

VOL. 2 ISSUE 12 · JANUARY 2024

CHESS JOURNAL

Official Newsletter of the Scott County Chess Club

Come join us on first Saturdays!

Our meetings are usually held on the **first Saturdays** of each month so everyone can plan ahead to join us.

The **NEXT regular meeting** will be held on January 6 at the Forest Public Library - 9 to 11 a.m. (210 S. Raleigh St.)

Everyone is welcome! All ages and skill levels
NO membership fee to participate



*Players may bring their own chess set if they have one.
We have boards and sets to use.
(provided by Friends of Forest Library group)*



scottcountychessclub



@scott_chess



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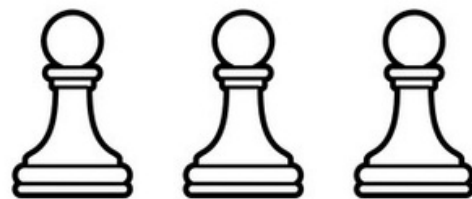
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scottcountychessclub.org



Chess News Highlights

Happy New Year!

More great Chess is on the way

We had a great year-long celebration in 2023 recognizing **five years** in operation since our start in 2018. We accomplished continued growth and maintained momentum to carry on into the new year while enjoying seeing new faces showing up for our activities.

There is much more potential in store for us to take another step forward in growing the game of Chess in Scott County. While there are a few activities we did in 2022 that we did not get to in 2023, our plans include bringing those activities back while starting new ones.

2023 in Review

First, let's recap how we did in the past year.

February: Started our year-long celebration of our 5-year anniversary.

March: Our founders, Chris and Aaron Baker, visited Noxubee County High School on March 11 upon invitation to help that community set up a chess program. Adults and children participated in a class designed to introduce a diverse mix of attendees how to play the game.

April: The second annual Bienville Chess Classic tournament was held April 1 and attracted 45 players from across the state, an increase over the previous Bienville tournament.

May: We held a reception at the Forest Public Library on May 1 officially honoring the five year anniversary of our founding. Partners and sponsors were invited as we gave thanks for all of the great support we have enjoyed from the business community in helping our tournaments succeed beyond expectations.

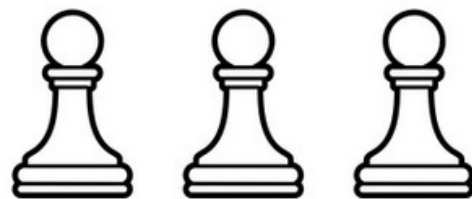


Sponsors

Community Bank
Cox Chevron
Bank of Morton
Tom Miles
Priority One Bank
French's Pharmacy
Fountain ACE Hardware
Bank of Forest
Jack Batte and Sons Lumber Mill
Joe McGee Construction

Partners

Central MS Regional Library System
Forest Public Library
Friends of Forest Library
U.S. Chess Federation
MS Chess Association
MS Scholastic Chess Association
Capital City Chess Club
Roosevelt State Park
Bienville National Forest
Forest Baptist Church
Andrew Jackson Council - BSA
Community Bank
SwissSys
MS Trophy
Larchwood Designs
Go Daddy (web hosting)
MS Secretary of State
Billy Freeman Photography
Ingram Printing
Scott County Times
The Spirit of Morton
SuperTalk MS
WLBT - Studio 3
Forest Chamber of Commerce
Town of Lake
City of Morton



Chess News Highlights

May: Also in May, we attended the annual festivals Morton Day in the Park and LakeFest in those respective communities to provide information to the general public about who we are and what we do. We saw great interest as numerous people stopped by our booths. We thank those festival organizers for giving us space to spread our message.

June: We hit the airwaves again on June 1 on SuperTalk radio network as return guests of “Good Things with Rebecca Turner.” This was the third appearance for us on the show and this time we included Beth Thrasher who provided great insight on the growth of Chess in the state, especially among students.

July: We provided information during the Forest Library’s summer reading program about Chess with displays set up during their regular activities.

August: We were greatly blessed and honored to be part of a tremendous donation to the Forest Public Library. Former resident and native retired Lt. Col. Michael Hawkins donated \$1,000 in memory of former Forest High School classmate Randy Richardson for the development of Chess at the library. Scott County Chess Club also participated in the library’s annual Back to School Bash for students preparing for a new school year.

September: The Scott County Chess Club held its information booth in its first visit to Sebastopol for their annual Sebastopolooza Festival and one week later, returned to the Wing Dang Doodle festival in Forest. Both display booths garnered much attention from persons seeking information about Chess. Meanwhile, the Forest Public Library greatly expanded its Chess book inventory with the support of half of the \$1,000 donation received in August.

October: The Scott County Chess Club held its first Randy Richardson Memorial Chess Camp for local youth interested in learning the game. Held on National Chess Day, October 14, the camp was well attended and featured a cross section of the diverse community. Free to the public, the other half of the donation was used to finance the camp as well as purchase additional Chess sets for future use.

Also in October, the Scott County Chess Club joined with the Mississippi Chess Association and other members of the Chess community to host a display section for the first time at the Mississippi State Fair in Jackson on October 15. Thousands of fairgoers visiting booths in the TradeMart stopped by our table to play Chess among themselves and with our players. It was a tremendous response and state officials expressed interest in expanding our section for more activity in the 2024 state fair.

'Chess is like
life.
There are
rewards for
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Chess News Highlights

'Chess is like life. There are rewards for good choices, consequences for the bad choices.'

October (continued): The moth of October was not quite done with Chess as the Scott County Chess Club returned to the airwaves - this time on television. The Club was joined again by Beth Thrasher and her two children, Sophia and Clayton, with Chris Baker on WLBT-3 in Jackson for their new features show, "Studio 3." The half hour show included information provided about the game while an actual game was underway.

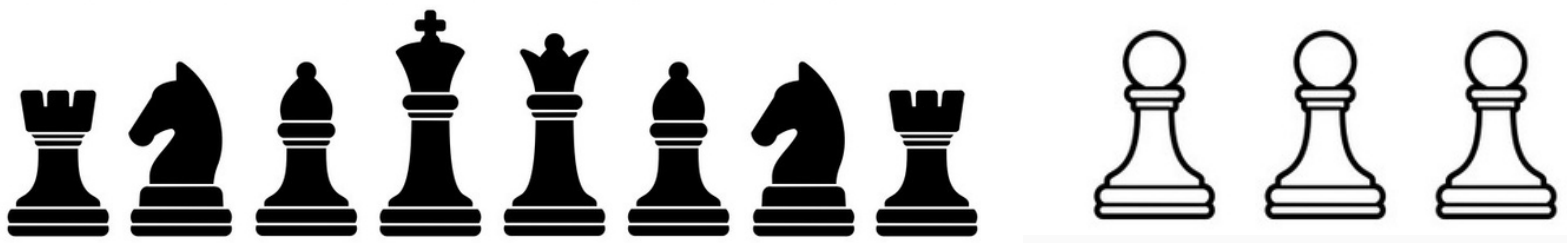
November: The third annual Roosevelt Chess Classic again attracted a solid crowd of Chess players to Scott County's Roosevelt State Park. Individuals and teams squared off for trophies and medals as well as money and bragging rights.

The Scott County Chess Club took a large leap forward in accomplishing a primary goal in its anniversary year. After all bills were paid and cleared from the tournament, there were enough funds to support the purchase of **50 chess board sets** with clocks as well as a storage container and supporting materials. Until now, the club had to borrow boards and clocks from another club to hold its tournaments, but now that will not be necessary. It will also allow the club to hold more activities on its own.

December: The Scott County Chess Club ended 2023 with its annual participation in the Forest Christmas Parade.

Finally, in the waning weeks of the year, **the club's website exceeded 3,000 visitors.** Check it out at scottcountychessclub.org.





Scott County Chess Club sponsored tournament

3rd Annual Bienville Chess Classic is set

MORTON – The 3rd annual **Bienville Chess Classic tournament** is set for **Saturday, April 20, 2024**, at Roosevelt State Park in Morton. This event will feature only individuals playing rated and unrated games. **Registration is open!** Our first Bienville Classic in May 2022 attracted 32 players from around Mississippi and we had players come from Louisiana and Florida. The player from Florida won the grand championship after driving 17 hours to play. Last year's tournament attracted 45 players. Our combined turnout for all five tournaments held is now 251 players, including those returning and new players each time.

Before we go any further, recognition goes to our past sponsors who generously donated funds to help make our first three tournaments successful. Most of, if not all, of them have expressed an interest to continue this year and we may even have some new sponsors added. This is a tremendous benefit because their contributions help keep the registration fees and expenses as low as possible which means funds left over after all bills are paid can be carried over to the next event. We really appreciate the support from the community and the businesses who have helped make these tournaments possible.

2024 Individual Tournament

Roosevelt State Park, Alfreda-Harris Lodge, 2149 MS Highway 13, Morton

Exit 77 on Interstate 20

4 rounds – Swiss System – Game control: 45+5

active U.S. Chess Federation membership and notation **required for rated games**

RATED - Open (Cash - \$200 & plaque for 1st, \$100 & medal for 2nd; \$50 & medal for 3rd)

RATED - U1200 (Trophy for 1st and medals for 2nd and 3rd)

RATED - U800 (Trophy for 1st and medals for 2nd and 3rd)

Unrated (Trophy for 1st and medals for 2nd and 3rd)

Federation membership is **not required** for this section only.

This section is designed for players just starting out in tournament participation.

Results will not be sent to Federation but will be posted on our website.

Clocks will be used and notation is strongly encouraged.

REGISTRATION

\$30 entry fee through **Saturday, April 13**. (at midnight and thereafter, **\$40**)

To Register: Players must provide their NAME, Active Chess Federation ID#, desired SECTION, and desired METHOD of PAYMENT

to the following email address: scottcountychessclub@gmail.com

An email response will be sent within 24-48 hours after first contact to finalize registration and make payment arrangements.



2024 Bienville Chess Classic - continued

*** Please check your membership status with the U.S. Chess Federation to make sure your status is active and renew if necessary before registering.***

These payment methods are strongly preferred in advance:

PayPal, Venmo, CashApp

but cash or check can be accepted on site - We do not have the ability to accept debit cards.

****Skittles rooms** will be available for casual play between rounds.*

Everyone is encouraged to bring chairs for lounging.

Updates will be provided by email during the final month leading up to the event.

Registration and Check-in - 8 a.m. until 9 a.m.

**The park charges \$2 per person for entry to the park at the gatehouse.*

Welcome and Briefing of Rules - 9:15 a.m.

Round 1 - 9:30 a.m.

Round 2 - 11:30 a.m.

Round 3 - 2 p.m.

Round 4 - 3:30 p.m.

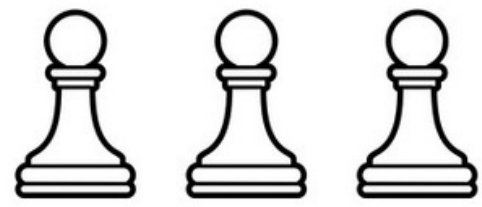
***Awards** - To be presented after all games are completed.*

**Byes due to inability to pair = 1.0 *Requested byes = 0.5*

Please make requests before start of desired round.

No requested byes in final round

For more information, visit scottcountychessclub.org



Chess Calendar

For more information about all listings:
see our website at scottcountychessclub.org

* **Scott County Chess Club** will hold a regular meeting
Saturday, January 6, 9-11 am, Public Library, Forest
This will be our regular meeting - everyone is welcome.

* **Adult Quads Tournament**
Saturday, Jan. 13 - Ridgeland

* **MS Scholastic Individual State Championship**
Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 13-14 - Ridgeland

* **MSCA BugHouse Championship**
Saturday, Jan. 27 - Jackson

* **Ole Miss Scholastic Chess Tournament**
Saturday, Feb. 3 - Oxford

* **MS Girls Scholastic State Championship**
Saturday - Feb. 17 - Flowood

* **Kemper County Chess Tournament**
Saturday, Feb. 24 - Scooba

* **Holmes County Chess Tournament**
Saturday, March 2 - Goodman

* **MSCA Individual and Team Cup Championship**
Saturday, March 9 - Miss. State/Starkville

* **MS Scholastic Team State Championship**
Saturday, March 23 - Ridgeland

'I'm here
because I
was told
there would
be chess.'



TOP TO BOTTOM CHESS:

* **Memphis Chess Club**

Weekly chess tournaments on Saturdays

* **Mississippi Coast Chess Club**

Thursdays- Newk's, Gulfport



Tournament action is all around

Many chess players are content to just play casually whenever the opportunity arises. This may include accepting a spontaneous invitation from a fellow chess player or attending a local chess club. However, there is another level to the game of chess - tournaments.

Tournaments are great ways to see how much progress a player is making in learning and growing in the game by discovering how they stack up against other players. It is also an opportunity to learn from other players in seeing a variety of strategies and styles of play. Like any other competitive activity, it is good to keep a healthy attitude and perspective, but playing in tournaments can reap many rewards.

Some players enjoy just playing in a random tournament for fun and experiencing the opportunity to learn and grow. Other players are more competitive and really get into tournaments, seeking to win and advance as far as they can go. They may have aspirations for earning master, grandmaster status within the U.S. Chess Federation through their rating. It is up to each individual to determine what kind of chess life they wish to have.

In Mississippi, there are many opportunities to participate in tournaments. The Mississippi Chess Association sponsors a state tournament each fall for adults and youth. Youth may also participate in the annual scholastic tournaments. These events are precursors to representing the state on the national level at many events.

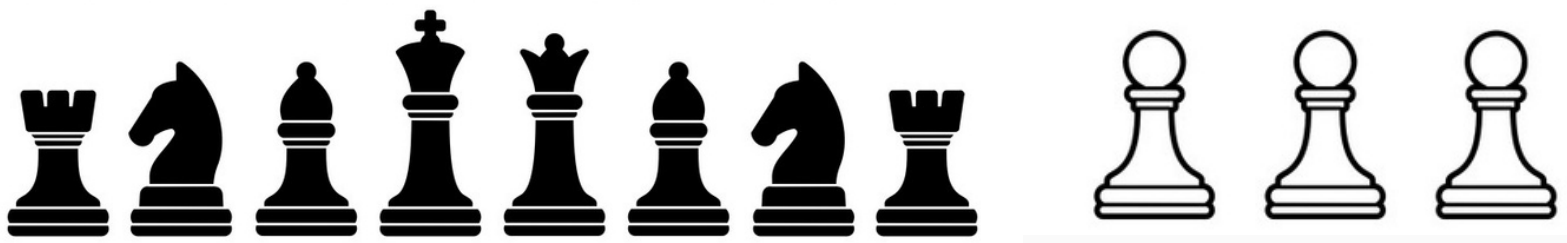
Tournaments usually include registration fees and players choose what sections they wish to participate in, based on their skill level as determined by their U.S. Chess Federation rating. Tournaments may also include team play where individual players' scores are combined and calculated for overall scores. Prizes may include cash, trophies, plaques, medals, ribbons, and certificates.

See calendar on page 7 and our website for more information!

scottcountychessclub.org

'A day
without chess
probably
wouldn't kill
you,
but
why risk
it?'





U.S. Chess Federation

The U.S. Chess Federation, now based in St. Louis, Missouri, regulates and governs the game in the United States. It sanctions tournaments and officials as well as oversees the ratings system that measures players' skills.

Chess is recognized as an essential tool that promotes inclusiveness and benefits education, rehabilitation, recreation, and friendly competition.

US Chess Goals

- Expand the educational, social, recreational and rehabilitative applications of chess.
- Increase the visibility of chess on mainstream communications channels.
- Develop the depth and breadth of our partnerships.
- Use chess to increase opportunities for under-represented segments of society.
- Continuously improve internal operations and member services.

US Chess Core Values

- **Education.** We promote the transformative power of chess for lifelong personal growth.
- **Customer Service.** We endeavor to be responsive, adaptive and proactive in providing services to our customers.
- **Excellence.** We strive to be the best we can be as an organization and in service to the game.
- **Integrity.** We honor, preserve and promote fair play.
- **Inclusion.** We believe everyone has a seat at the chess table.
- **Love of the Game.** We embrace chess as a historic and iconic game, and we celebrate its history, growth and evolution in our activities and services.

Players must join the Federation to obtain a membership number which is required when registering for rated tournaments and other rated events. Tournament directors submit results to the Federation which impacts a player's rating.

For more information and to join, visit <https://new.uschess.org/join-us-chess>

USCF Membership makes for a great Birthday gift!!



Benefits of playing Chess

- **Improves concentration and memory.** According to studies done at the University of Memphis, playing chess significantly improves children’s visual memory, attention span, and spatial-reasoning ability.
- **Enhances reading and math skills.** With its focus on problem solving and move variables, chess can improve math skills. Studies show that chess improves reading skills as well.
- **Fosters logic, critical thinking, and creativity.** Chess favors the “if-then” thinker. “If I move here, then my opponent may move here, here, or even here.” That’s logic and critical thinking in action! Studies also show that chess boosts creativity, most dramatically in one specific area—originality. Playing chess helps unleash your originality, since it activates the right side of the brain, the side responsible for creativity.
- **Encourages and rewards hard work.** Chess offers immediate feedback. Lose your focus, lose a piece. Practice and study the strategies, win more games. In chess, you control your destiny.
- **Promotes brain growth.** Games like chess that challenge the brain actually stimulate the growth of bodies that send out signals from the brain’s neuron cells. Communication within the brain improves and becomes faster.
- **It exercises both sides of the brain.** A study indicated that when chess players were asked to identify chess positions and geometric shapes, both the left and right hemispheres of the brain became highly active.
- **Raises your IQ.** At least one scientific study has shown that playing the game can actually raise a person’s IQ.
- **Helps prevent Alzheimer’s.** A study found that people over 75 who engage in brain-games like chess are less likely to develop dementia than their non-board-game-playing peers.
- **Increases problem-solving skills.** Chess requires fast thinking and problem-solving on the fly because your opponent is constantly changing the parameters.
- **Teaches planning and foresight.** One of the last parts of the brain to develop during adolescence is the area responsible for judgment, planning and self-control. Chess helps this area’s development and helps teenagers make better decisions in all areas of life.
- **Optimizes memory improvement.** Playing chess improves your memory, mainly because of the complex rules you have to remember, as well as the memory recall needed when trying to avoid previous mistakes or remembering a certain opponent’s playing style. Many chess players have exceptional memory performance and recall.
- **Improves recovery from stroke or disability.** Chess develops fine motor skills in individuals who have disability or have suffered a stroke or other physically debilitating accident. This form of rehabilitation requires the motion of chess pieces in different directions (forward, backward, diagonally forward motion, diagonally backward motion), which can help develop and fine tune a patient’s motor skills, while the mental effort required to play the game can improve cognitive and communication skills. Playing can also stimulate deep concentration and calm, helping to center and relax patients who are experiencing different degrees of anxiety.

Most of all - Chess is FUN!

'Life is full of important choices.'

'In chess, there are no losers.'

Either you win or you learn ...

sometimes both.'