a cat's front paws. Declawing is a major surgical procedure and can produce pain and infections. In many countries, declawing is prohibited by animal welfare laws and it is ethically controversial within the veterinary community. While both the Humane Society of the United States and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals strongly discourage or condemn the procedure, the American Veterinary Medical Association supports the procedure under certain guidelines and finds "no scientific evidence that declawing leads to behavioral abnormalities", and argues that many cats would be given up and euthanized were declawing not performed.

Cat Waste: Being fastidious self-cleaners, cats detest their own waste and instinctually bury their urine and feces. House cats are usually provided with a litter box containing bentonite or other absorbent material such as wood chips or sand. Litter boxes should be cleaned daily and the absorbent material changed often. Daily attention to the litter box also serves as a monitor of the cat's health. Bentonite or clumping litter is a process which absorbs urine into clumps which can be sifted out along with feces, and thus the litter box stays cleaner longer with regular sifting.

The Science Behind The Human-Feline Bond: Recent research has shed light on

the science behind the human-cat bond. Pheromones and the hormone oxytocin play important roles in this connection. Pheromones are chemicals that animals, including cats, release to communicate with others of their species. These chemicals are detected by a specialized organ located in the nasal cavity. The information conveyed by pheromones can include a wide range of messages, from sexual attraction to social hierarchy. Cats use pheromones to communicate with each other and with humans. Cats have scent glands on their faces, paws, and tails that release pheromones. These pheromones convey messages such as territorial boundaries, mating opportunities, and feelings of safety. For example, when a cat rubs its face against a human's leg, it is leaving behind a pheromone that says "this person is safe and familiar." Interestingly, cats can also detect human pheromones. This means that when we pet a cat, we are not only communicating with them through touch and body language, but also through the pheromones we release. **The Role of Oxytocin:** Oxytocin is a hormone that is associated with bonding. When cats interact with humans, both the cat and human experience an increase in oxytocin levels. But oxytocin doesn't just play a role in bonding between cats and humans. It is also involved in a wide range of social behaviors in both animals and humans. In fact, some researchers have suggested that the human-cat bond may be similar to the bond between a mother and her child, in terms of the role that oxytocin plays. Overall, the human-cat bond is a complex and multifaceted relationship that is influenced by a variety of factors, including pheromones, oxytocin, and social interaction. By understanding the science behind this bond, we can deepen our appreciation for the unique and special connection that we share with our feline friends.

Understanding your Cat's Vocalizations and Body Language: Cats have long been associated with independence and a tendency to keep to themselves. Despite their independent nature, cats enjoy human company and require understanding of their unique behaviours. Although cats can make up to 100 different sounds, they are usually quiet, but this does not mean they lack communication skills. They communicate regularly with sounds and body movements. Here are the more common sounds and their meanings: **Meow:** a complex call that says "hello", "feed me", "pet me", or "let me out". **Purr:** "I am so happy, content". **Hiss:** defensive, "I'm worried, scared". **Growl:** "back off", last warning before attack". **Trill:** high pitched sound that says "so glad to see you". **Chatter of teeth:** when a cat sees prey but cannot get to it. **Yowl:** the cat is in pain or is calling for sex. Here are some of the more common body movements and what they mean: **Tail up:** "Hi there. I'm happy". **Swat:** with a front paw: "stop annoying me". **Ears flattened against head, Tail and back arched, Tail tucked, Tail fluffed:** "I'm scared, angry, upset, unpleasantly surprised". **Rubbing against you:** "You are mine. I am owning you". **Slow Blink:** "love being around you". Try practicing this with your cat and see if he/she returns the gesture. **Head Butts:** "A happy greeting". Make your hand into a fist and extend it slowly toward your cat and get a head butt to the fist.

Ways to Strengthen Your Bond with Your Cat : Cats are amazing creatures, and when they trust and love you, it is a beautiful thing. Here are some additional tips to help you and your feline friend grow even closer. Cats are creatures of habit and thrive in a consistent environment. Make sure your cat has a comfortable space to call their own and provide them with toys, scratching posts, and other items to keep them engaged. Cats love to climb and perch, so consider getting a cat tree or window perch for them to enjoy. Cats are naturally curious and need mental stimulation. Spend time playing with your cat and

providing them with opportunities to explore and play. This will not only strengthen your bond, but it will also help keep your cat physically and mentally healthy. Try rotating your cat's toys to keep things interesting and consider puzzle feeders to provide mental stimulation during meal times. You can also try teaching your cat new tricks or providing them with a cat-friendly garden to explore. By following these tips, you'll be well on your way to building a strong bond with your cat. Remember, every cat is unique, so take the time to learn what your cat likes and dislikes and tailor your interactions to their preferences. With patience and love, your bond with your cat will continue to grow stronger every day. The human-cat bond is a fascinating and unique connection. By understanding the history and science behind this bond and learning how to strengthen it, we can create a deeper and more fulfilling relationship with our feline companions.

In conclusion, the history of the human-cat relationship is a long and fascinating one. From their origins as wild hunters to their current status as beloved pets, cats have played an important role in human society for thousands of years. Whether you're a cat lover or not, it's hard to deny the amazing positive impact that these furry feline friends have had on human lives.

Know Your Cat and Both You and your Cat Will Appreciate your Shared Experience.

(In interacting with your cat it is important to be mindful of two basic realities: 1) while dogs have owners, cats have staff, and 2) God made dogs to show His love for humans, and He made cats to show His dominion over humans).

Email: ajmeagher@aol.com