

WEEKENDER

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■ Comedian Kyle Ploof from Weymouth

HOMEGROWN HUMOR

Weymouth stand-up sends chuckles through local comedy scene

By Andrew Clark
GATEHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

IN 2004, he was a Weymouth High senior toiling over math problems. Six years later, Kyle Ploof is sharing a stage with comedians like Patton Oswalt, having established himself as one of the best young stand-up comedians on the Boston scene.

For Ploof, who is known for his sharp wit and impeccable storytelling abilities, being a professional comedian has been a dream come true.

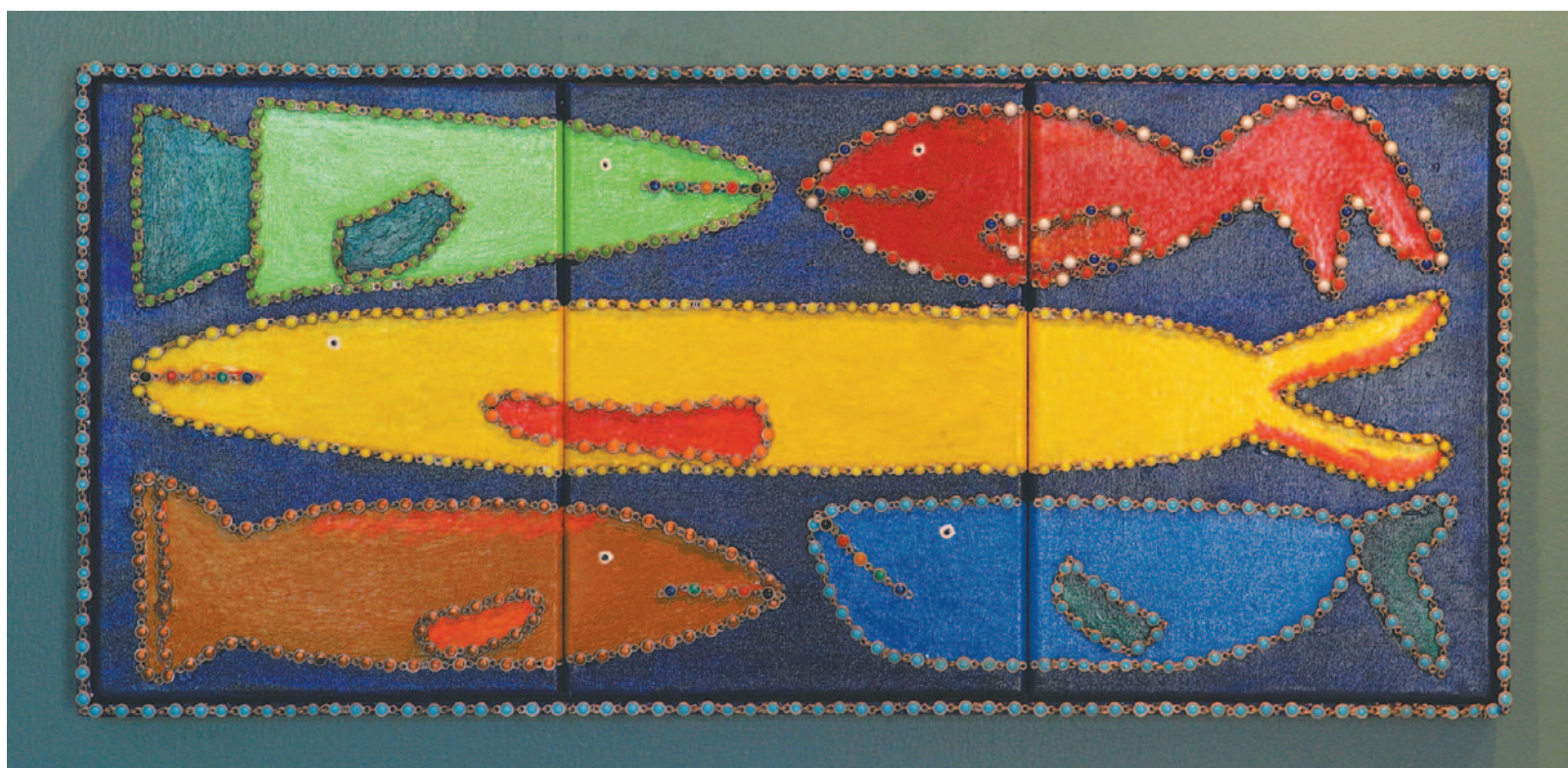
"I'm most proud of being able to get regular work as a comic," said Ploof. "That is something I figured was way off in the distance, and now that it's happening – on a national scale – is something I take pride in."

Ploof hosts a show the first Thursday of each month at Tommy's Comedy Lounge in Boston's Theatre District. He can be seen performing at all of the area's top venues, from The Comedy Studio in Cambridge to Nick's Comedy Stop. He estimates that he performs at least 10 times a week, whether at open mics or at paid gigs.

In his young career, Ploof has seen a great deal of success. In 2007, he won the "Last Comic Laughing" contest and the former WBCN and Going.com's "Boston's Best Stand-Up" competition. Additionally, Ploof has been featured at the Las Vegas Comedy Festival and the New York Comedy Expo.

It has been an exhaustive effort for Ploof to get to where he is now, as he has put countless hours into writing and performing material for over five years.

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PHOTOS BY ALEX JONES/GATEHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

■ "Fish Family" by Ricky Gagnon is part of a new exhibit at The Plymouth Center for the Arts that encourages visitors to touch the 60 pieces of art.

ART THAT'S VERY TOUCHING



■ Above right is "Comfort Pillow" by Alex Leaver. At right is "The Sea Storm" by Miriam Walsh. Below is "Moon Tide," a multi-sensory box created by George Mitchell of Brockton.

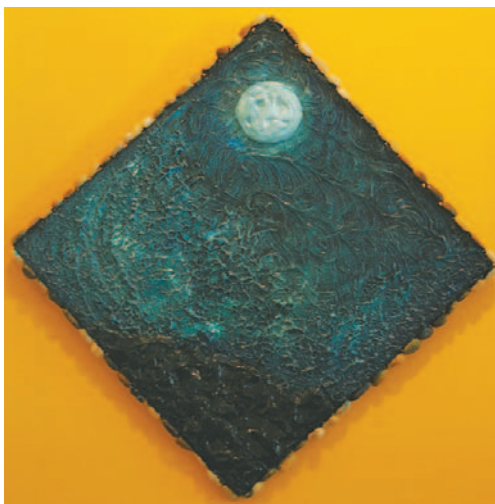


Exhibit in Plymouth invites a HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

By Jody Feinberg
GATEHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

PLYMOUTH

There are no Do Not Touch signs in the exhibit "A Different Vision" at Plymouth Center for the Arts. On the contrary, visitors are expected to run their fingers along the paintings, sculptures, textiles and mixed-media art.

"We had works created specifically for this show that people can touch," said Honey Weiss, a member of the Plymouth Art Guild who organized the show. "People with visual impairments don't often get the opportunity to enjoy visual art."

The 60 pieces offer an unusual artistic experience not just for people who are blind or have limited vision, but also for people with sight.

"It's a beautiful and colorful exhibit on its own, and being able to touch is a real treat," said Amy Davies of Plymouth, a volunteer at the Plymouth Art Guild.

Each item is accompanied by a description in print and braille. An audio guide is also

EXHIBIT/PAGE 18



■ "Square Two" by Douglass Gray.

chit-chat

with **KYLE RODERICK**

By Peggy Mullen/GateHouse News Service

Hope and optimism: Defeating cancer



Kyle Roderick of Quincy, who survived non-Hodgkins lymphoma as a teenager, has become a force in fundraising for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Light The Night Walk, an annual event to raise money for and awareness of blood-related cancers.

Since his bone marrow transplant in 1996, Roderick has raised money every year for the walk. This year, he and his wife, Monica, have organized L.O.L., Laugh Out Lymphoma, a night of comedy and dancing, May 8 at the Westin Copley Place Hotel. Roderick, who is on the board of trustees for the New England chapter of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, talked to us about his volunteer work and his commitment to the cause.

In addition to your recovery from the disease, what motivates you to raise funds on such a large scale for the cause?

During some of our darkest days, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society was there for my family and me. In addition to their help during this time, I've aligned myself with the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society because participation truly helps to save lives. Over 75 percent of the funds donated go directly toward cutting-edge cancer research, patient financial assistance, education and other patient-focused activities that make a real difference in the lives of people fighting these diseases.

What have you enjoy most about organizing the L.O.L. event?

While setting up events like LOL (Laugh Out Lymphoma) are difficult and represent months of work, my wife, Monica, and I truly enjoy the outcome. We develop events that give hardworking people the opportunity to attend a fun, classy event for a reasonable price. However, all net proceeds benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society while raising awareness of cancer and the hope that their donations represent to patients and researchers. At the end of the night, if everyone walks out with a smile and a renewed sense of optimism, we've done our job well.

What do you do when you're not giving your time to the effort?

While setting up events for www.havefunforcharity.com is a great past-time, I spend my days helping healthcare providers to treat their patients by representing a biotechnology company named Amgen.

I also just celebrated 13 cancer-free years and married the love of my life. We enjoy traveling the world or simply walking by the water, trying to live each day as a gift.

What are you looking forward to?

I'm looking forward to LOL 2010 to be sure. It promises to be an amazingly elegant night with two hysterical comedians, appetizers, raffle prizes and great music. More importantly, I'm looking forward with hope and optimism to the day when we can say the battle against cancer is over. We've won.

GO TO THE SHOW

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■ **WHAT:** L.O.L., Laugh Out Lymphoma, a night of comedy and dancing to benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

■ **WHERE:** Westin Copley Place Hotel, 101 Huntington Ave., Boston

■ **WHEN:** 6 p.m. Saturday, May 8

■ **TICKETS:** \$50-\$60, www.havefunforcharity.com



Sister fears inheritance may doom addicted brother

Dear Abby: My brother is a lifelong drug addict who has spent the last two decades in and out of jail. He rarely works and has no permanent residence, finding shelter instead with various friends, girlfriends and sometimes sleeping in his broken-down vehicle. When he calls me, it's always with some creative story and a request to send him money. The money I have sent over the years has gone to pay for his new drug fix, not to resolve the problem his sob story was about.

Recently, our grandmother died and she left each of us some money. As her executor, I am responsible for making sure my brother gets his share. While I want him to benefit from this modest inheritance, I'm afraid he will use it to buy

drugs — possibly enough drugs to harm himself, if unintentionally. Obviously, this is not what our grandmother would have wanted. How can I make sure this money goes to help, and not further enable, my drug-addicted sibling?

— *Conflicted Sister in Maryland*

Dear Conflicted: Consult an attorney, preferably one who has experience with wills and trusts, and see if some arrangement can be made that ensures your brother has a roof over his head and won't starve. It may be possible that something can be worked out so his necessities would be paid for him, without his actually getting his hands on the money.

Dear Abby: I have been left



DEAR ABBY

ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

confused and bitter over the loss of my best friend, "Sally." I expected to go to her children's weddings and be there for the birth of her grandchildren.

Sally had an affair, which I knew about. When her husband, "John," found out, he called me asking why I didn't tell him. After that horrible phone call, during which I lied to protect Sally, I never heard from them again.

Had I known this would happen I would have told John the truth. Instead of leaving her husband, Sally gave up her friendship with me. What did I do wrong? What would you advise your readers to do when someone starts telling them about an affair they're having?

— *Thrown Under The Bus, Bellevue, Wash.*

Dear Under The Bus: What you did "wrong" was allow yourself to be dragged into that mess as a co-conspirator. Silence implies agreement. Once John realized you knew all about her affair and lied, you became as guilty in his eyes as Sally and her lover. My advice to readers about what to do when someone starts telling them about an affair? Stay out of the line of fire

by telling the person you don't want to hear it.

Dear Abby: Like many parents, my husband and I would like our three children to read more. And they, like many children, would prefer to watch more television. We arrived at a compromise, and I would like to share it with your readers.

Many television shows are also available with closed captioning. For those who don't know what closed captioning is — it is a service available on most TVs that shows what is being broadcast via audio. We mute the television and have the children read the words instead of listening. It works great! Their reading skills have soared, and I have noticed they are now reading more books than they used to. In addition, I

really enjoy the quiet time while we're watching the TV.

Please pass this strategy on. Some of our friends are also doing it and feel it has helped their children, too.

— *Proud Parents*

Dear Proud Parents: I'm pleased to spread the word. Closed captioning, which was originally intended for use by people with hearing disabilities, can also be very helpful for individuals who are learning English as a second language.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

— UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Stand-up sends chuckles through local scene

PLOOF/FROM PAGE 17

"I got started in comedy after a long-term relationship with my high school girlfriend ended," said Ploof. "I started taking girls to comedy clubs in Boston and figured 'Hey, I can do this.' I had no idea how hard it would be.

"I write material every single day. I force myself to write between five to 10 new minutes each week. Of those minutes, I keep about 30 seconds. Most material is junk, but you have to write tons."

Following his graduation from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in 2008, Ploof moved to New York City to try his hand on the comedy scene. However, Ploof found it difficult to break in there, stating that "every bartender, waiter and their brother was a comic."

Instead, Ploof moved back to Boston.

"I think Boston comics have a certain edge that absolutely help us in the business," said Ploof, who cites local headliners such as Tony V., Lenny Clarke, Paul Nardizzi, Harrison Stebbins, and the late Kevin Knox amongst his influences.

"We're different. Crowds here are much tougher than anywhere else. You can't sneak anything by a Boston audience. If you stink — Boston will let you know — but that's what makes us great."

Amongst his peers, Ploof is very well-respected and considered one of the hardest workers that the Boston community has going.

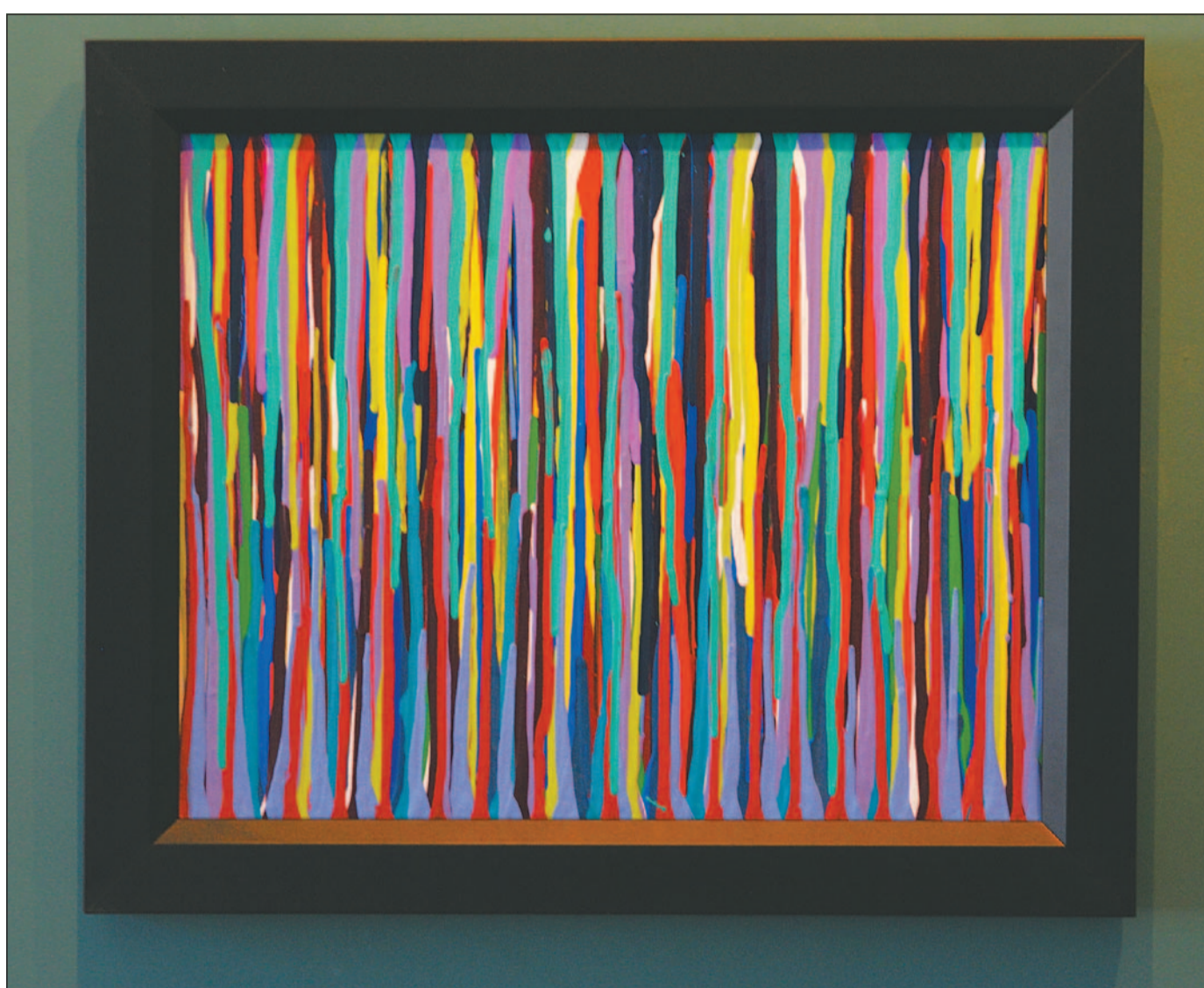
"Kyle Ploof is one of the hardest working guys in the business," said Jason Marcus, a Boston-based stand-up comedian who has performed all over the country.

What may be the most impressive about the 23-year-old Weymouth native is his generosity off-stage.

Earlier this year, Ploof's family dealt with the death of his 48-year-old uncle, who left behind a wife and five children. To help out his family in these difficult times, Ploof organized a fundraising show at the Sons of Italy in Quincy featuring some of Boston's best talents.

"I used comedy as a way to help my family after my Uncle passed away by organizing, booking and hosting a benefit show which raised money to help my aunt and cousins," said Ploof.

"Lamont Price, Dave Russo and Rick Canavan were gracious enough to donate their talents and time. The show was a great success."



ALEX JONES/GATEHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

■ "Taste the Rainbow" by Heather-Marie Ham is part of the "A Different Vision" exhibit at Plymouth Center for the Arts.

Art exhibit is very touching

EXHIBIT/FROM PAGE 17

available.

All works were judged by Hannah Goodwin, manager of accessibility at the Museum of Fine Arts, and Valerie Burrows, accessibility coordinator at the MFA. Awards will be announced at the opening reception on Friday.

In judging the works, Goodwin shut her eyes and touched each piece before looking at it.

"The visual component is important, but I felt I had to understand the tactile experience first," Goodwin said.

In recognition of the exhibit's particular challenge, Goodwin and Barrows created an award category called artist stretch. Awards also were given for two-dimensional wall art, 3-D art and multi-sensory.

"'A Different Vision' has inspired a lot of experimentation and creative thinking on the part of artists," Goodwin said. "Some of the art is more successful tactilely, some is more successful visually, and some have the tactile and visual delightfully in sync."

One example where both the visual and tactile are strong is "Robin's Nest" by Kathleen Mullins Mogayzel. She fashioned an egg-filled nest amidst tree branches out of a variety of tactile materials: foil, metallic waxes, brass wire, glass beads, copper leaves and a printmaking plate,

Goodwin said the MFA strives to make its art accessible to everyone, but restrictions exist because of the valuable nature of the art. Even if people can touch an object, they must wear gloves.

"This exhibit sets a very high bar, because there are no physical barriers," Goodwin said. "It's pretty unusual to have the opportunity to touch everything, including things like paintings that pretty much can never be touched."

To enhance the tactile possibilities in a painting, the artists used a variety of brush strokes and raised paint.

"Taste the Rainbow" by Heather-Marie Ham, has thin textured ribbons of paint, and "Rainbow Kisses" by Jeffrey Dawley has hundreds of small, raised points. For "Sea Storm," Miriam Walsh

applied different textures to create strong contrast between a rocky shore, stormy sea, swirling winds and calm moonlit sky.

Instead of paint, Mary Anne O'Brien used aromatic beeswax and damar resin to define the fish in her piece "Three Fish" and made the ocean from rippled rice paper and dried seaweed.

Some works appeal to the senses of hearing and smell. Ceramic sea urchins, coral and clams in "Rhythm of the Sea" by Brenda O'Rourke sound like tinkling bells when shaken. Raise the silky, polished lid of

the wooden box "Moon Tide" by George Mitchell and smell the sweet scent.

The sculptures take on added meaning when touched. By running fingers over "The Matriarch" by Valerie Mine, visitors get a more intimate sense of how facial features express emotion.

A number of artists took a playful approach, which children will appreciate. There's a 3-foot tall pink dragon hand puppet, "Hot Pink Dragon Extraordinaire" by Barbara Harold, and a "Touchable Crazy Quilt" by Marilyn Ferkinhoff, which has multiple textures and removable objects such as jewelry and a magnifying glass.

Some works are humorous, particularly the textile piece "Comfort Pillow" by Alex Leaver. She fashioned nine felt and yarn breasts atop a pillow, separated by tufts of fur. Visitors can reach inside the pillow, to touch the plush fur and removable crochet pillow. Leaver described it as an expression of the feminine ideal of "humor, nourishment and warmth."

A few pre-opening visitors couldn't resist touching the comfort pillow — and laughing.

"We'll be able to tell how far people have come in the exhibit when we hear their laughter," said Elise Pennypacker, who developed the exhibit with Weiss and displays two quilts in it.

Most works are by professionals and amateur artists, but there also is a group project from disabled adults at New England Village and one by students from Manomet Elementary School.

And three paintings were made by artists who them-

selves are nearly blind, including "Man's Best Friend" by Frances McLaughlin, a lovely image of a man patting his dog in a woods of falling snow.

"I find that a lot of people with sight assume that people who are blind are not interested in visual art, but that is just not true," Goodwin said. "It's wonderful to have an exhibit like this."

Reach Jody Feinberg at jfeinberg@ledger.com.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH TANNAH HIRSCH
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NICE AND EASY

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH		EAST	
♠ A K Q 10 5	♥ 10 5 4 3	♠ J 7 3	♥ A J 8 7
♦ 3	♣ K 9 7	♦ Q 9 6	♦ Q 8 4
WEST		SOUTH	
♠ 9 8 6	♥ K 2	♠ 4 2	♥ Q 9 6
♦ A 8 7 2	♣ J 5 3 2	♦ K Q J 10 4	♠ A 10 6

The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♦ Pass 1♠ Pass
INT Pass 3NT Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Two of ♠

This deal is from a team match between a team of grizzled veterans and one of modern super-scientists. When the veterans sat North-South, their auction was short and to the point. When South showed a balanced minimum with his one-no-trump rebid, North wasted no time in getting to game. After a club lead to East's queen, declarer won with the

ace and forced out the ace of diamonds. West continued with a club, won in the closed hand with the ten. When the jack of spades dropped, declarer collected 12 tricks.

This was the auction at the other table:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♦ Pass 1♠ Pass
2♦ Pass 2♥ Pass
2♠ Pass 3♠ Pass

Opening lead: ?

Since South's opening bid could show as little as 10 points and South more than likely held only two spades (he could have raised spades immediately with three-card support), North felt he could do no better than invite game and South felt he had done all he could.

South was right! If declarer delays drawing trumps, or if East finds an opening lead of a low heart, the defenders collected two hearts, a heart ruff and the ace of diamonds — three spades bid and just made!

(Tannah Hirsch welcomes readers' responses sent in care of this newspaper or to Tribune Media Services Inc., 2225 Kenmore Ave., Suite 114, Buffalo, NY 14207. E-mail responses may be sent to gorenbridge@aol.com.)