North Forty – 01/26/11 edition by Tony S. Valls – tonysv@tds.net

My youngest and I play the occasional game of cribbage before bedtime. I categorize cribbage as a medium-hard card game. We play to 31 or 61 points because going to 121 points makes for a really long game.

My daughter needs lots of time counting the points in her hand and figuring out which cards to keep and discard. Even as we are laying down cards during play she pauses to contemplate each card. My side of the equation, however, is much more complex. I need to walk that fine line between letting her win more often than me without her noticing.

If I play the game straight with no mistakes then she will lose a lot of games. This would be no fun for her and she won't play with me anymore—no fun for me either. On the flip side, if I let her win too much then she will suspect I'm losing on purpose. I also try to win a close game, but not too close. And on top of all that, I have to factor in challenging her enough to be a better player.

All this strategizing does make things a little dizzy on my side of the table, but it works. She enjoys the game and continues to play with me. Which is the point.

The North Lake basketball team Magic is hot. The team has been on a four-game winning streak. Last week Magic played the Jaguars in Junction City and Etna Elementary School. The scores were: in Junction City, Magic 34 and Jaguars 26; In Etna, Magic 54 and Etna 31.

I want to give a cheer to all the players in the league. They all play hard and display good sportsmanship. It takes a lot of courage to go out on the court in front people and play. Kudos also to all the coaches and the parents who work hard to make the games happen.

Bob Bryant, our local paramedic, will be guest speaker at this week's Lion's Club meeting tomorrow night at 7:30 p.m. at IOOF Hall. Bob will discuss how to spot the signs and symptoms of some medical emergencies and what you can do about them. A couple of the emergencies Bob will cover include strokes and heart attacks.

The annual Valentine's Dinner at Trinity Center Community Church will be from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Friday, Feb 11. Tickets at \$6 each and reservations must be in by Feb 7. The menu is chicken or steak. Everyone attending is asked to bring side dishes. Contact Linda Baird at 266-3754 for information and to purchase tickets.